



**Essex County College**  
**Board of Trustees**  
**PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

April 23, 2024 – 4:30 PM

*Essex County College – Main Campus - Smith Hall*

**In Attendance:**

M. Bolden; A. Lewis; B. Robinson; J. Wright; J. Zarra; A. Boakye, President; M. Townes, Board Counsel

**Excused:**

I. Cruz; J. Grimes; L. Guyton

**Call to Order/Roll Call**

Trustee Bolden, Chair of the Board, called the meeting to order at 4:41 p.m. Five Trustees answered roll call. A quorum was announced for the meeting.

**Open Public Meetings Act Announcement**

Trustee Robinson was asked to read the Open Public Meetings Act Announcement. She read as follows:

Advance written notice of this meeting was filed on January 2, 2024, and written notice for this meeting was provided to the Essex County College Community, indicating that the meeting will be held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act (P.L. 2020 c. 11) and Board Policy 1-1.

Notice of the meeting was also posted on the College website at [www.essex.edu](http://www.essex.edu). According to records of Essex County College, we have not received written requests or prepayment from any parties for advance notice of meetings.

**Minutes**

Trustee Robinson moved that minutes of the March 19, 2024 meetings of the Board of Trustees be approved. Trustee Lewis seconded the motion. ***The motion carried unanimously.***

**Communications**

Trustee Robinson announced that there were no communications.

**Public Comments on Agenda Items**

Mr. Lev Zilbermints; agenda comments are attached at Appendix A. Madame Chair noted that Mr. Zilbermints' concerns would be addressed at the appropriate time during the meeting.

**Finance Committee Report**

Trustee Zarra reported that the Finance Committee met and reviewed the following four items presented for the Board's consideration:

3-1.1/Apr-2024	Authorize the Award of a Two-Year Contract for Advertising and Recruitment Clear Channel Outdoor, San Antonio, TX No Degree Grant Funded – Operating Expense	Amount not to exceed \$150,000.00 per year
3-1.2/Apr-2024	Authorize the Award of a Contract for Owner Representative Services Anser Advisory Management LLC, Santa Ana, CA Chapter XII Funded – Capital Expense	Amount not to exceed \$30,000.00
3-1.3/Apr-2024	Authorize the Award of a Two-Year Contract for Landscaping Services for the West Essex Campus RAC Landscape Contractors, Cranford, NJ College Funded – Operating Expense	Amount not to exceed \$41,600.00 per year
3-1.4/Apr-2024	Authorize the Award of a Three-Year Contract for Books for College Students RedShelf, INC, Chicago, IL College Funded – Operating Expense	Amount not to exceed \$3,500,000.00 per year

Trustee Robinson moved the Finance Actions for approval. Trustee Wright provided the second. ***The motion carried unanimously.***

### **Personnel Committee Report**

Trustee Robinson advised that the Committee met and recommended the approval of the following actions:

#### Appointments

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| 4-1/Apr-2024 | Lolita Cruz, Associate Director of Campus Services and Community Initiatives<br>West Essex Campus<br>Effective April 29, 2024<br>Salary \$76,000.00 |
| 4-2/Apr-2024 | Shalia Story, Operational Support Specialist<br>Office of the President<br>Effective April 24, 2024<br>Salary \$52,500.00                           |
| 4-3/Apr-2024 | Jenny Espinoza, Accounts Payable Officer<br>Business Affairs<br>Effective April 29, 2024<br>Salary \$50,000.00                                      |
| 4-4/Apr-2024 | Mubbashra Begum, Accounts Payable Officer<br>Business Affairs<br>Effective April 29, 2024<br>Salary \$57,000.00                                     |

- 4-5/Apr-2024 Jamel Green, General Ledger Accountant  
Accounting  
Effective April 29, 2024  
Salary \$73,000.00
- 4-6/Apr-2024 Massiata Soumahoro, General Ledger Accountant  
Accounting  
Effective April 29, 2024  
Salary \$60,000.00
- 4-7/Apr-2024 Kayleen Marino, Administrative Assistant, Student Life & Activities  
Student Activities  
Effective May 1, 2024  
Salary \$36,500.00
- 4-8/Apr-2024 Karon Johnson, Security Officer  
Public Safety  
Effective April 29, 2024  
Salary \$31,470.00

