



**Board of Trustees**

**PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

December 16, 2025 | 4:30 PM  
Smith Hall – Main Campus

**In Attendance**

- Dr. A. Lewis, Chair
- C. Martinez, Vice Chair
- I. Cruz
- B. Robinson
- J. Wright
- J. Zarra
- M. Townes, Board Counsel
- Dr. A. Boakye, President

**Excused**

- J. Grimes

**Call to Order/Roll Call**

Board of Trustees Chair, Dr. Lewis, called the meeting to order at 4:39 p.m. A quorum was achieved with 6 trustees in attendance.

**Open Public Meetings Act Announcement**

Trustee Martinez read the Open Public Meetings Act into the record. It reads as follows:

In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act of the State of New Jersey, adequate notice of this regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Essex County College was provided in the following manner: Advance written notice of this meeting was filed on December 3, 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 Martinez moved to approve the minutes from the November 18, 2025, meeting. Trustee Wright seconded. ***The minutes were approved unanimously.***

**Communications**

Trustee Martinez announced that there was no new communication.

Mr. Townes read the following three resolutions into the record:

**IN HONOR OF MARION A. BOLDEN FOR HER DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AS  
CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**WHEREAS, Marion A. Bolden**, a proud native of Newark and a distinguished alumna of South Side High School and Montclair State University, has dedicated her life to the advancement of public education and the betterment of the Essex County community; and

**WHEREAS, Ms. Bolden** brought over four decades of pedagogical and administrative expertise to the College, having served with distinction as a mathematics teacher, department chairperson, and for nine exemplary years as the Superintendent of Newark Public

Schools, where she championed high school reform and student achievement; and

**WHEREAS,** appointed to the Essex County College Board of Trustees in 2018 and elected as Board Chair in 2019, Ms. Bolden provided steady, visionary leadership during a pivotal era in the institution's history, navigating the College through the complexities of the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuring educational continuity; and

**WHEREAS,** during her tenure as Chair, Ms. Bolden oversaw significant institutional milestones, including the successful search and appointment of Dr. Augustine A. Boakye as President, the strategic expansion of the West Essex campus, and the strengthening of the College's financial and accreditation standing; and

**WHEREAS,** a passionate advocate for history and the arts, she has ensured the preservation of Newark's educational heritage through the Newark Public Schools Historical Preservation Committee and continues to inspire youth through the Dr. Marion A. Bolden Student Center.

**WHEREAS,** her tenure as Chair was characterized by an unwavering commitment to "Students First," integrity in governance, and a deep belief in the transformative power of the community college experience;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** that the Board of Trustees of Essex County College hereby expresses its profound gratitude and sincere appreciation to **Marion A. Bolden** for her outstanding leadership, tireless dedication, and invaluable contributions as Board Chair; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** that this Resolution be entered into the permanent minutes of the Board of Trustees, and a copy, suitable for framing, be presented to Ms. Bolden as a token of the College's enduring respect and esteem.

**IN HONOR OF FORMER TRUSTEE, THE LATE REVEREND LANEL D. GUYTON**

**WHEREAS,** **God** in His infinite wisdom called home the spirit of **Reverend, Dr. Lanell D. Guyton;** and

**WHEREAS,** Reverend Dr. Guyton, since 2017, served with distinction as a Trustee of Essex County College (Treasurer from 2018 to 2021), where he was a beloved friend, mentor, and steadfast advocate for students and the College community; and

**WHEREAS,** A devoted educator and spiritual leader, Reverend Guyton guided countless individuals through life's most challenging moments with compassion, wisdom, and grace; and,

**WHEREAS,** Reverend Dr. Guyton earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology from Richard Allen University, a Master's of Divinity at the Interdenominational Theological Center, and a Doctorate of Divinity at United Theological Seminary, and dedicated his life to service, scholarship, and faith; and

**WHEREAS,** He will be remembered for his infectious laughter, thoughtful counsel, and unwavering belief in the goodness of humanity.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Trustees, on behalf of the entire Essex County College family, extends its heartfelt condolences to the Guyton Family as they celebrate the life and enduring legacy of **Reverend Dr. Lanell D. Guyton**.