Reappointment Listing

4-9/Apr-2024	Administrative:	28
	Administrative Confidential:	21
	Tenure Track Faculty:	26
	Non-Tenure Track Faculty:	7
	Professional:	117
	Professional Confidential:	19
	<u>Total Employees:</u>	<u>218</u>

Promotion in Academic Rank

- 4-10/Apr-2024 William J. Tooma, Associate Professor  
Chairperson  
Humanities & Bilingual Studies Division  
Effective September 1, 2024

Granting of Tenure

- 4-11/Apr-2024 Lori York, Chairperson and Assistant Professor  
Nursing and Health Sciences Division  
Effective September 1, 2024
- 4-12/Apr-2024 Sujatha Ramakrishnan, Assistant Professor  
Biology, Chemistry, and Physics Division  
Effective September 1, 2024
- 4-13/Apr-2024 Gervida Constant, Assistant Professor  
Nursing and Health Sciences Division  
Effective September 1, 2024

## Retirement

4-14/Apr-2024 Jonell Congleton, Liaison to the President/Board of Trustees  
Office of the President  
Effective: June 30, 2024

## Resignation

4-15/Apr-2024 Aja'Zena Chambers-Finn, Telephone Operator  
Information Technology  
Effective: April 14, 2024

## College's Table of Organization

4-16/Apr-2024 Organization Chart

Trustee Wright presented the motion to approve the personnel actions. Her motion was seconded by Trustee Lewis. ***The motion carried unanimously.***

## **Educational Programs Committee Report**

Trustee Lewis advised that the Committee met and, on their behalf, he presented the following items for approval:

- 7-1.1/Apr-2024 Dual Admissions Agreement: New Jersey City University
- 7-1.2/Apr-2024 Dual Enrollment Program: Belleville Board of Education
- 7-1.3/Apr-2024 Dual Enrollment Program: Caldwell-West Caldwell Board of Education
- 7-1.4/Apr-2024 Dual Enrollment Program: East Orange Board of Education
- 7-1.5/Apr-2024 Dual Enrollment Program: Irvington Board of Education
- 7-1.6/Apr-2024 Dual Enrollment Program: Montclair Board of Education
- 7-1.7/Apr-2024 Dual Enrollment Program: Newark Board of Education
- 7-1.8/Apr-2024 Dual Enrollment Program: Orange Public Schools Board of Education
- 7-1.9/Apr-2024 Dual Enrollment Program: Essex County Schools of Technology
- 7-1.10/Apr-2024 Memorandum of Agreement: The New Jersey Department of Education
- 7-1.11/Apr-2024 Memorandum of Understanding: NJ Health Information and Management Systems Society (NJHIMSS)

Board actions 7-1.1 through 7-1.3 were moved for approval by Trustee Wright and seconded by Trustee Robinson. ***The motion carried unanimously.***

Board action 7-1.4 was moved for approval by Trustee Zarra and seconded by Trustee Wright. ***The motion carried – four affirmed, one abstention.***

Board actions 7-1.5 through 7-1.11 were moved for approval by Trustee Wright and seconded by Trustee Robinson. ***The motion carried unanimously.***

## **Site Facilities and Equipment Committee Report**

Madame Chair announced that the Committee did not meet in the month of April and did not have any action items.

### **Policy and Governance Committee Report**

Madame Chair announced that the Committee did not convene a meeting in the month of April and there were no action items submitted for the Committee's consideration.

### **Community Relations Committee Report**

Trustee Wright reported that she had no actions to present; however, the committee met and discussed the Athletic Hall of Fame, which has been rescheduled to Spring 2025, and the College's 55<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala which she described as exciting and wonderful. She acknowledged that many donors and sponsors contributed to the success of the Gala; especially, the 'full-ride' scholarships announced by Dr. Senese, President of Caldwell University, to be awarded to three Essex County College students.

In conclusion, Trustee Wright thanked the Faculty Association for the invitation to attend their Appreciation Night and expressed excitement about Commencement to be held on Thursday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>.

### **Alumni Association Report**

Mr. Zilbermints came forward and read the following Alumni Association Report:

Greeting to Board of Trustees members, President Boakye, ECC staff and students, and everyone in attendance. My name is Lev Zilbermints, ECCAA treasurer, and I am pleased to provide an update on the progress of the Association:

- First, we thank ECC President, Dr. Boakye and his administration for their continued support.
- The Alumni held its first General Assembly meeting on April 10, 2024. Two of five interested candidates were present. A fundraising goal of \$10,000.00 was proposed and the funds will be shared between the Scholarship Fund and the Alumni Operations budget. The next meeting is scheduled for June 12.
- The Association will be represented on Scholarship Night, Graduation Rehearsal and Graduation Day. There will be a sign-up table for graduates who wish to join the Alumni Association
- The Association has designed a congratulatory certificate for all graduating students and it is under consideration how best to use this tool.

### **Student Government Association Report**

The Student Government Association Report was submitted electronically and read into the record of the meeting by the Association's President, Mr. Mark Anifowose. The full report is attached at Appendix B.

The SGA report was received with applause. Madame Chair thanked Mr. Anifowose for the good work achieved by the Association.

### **Faculty Association Report**

In the absence of Professor Jean-Wilner Alexandre, Dr. Sujatha Ramakrishna, the Faculty Association's Recording Secretary read the report (attached at Appendix C) which was acknowledged as being very comprehensive.

### **President's Report**

Dr. Boakye noted that some of the items he planned to report on had already been shared in the Student Government and Faculty Association reports; he, therefore, went on to highlight the following from his report:

- Since January, Cabinet members, Chairpersons, and key members of the College meet at the West Essex Campus to discuss specific programs and growth of the student population there.

- The College's Public Safety Headquarters was dedicated to the late Senator Ronald Rice, Sr. on March 21<sup>st</sup>, an event spearheaded by the Board of Trustees.
- A second Bloomberg Lab was launched by the Business Division at the West Essex Campus on March 20<sup>th</sup>. The Division also organized the 8<sup>th</sup> annual Financial Literacy Conference for the College Community and the annual Business Plan Competition, sponsored by Prof. Alan Singleton. The three top students received monetary awards of \$2,500, \$2,000 and \$1,000 in the Business Plan Competition. The emphasis of the competition is to help students grow their businesses and become entrepreneurs.
- The President announced that the Lieutenant Governor, the Honorable Tahesha Way, will be the keynote speaker at the College's 55<sup>th</sup> Commencement ceremony to be held on May 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- Dr. Boakye listed some of the engagements shared in his written report:
  - He attended the inauguration of Dr. Jeffrey Senese, the President of Caldwell University
  - He participated in the Pre-Apprenticeship Career Education (PACE) Grant signing ceremony. The grant provides the College with \$500,000 to support promoting a Fiber Optics program in the College. ECC is the first College to offer such a program. Dean Vieira and her team worked to acquire the grant.
  - The President supported the March 27<sup>th</sup> Student Resource Fair.
  - Ms. Samirah Scantling, PTK President and Ms. Judith Llewelyn, Vice President of the Alumni Association accompanied the President to the NJ Senate Budget hearing to fight for the reversal of the Governor's proposed \$20 million cut to Community College funding for the coming year.
  - The President noted the capital projects on the main campus to complete electrical work in the Child Development Center; work with the architects to renovate and waterproof the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> floors; the MLK Library and Learning Center renovations which are ongoing; and, the plans for a main campus ***One Stop Student Center***.
- Dr. Boakye offered thanks to those who participated in the 55<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala and Scholarship Fundraising event. He stated that everyone had a great time and it was a very good and beautiful event. He also recognized Caldwell University for the three scholarships which were announced at the Gala by Dr. Senese.
- Dr. Boakye congratulated everyone who was reappointed, appointed, promoted, and granted tenure. He then talked about succession planning and replacement with regard to full-time faculty. He said ECC has more full-time faculty than Union County College (which is a bigger institution). ECC has hired approximately 26 full-time faculty members in the last few years who are now on the tenure track; he is working with Dean Williams to hire more full-time faculty with the goal to ensure that students receive a quality education and are retained.

In closing his report, the President acknowledged the retirement of the Liaison to the President and Board of Trustees with thanks.

Dr. Boakye then took a few minutes to respond to Mr. Zilbermints comment on agenda items concerning the three-year, \$3.5 million contract award for textbooks. He explained that the College's contract with the bookstore vendor, Follett, expired at the end of March; the College will be working with a new vendor, RedShelf.

Madame Chair thanked Dr. Boakye for his report and then took a minute to commend Dr. Runfeldt and his team for compiling the College's Fact Book and expressed how helpful it has been to her.

## **New Business**

Trustee Wright made an appeal to Governor Murphy to appoint the two state representatives to the Board of Trustees. She stated that the Board is short the two Trustees and has been for a significant amount of time – two years, without the Governor’s appointees. She acknowledged that the County has already identified a replacement for Trustee Morales, who left the Board in January to pursue office as an Assemblywoman.