**IN HONOR OF FORMER TRUSTEE, THE LATE BISHOP REGINALD T. JACKSON**

**WHEREAS**, it is with profound sorrow and deepest sympathy that we acknowledge the passing of Bishop  
Reginald T. Jackson, longtime Chairman of the Essex County College Board of Trustees, who served this institution with distinction for 13 years, including 10 years as Board Chair; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2012, he was elected Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church's 20th Episcopal District and later served as the Ecumenical and Urban Affairs Officer of the AME Church; and

**WHEREAS**, Bishop Jackson faithfully served for 31 years as Pastor of St. Matthew AME Church in Orange, New Jersey, ministering to countless individuals and leaving a lasting spiritual and community legacy; and

**WHEREAS**, God has seen fit to call home the spirit of Bishop Reginald T. Jackson; and

**WHEREAS**, we take comfort in knowing that he has returned to the eternal home of our Heavenly Father; and

**WHEREAS**, we pray that his family, loved ones, and friends may find peace and strength in the assurance of his faith and salvation in Jesus Christ; and

**WHEREAS**, Bishop Jackson is survived by his two beloved children, Regina and Seth Jackson, and we join them in mourning their loss while honoring the cherished memories of a devoted father, leader, and servant of God;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, on behalf of the entire Essex County College family and community, that we extend our heartfelt condolences to the family of Bishop Reginald T. Jackson and express our deepest gratitude for his extraordinary service, leadership, and enduring legacy; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that a copy of this resolution be formally presented to his family as a symbol of our sympathy and our lasting appreciation for the life and service of Bishop Reginald T. Jackson.

Board Chair, Dr. Lewis, held a moment of silence for the late trustees.

**Public Comments on Agenda Items**

Mr. Lev Zilbermintz submitted his comments as a hard copy and read them into the record:

**LEV'S PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS**

Hello, everyone,

Another year gone by. Was it only yesterday that I stood here in December 2024 making a report to the Board of Trustees? How time flies!

Let me now talk about my comments.

**3-1.3/Dec.-2025:** I would again bring your attention to the fact that there are not enough electrical outlets in the Cafeteria. This means that students cannot recharge their cell phones, laptops, tablets, when they are studying for midterms or finals. Could you correct this problem? There used to be more outlets before renovations, but these have been covered up since then.

**Personnel Committee Report:** Congratulations to all those who have been appointed or reappointed to their positions. Also, congratulations to those receiving merit awards and supplements. You did a great job. Those retiring, thank you for your dedication and years of hard work at ECC. May you have a pleasant and happy retirement.

About time the Faculty Contract was ratified. It has been what, two years? That is even worse than the federal shutdown. Thank God that this matter has finally been taken care of. Maybe now faculty and administration can focus their joint efforts on other issues.

### Finance Committee Report

Trustee Zarra read the finance report into the record and requested that the trustees vote to approve the revised item 3-1.4, which was erroneously listed as being funded by the Securing Our Children's Future Bond Grant. The item in Resolution 3-1.4 is Chapter XII funded.

### Actions – Submitted for Recommendation for the Board's Approval

3-1.1/Dec-2025	Resolution Authorizing the Award of a One-Year Contract for the Purchase of Technical Equipment and Services <b>Johnston G.P. dba Johnston Communications and JCT Solutions,</b> Springfield, NJ Chapter XII Funded – Capital Expense	Amount not to exceed \$140,000.00
3-1.2/Dec-2025	Resolution Authorizing the Award of a Contract for the Class of 2026 Commencement <b>Devils Arena Entertainment LLC,</b> Newark, NJ College Funded – Operating Expense	Amount not to exceed \$160,000.00
3-1.3/Dec-2025	Resolution Authorizing the Award of a Change Order for Dining Hall Renovation <b>Rbuild LLC,</b> Bloomfield, NJ Chapter XII Funded – Capital Expense	Amount not to exceed \$160,000.00
3-1.4/Dec-2025	Resolution Authorizing the Award of a Change Order for Removal, Installation, and Fabrication of College Signs <b>American Woodcarving,</b> Wayne, NJ Chapter XII Funded – Capital Expense	Amount not to exceed \$60,000.00

***Trustee Zarra motioned for the approval of the Finance action. Trustee Wright moved for approval. Trustee Robinson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.***

### Personnel Committee Report

Trustee Robinson advised that the Personnel Committee met last week and recommended the approval of the following items:

### Actions – Recommended for the Board's Approval

**A. Appointment**

- 4-1/Dec-2025 Shanta Carter  
Instructor- Nursing  
Nursing and Health Sciences Division  
Effective Date: January 5, 2026  
Salary \$70,186
- 4-2/Dec-2025 Angela Pierce  
Instructor- Mathematics  
Mathematics, Engineering Technologies and Computer Science Division  
Effective Date: January 5, 2026  
Salary \$61,101
- 4-3/Dec-2025 Rhonda Hobson  
Instructor – Criminal Justice  
Social Sciences  
Effective Date: January 5, 2026  
Salary \$58,728
- 4-4/Dec-2025 Edwin Alcantara  
Lecturer – Nursing  
Nursing and Health Sciences Division  
Effective Date: January 5, 2026  
Salary \$61,101
- 4-5/Dec-2025 Maria Kleiner  
Administrative Assistant to the Dean of Faculty & Academics  
Academic Affairs  
Effective Date: January 5, 2026  
Salary \$42,000
- 4-6/Dec-2025 Logan Sellam  
Laboratory Specialist  
Mathematics, Engineering Technologies and Computer Science Division  
Effective Date: January 5, 2026  
Salary \$50,000
- 4-7/Dec-2025 Barbara Lewis  
Coordinator – Disability Services  
Student Affairs  
Effective Date: January 5, 2026  
Salary \$50,000
- 4-8/Dec-2025 David James  
Graphic Designer  
Institutional Advancement Area  
Effective Date: January 5, 2026  
Salary \$46,000
- 4-9/Dec-2025 Sonya Rodriguez Jimenez  
Administrative Assistant  
Enrollment Management & Services Area  
Effective Date: January 5, 2026  
Salary \$40,000

4-10/Dec-2025 Leilani Criado  
Print Shop Operator  
Auxiliary Services  
Effective Date: January 5, 2026  
Salary \$37,500

**B. Merit Awards – Support Staff**

4-11/ Dec-2025 Jonella Johnson  
Office Assistant  
Training Inc.  
Effective Date: December 22, 2025  
\$1,000 added to base

Deneen Anthony  
Office Assistant  
Pre-College Dual Enrollment  
Effective Date: December 22, 2025  
\$1,000 added to base

Dermont Smith  
Maintenance Tech  
Facilities Management  
Effective Date: December 22, 2025  
\$1,000 added to base

Manuel Padilla  
Lead Custodian  
Facilities Management  
Effective Date: December 22, 2025  
\$1,000 added to base

**C. Supplement**

4-12/Dec-2025 Jamel Green  
CFO/Senior Comptroller  
Comptroller’s Office  
Effective Date: November 01, 2025 – June 30, 2026  
\$10,000

**D. Retirement**

4-13/ Dec-2025 Celenia Esteves  
Custodian  
Facilities Management  
Effective Date: January 1, 2026

**E. Contract Ratification**

4-14/ Dec-2025 Essex County College Faculty Association

4-15/ Dec-2025 Essex County College Adjunct Faculty Federation

***Trustee Robinson motioned for the approval of the Personnel actions. Trustee Cruz moved, and Trustee Zarra seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously***

**Educational Programs Committee Report**

Trustee Dr. Lewis reported that the Educational Programs Committee met last week and recommended

approval of the following items.

- 7-1.1/Dec-2025      Articulation Agreement: Montclair State University (MSU)
- 7-1.2/Dec-2025      Articulation Agreement: New Jersey Prevention Network (NJPN)
- 7-1.3/Dec-2025      Memorandum of Understanding: Stockton University
- 7-1.4/Dec-2025      Acceptance of Funds: OSHE FY 26 Hunger-Free Campus Grant
- 7-1.5/Dec-2025      Acceptance of Funds: OSHE FY 26 Center for Adult Transition Grant

***Trustee Lewis motioned for a vote on the Educational Programs. Trustee Robinson moved the motion, and Trustee Martinez seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.***

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

Trustee Martinez reported that the Site, Facilities, and Equipment Committee did not convene last week and, therefore, had no actions to report. She added that during the Board's December 16<sup>th</sup> Executive Session, Dean Seddiki provided an update on the status of capital projects around the campus.

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

Trustee Cruz reported that the Policy and Governance Committee convened last week and reported the following actions.

#### **Actions – Submitted for Recommendation for the Board's Approval**

- 7-2.1/Dec-2025      Revised Board Policies: 1-1, 1-2, 1-2.1, 1-4, and 1-6
- 7-2.2/Dec-2025      Revised Board Policies: 2-1, 2-2, 2-4, and 2-12
- 7-2.3/Dec-2025      Revised Board Policies: 3-4, 3-5, 3-6, 3-8, 3-9, 3-10, 3-12, and 3-13

***Trustee Cruz motioned for a vote on the Policy and Governance actions. Trustee Robinson moved the motion, and Trustee Wright seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.***

#### **Community Relations Committee Report**

Trustee Wright stated that the Community Relations Committee did not meet and had no actions.

#### **Alumni Association Report**

The Alumni Association Report was read into the record by the Alumni Association President, Ms. Shelby Robinson. A copy of the report is attached as Appendix A.

#### **Student Government Association Report**

The Student Government Association Report was presented by the newly appointed SGA President, Mr. Jeri Johnson and the new Vice President, Ms. Metisha Monroe. The report is attached as Appendix B.