Dr. Boakye then invited Dr. Renee Ojo-Ohikuare, Executive Director of Enrollment Management to share some of the initiatives she and her team have put together. Those initiatives follow:

- Filled the position of Director of Recruitment and Retention who has embraced the role, is working with faculty and planning Open Houses on the West Essex and Main campuses.
- Cultivating relationships with public and private high schools.
- Repurposing Instant Admit days by going to the students. The first Instant Admit day at a school is scheduled for the first week of May at Bloomfield High School.
- Establishing that Freshmen, Transfers, Re-admits build relationships with their mentors to ensure retention year over year.

Trustee Robinson thanked Dr. Oho-Ohikuare for the prompt assistance she provided to get students at East Orange Campus High School registered for and scheduled to take the Accuplacer test.

## **Public Comments**

**Mr. Zilbermints** submitted his Public Comments; they are attached at Appendix D. With regard to his concern about the Palestinian and Hamas war student protests, Dr. Boakye advised that the College works with its Public Safety department, Student Life, Student Government Association leaders and student clubs to diffuse any possible protest activity and keep peace on campus. He also offered that dialogue with those having issues is open to make sure we understand one another. In terms of security, he stated that the College is always ready to make sure everyone is safe and sound on our campuses.

**Dr. William Tooma** thanked Drs. Boakye and Williams for recommending his promotion to Associate Professor and the Board for approving it. He advised that he has been teaching at the College since he was twenty-five years old; he grew up here and will be forty later this year. Dr. Tooma said he has a vested interest in Essex County College and wants to see it continue to succeed, thrive, and serve students.

**Dr. Sujatha Ramakrishnan** expressed thanks to the Board of Trustees, Dr. Boakye and Dr. Williams for granting her tenure. She said she will do her best to fulfill her responsibilities as a faculty member and to work toward the betterment of Essex County College.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, Madame Chair congratulated on those who received promotions, were granted tenure or were newly appointed.

## **Notice of Executive Session**

Trustee Robinson was asked to read the Notice of Executive Session. She read as follows:

WHEREAS, The Open Public Meetings Act, 1975 (N.J. Law Chapter 231) permits a public body to exclude the public from that portion of a meeting at which certain topics are discussed:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of Essex County College shall hold, following this meeting and prior to its next scheduled meeting on May 21, 2024 at 4:30 PM, an Executive Session to discuss the following topics, the general nature of which is limited to Collective

Bargaining Agreements, Pending and Existing Contractual Negotiations, Litigation and Personnel Matters. The discussion of these said topics shall be disclosed to the public as soon as reasonable.

Trustee Lewis provided the motion to conduct an Executive Session as indicated. Trustee Wright seconded his motion. ***The motion carried unanimously.***

### **Adjournment**

Madame Chair asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Robinson provided the motion, Trustee Wright the second. The meeting was adjourned at 5:44 pm by a vote of acclamation.



## AGENDA COMMENTS

### ECC Board of Trustees meeting, 4/23/2024

Greetings,

My name is Lev Zilbermints, Class of 1993. Here are my Agenda Comments.

**3 – 1.4/Apr – 2024:** I find it interesting that you are authorizing a three-year contract for Books for College Students. Three and a half million dollars is a lot of money! My questions is, will this be the same Bookstore management or something else? Will students have to pay outrageously high prices for textbooks or will they be able to rent the? I am familiar with this matter because we had the exact same thing at Rutgers-Newark in the 2000s.

So, the question is, can the students buy the 10<sup>th</sup> edition if they don't need the 11<sup>th</sup> edition? Can they rent the book instead of paying higher prices for a new text book because consider the fact that student do not have a lot of money to begin with.

**VII.** Congratulations to those who have been appointed or reappointed to their positions. Also, congratulations to those who have been promoted and granted tenure. We are very proud of your accomplishments. You will make Essex County College a better school. Those who have resigned, we wish you the best in your future. Thank you for serving ECC.

We see that Jonell Congleton is retiring soon. Having known Jonell for many years, we are sad to see her leave. We would like to wish her the best in her upcoming retirement, happiness, long life and success. We hope that Jonell will become more active with the Essex County College Alumni Association

**Lastly,** Dual Enrollment – nice job. Nine Dual Enrollment agreements. This might well increase our student enrollment.

## **STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION WINTER/SPRING 2024 (APRIL) REPORT**

Good Evening esteemed members of the Board of Trustees, Dr. Boakye, Faculty, Staff and Administration, I am Mark Anifowose, President of the Student Government Association, and I am here to present the April report for SGA activities.

### **SGA ACTIVITY REPORT:**

On the 2nd of April 2024, a Student Government Candidate Forum was hosted by our organization, aimed at providing a platform for the upcoming student leaders to gain insights into the Student Government Association (SGA) and their potential roles. The event was successful in identifying the potential of the next SGA leaders, and we are currently making continued efforts to fill the remaining vacant positions.

On Thursday, April 16, 2024, we had the honor of participating in an Instagram livestream event at the West Essex Campus, alongside the President of Phi Theta Kappa, Samirah Scantling, Dean Elvy Vieira, as well as other student leaders and clubs. The event was honored by the presence of the Mayor of West Caldwell, Joe Tempesta, who shared his vision and plan for higher education in West Caldwell. During the event, each club present was given the opportunity to showcase its talent. The Taekwondo Club presented first, followed by the Cheerleaders Club, and then the ALPFA Club (Association of Latino Professionals for America). The event was a great platform to highlight the talent we have here at Essex County College and to potentially attract new students to our institution.

On Wednesday, April 17, 2024, I had the privilege of attending the Higher Education State Convening as a representative of student government leaders from various colleges across New Jersey. The meeting, which was aimed at discussing pertinent issues, featured constructive conversations with the Secretary of Higher Education, Brian Bridges. The focal points of our discussion included matters such as mental health, hygiene, and food access for community college students. Additionally, budget-related concerns were addressed, and plans for future, in-person discussions during the Fall semester were outlined. The Higher Education State Convening provided valuable insights into the impact of Higher Education in New Jersey and ways to strengthen the overall education system in the state. As a representative of student leaders, I believe that the meeting was an excellent opportunity to exchange

ideas with other stakeholders and contribute to the discourse on critical issues affecting our education system.

Lastly, We extend our gratitude to the Essex County College 55th Anniversary GALA planning committee for the provision of tickets to support our students and athletes in attending the event. It was a remarkable experience for our students and alumni in attendance, and we were privileged to interact with the corporate sponsors and scholarship donors present. During the event, we had the opportunity to speak with the students in attendance, and it was evident that they were impressed by the level of organization and coordination that was exhibited throughout the event. We would like to express our appreciation to all the individuals who made this possible, as well as the board for their support in bringing this event to fruition. We look forward to the 56th Anniversary GALA with great anticipation.

## **OTHER SGA ACTIVITIES:**

### **Inter-Club Council Meeting:**

On Monday, March 25th, 2024, we had the privilege of hosting Ms. Charlene Berry from the organization Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment (ADAPT) to lead a discussion on the impact of drug and alcohol abuse on the brain and the community. During the session, we explored the effects of vaping and smoking on the brain and lungs, as well as strategies for prevention and addiction withdrawal. The session included interactive Q&A sessions and quizzes, providing students with the opportunity to win exciting prizes.

We are pleased to inform you that Ms. Charlene Berry expressed her interest in attending one of our student forums to engage with more students and share her knowledge and experience. We look forward to hosting her soon and providing students with the opportunity to learn more about the impact of substance abuse on the brain and community, as well as strategies to prevent addiction and promote healthy lifestyles.

On Tuesday, April 2, 2024, we participated in the Denim Day event in support of sexual assault awareness month. Our team assisted in setting up for the event, and we were pleased to witness the 360 Art Club's participation by styling denim outfits throughout the event. We look forward to seeing more events like this at Essex.

On Wednesday, April 10, 2024, all of the clubs at Essex came together to organize the Student First Fest, where they showcased their talents and tried to attract new members to their respective clubs. The event was a success, with approximately 32 clubs participating, and it provided an opportunity for students to network. The Music Club entertained everyone present, while food and refreshments were served to the attendees.

During the week of April 15 to April 19, 2024, we participated in the Finals Week Café, an event aimed at easing students into the finals season. Our team helped by uploading pictures of the setup daily on the ECC APP, inviting students to stop by the student center for breakfast items. We were pleased to see students taking advantage of the resources offered at Essex, and the event was a success.

#### **INITIATIVES FOR SUMMER 2024:**

Our primary objective for the upcoming months is to prepare and equip new leaders for the Student Government Association (SGA), in order to ensure a seamless transition for the next leadership team.

We express our sincere gratitude to the school administration for their steadfast support in guaranteeing the safety, well-being, and comfort of the students here at Essex County College. We hope that such efforts will continue to be made in the future.

Respectfully submitted,

SGA Executive Board

Essex County College

Student Government Association

## Memorandum

To: Ms. Marion Bolden & the Board of Trustees

From: Jean-Wilner Alexandre ECCFA Representative to ECC Board of Trustees

Date: April 23rd 2024

Re: Faculty Report

Good afternoon esteemed members of the Essex County College Board of Trustees (ECCBOT), Dr. Boakye and his cabinet, and the college community,

I am Dr. Sujatha Ramakrishna, serving as the reporting secretary for the Essex County College Faculty Association (ECCFA) and Biology professor. Today, I have the privilege of presenting the faculty association report to the Board of Trustees on behalf of Professor Jean-Wilner Alexandre.

### **General Comments**

First and foremost, on behalf of ECCFA I would like to extend my gratitude to Dr. Boakye for his recommendation and to the board for ratifying the promotion and tenure of our esteemed colleagues. On behalf of the ECCFA, I offer heartfelt congratulations to them as well and assure them of ECCFA's unwavering support.

Secondly, ECCFA cordially invites all members of the ECC Board of Trustees to our Faculty Gala 2024, scheduled for this coming Friday, April 26, 2024, at the Grove in Cedar Grove, New Jersey. This event presents an excellent opportunity for trustees and faculty members to acquaint themselves with each other as we collectively advance the college mission.

- We extend our appreciation to our Trustees who are able to attend, to President Dr. Boakye and Dean Dr. Williams for their confirmation.

Lastly, we express our gratitude to the administration for attentively addressing faculty concerns by extending the due date for final grades submission to nearly a week after the last day of class. This adjustment has significantly eased the challenges faced by faculty over the past year.

### **Faculty Activities Report to the Board of Trustees**

Our faculty members remain actively engaged in self-improvement through their participation in conferences, seminars, workshops, and extracurricular activities aimed at enhancing student experiences. Below is a brief overview of their recent activities:

1. ECCFA recently conducted elections for executive positions. Professor Ming McCall was reelected as president, and Professor Victor Stolberg is expected to serve as vice president for the next two years among the newly elected.
2. Contract negotiations with the administration are nearing readiness, with approximately 80% of the preparations complete. The negotiation team has finalized all necessary adjustments in the contract. Currently, we await requested information from the administration. A key concern for faculty persists:

the issue of pay disparity. This is especially notable for faculty members with extensive academic and professional experiences, who are often hired with substantially lower compensation compared to administrators with fewer credentials but higher salaries.

3. On March 23, 2024, Dr. Sujatha Ramakrishnan served as a judge for the Plant Sciences category at the Terra North Jersey STEM Fair held at Kean University.
4. On March 23, 2024, Professor Alexandre drove six students from the ECC Association of Latino Professionals for America (ALPFA) to the organization's regional conference in Maryland. This event provided a valuable opportunity for the students to network with peers from the northeast region and gain insights into the professional world from experts in their field.
5. Professor Jean-Wilner Alexandre is one of the 19 professors who will be honored at the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP) Global Conference in Miami, Florida, in June for Teaching Excellence. These professors are selected from 11 worldwide regions to receive the Teaching Excellence Award based on demonstrated excellence in the classroom, academic pursuits, service to the college, and community engagement.
6. Professor Natalie White-Smith from the Department of Nursing and Health Sciences along with other faculty members in her department organized the Annual RN Program Evidence-Based Poster Presentation Day, which saw significant participation and support from students and faculty.
7. On March 20th, Professor Clare Kajura and Dr. Bridget Turner organized a Social Sciences Mid-Semester Check-in, attracting participation from numerous colleges and universities, providing valuable enrollment and transfer information to approximately 75 students.
8. On April 4, 2024, Professor John D. Hammond led the 8th Annual Financial Literacy Conference, attracting approximately 200 students and staff and 6 speakers. Notably, one of the speakers was an ECC alumni.
9. ECCFA demonstrated its support for Essex County College's 55th Anniversary Scholarship Gala by purchasing 10 tickets, with 10 faculty members attending the event on April 9th, 2024, showcasing our commitment to the college's mission.
10. From April 12th to April 14th, 2024, approximately eight faculty members represented ECCFA at the NJEA Higher Education Conference & Collective Bargaining event held in Princeton, New Jersey. It was an opportunity to prepare for the upcoming negotiation.
11. Professors Jean-Wilner Alexandre and Stolberg attended the Essex County Education Association Legislative Action Team (ECEA LAT) reception on April 17th, 2024, providing an opportunity to engage with elected officials and discuss the challenges facing education in the state.
12. A trip to the Bloomberg Headquarters Office in New York took place on April 19th, 2024, with approximately 20 students accompanied by Dr. Alvin Williams, Professor John Hammond, and Dr. John Olotewo.

Two exemplary professors consistently participate in extracurricular and academic activities, as well as engage with the community. Their significant contributions to the college warrant a dedicated section in this report to highlight their impactful efforts.

**Professor Victor Stolberg from Counseling and newly elected Vice-President of ECCFA:**

1. completed a “Security Risk Management Essentials Certificate Program,” issued by DisasterReady.org
2. Publication: “Issues Between Addiction and Gender.” *International Journal of Psychiatry Research* 7(2): 1-3.
3. Organized and hosted “Meet and Greet II” for Faculty and Adjuncts, in cooperation with FDC and CLTE.
4. Organized and delivered an “Advisement Workshop” sponsored by FDC for Faculty and Adjuncts.
5. Organized and conducted a monthly “Counselors and Advisors Meeting.”
6. Attended talk by the Bloomfield Historical Society on the “Morris Canal.”
7. Attended day-long DEI Symposium at Caldwell University, for which he recruited a college-wide team (including Faculty from Divisions of Biology, Chemistry and Physics, Humanities and Bilingual Studies, Mathematics, Engineering, Technology, and Computer Science, and Social Sciences), to represent ECC at the request of Dean Alvin Williams.

**Dr. Akil Khalfani, Director - Africana Institute, Director - Center for Global Education and Experiences, Chair - Social Justice Council**

1. On April 4th, 2024, Dr. Khalfani hosted the inaugural Study Abroad Open House, aiming to introduce students to the myriad opportunities for learning while exploring the world.
2. Dr. Akil Khalfani participated in the Pre-Congress meeting for the 9th Pan African Congress held in Mali. He had the opportunity to meet and interact with the President of Mali, Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and dignitaries from around the world. The outcome of the meeting is attached, as well as some pictures and the letter from the Min. of Foreign Affairs. Dr. Khalfani is a member of the Scientific Committee that is helping to organize the 9th Pan African Congress in Togo later this year.
3. Dr. Akil Khalfani participated in the 3rd Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum for People of African Descent in Geneva, Switzerland on April 18, 2024 (virtually).

These activities highlight the dedication and commitment of our faculty members to advancing both their own professional development and the mission of Essex County College

Thank you for your attention.

End of the report

**PUBLIC COMMENTS****ECC Board of Trustee meeting, 4/23/2024**

Greetings, everyone,

I trust most of you had the opportunity to watch the solar eclipse earlier this month, right? It was quite an experience! For me it was the second solar eclipse I saw, the first being in 2017. There won't be another one visible from the United States until 2044 or 2045.

So, what else is new? Let's see... Today is the 29<sup>th</sup> anniversary of me winning the Essex County Chess Championship in 1995. I have been playing chess for longer than some people have been at Essex County College. Fifty years. That is how long. So with that type of experience, I daresay I know something about the game and what goes with it.

That being said, I now focus my attention on the unrest at colleges across America. These are student protests in favor of Palestinians and Hamas, the terrorist group that murdered 1200 innocent Israelis, and kidnapped another 250. I think we all read the Internet, newspapers, magazines, etc., so we are aware of the situation. My question is, how will the unrest affect ECC students? How will the administration and trustees deal with any possible pro-Palestinian protests that may arise? Look at Columbia University, Harvard, Yale. Is ECC prepared?

I recall the unrest during the Rodney King riots in 1992. ECC was ringed by security back then. There was tension in the air. Thank God the political and religious leaders of Newark managed to defuse the situation.

There is a May 1 demonstration planned in Newark, New Jersey, by various leftist groups. I have no idea how many people will participate. It could be from 300 to thousands. Is ECC prepared? We are lucky not to have students in tents on campus. Again, look at Columbia U, and other schools across America. Is ECC prepared?