Dean Bello-Bryan reported that an emergency executive meeting of the SGA was held, during which a new president and vice president were elected and introduced at the meeting. She thanked Ms. Fancher for her service and leadership and expressed appreciation. She added that the SGA looks forward to the new leadership.

#### **Faculty Association Report**

The Faculty Association Report, submitted electronically to the Board of Trustees, was read into the record by Professor Alexandre and is attached as Appendix C.

### **President's Report**

The President's Report was submitted electronically to the Board of Trustees and read into the record by Dr. Augustine A. Boakye, President. It is attached as Appendix D.

### **New Business**

The board reported that there was no new business to discuss.

### **Public Comments**

Five people made public comments:

- Lynne Peterson Cummins, President of the Adjunct Faculty Federation, made public comments. She thanked the administrative team and the Board of Trustees for the negotiations that recently concluded, resulting in a new contract for the Adjunct Faculty Federation. She also thanked the Faculty Association and expressed appreciation to the Board for the three resolutions honoring former trustees Bolden, Reverend Jackson, and Reverend Guyton.
- Dean Leigh Bello-Bryan made public comments, reporting that the Student Affairs Department provided free food to students through donations and holiday food boxes, as well as gift cards. She noted that IMAC Insurance and ShopRite contributed to these efforts and thanked all donors. She also reported that Student Affairs assisted students with applying for SNAP benefits and hosted pop-up food events and food and clothing drives. Students collected winter items, created SpotFund accounts, and raised approximately \$1,200, with donations still being accepted.
- Maria Kleiner made public comments. She noted that she was approved as a new hire at the meeting and will begin her role as Administrative Assistant to Dr. Tooma in January. She thanked the Board of Trustees for the opportunity.
- Mr. Lev Zilbermintz submitted his comments as a hard copy and read them into the record. He also read a letter from AAPINJ titled "Teachers, Educators Say Pass the Immigrant Trust Act," urging Senate President Scutari and Assembly Speaker Coughlin to pass the Immigrant Trust Act (A4987/S3672). The Act would protect immigrant students and their families by limiting the sharing of immigration status information at sensitive locations such as schools and health facilities, and restricting local law enforcement interactions with federal immigration authorities. The letter noted that fear of federal immigration enforcement is negatively affecting students' education and well-being, with many children avoiding school, health services, or parent engagement due to concern over family separation. The educators emphasized that passing the Act would help maintain safe, supportive classrooms and uphold New Jersey's commitment to diversity, compassion, and equitable access to education.

Mr. Zilbermintz also submitted his own public comments as a hard copy and read them into the record as follows:

#### **LEV'S PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Hello, everyone,

Here are my public comments.

Oh yeah. This reminds me. In Spring 2026 whoever schedules SGA Forums should hold these in the Cafeteria Pit. Because holding these by the staircase to the third floor, next to the portraits of the Board of Trustees members is not a smart idea. When a politician wants to

be heard he/she goes to a crowded area, not a desert. And the Cafeteria always has an audience in it. My advice is, hold the SGA Forum there. Bet I could organize it better than whoever planned it.

After all, I served in student government at ECC, Bloomfield College and Rutgers Newark. So I know what works and what does not.

You say Students First? Prove it. Organize the SGA Forum better than you did this semester. Have a Happy Christmas and a Merry New Year.

Lev D. Zilbermints, '93

- Cynthia D. Fancher, former SGA President, made public comments. She offered farewell remarks, congratulated those present, and reflected on her service, noting that she previously provided reports as a senator before becoming president. She stated that she resigned from her position due to personal and external circumstances.

### **Notice of Executive Session**

Trustee Martinez 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 January 27, 2026, 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 Martinez motioned for a vote on the Notice of Executive Session. Trustee Robinson moved the motion, and Trustee Cruz seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.***

### **Adjournment**

Board Chair, Dr. Lewis, motioned to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 5:43 PM by a vote of acclamation.

**Essex County College  
Alumni Association**

## **Alumni Association Update**

**Submitted:** December 16, 2025

**Time:** 4:30 p.m.

**Submitted by:** Shelby Robinson

**Title:** President, Essex County College Alumni Association (ECCAA)

- Met with Dr. Boyake and College leadership on December 9, 2025, to align on the alumni vision and strengthen collaboration in support of institutional priorities and student success.
- Angel Tree Initiative currently underway to support children and families in need; program concludes on December 18, 2025.
- Alumni Mentorship Program in progress with alumni mentors enrolled, mentee recruitment ongoing, and implementation targeted for Spring 2026.
- General Assembly Membership Meeting scheduled for December 17, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom, to engage members and provide updates on Alumni Association initiatives.
- The Alumni Association remains focused on impact-driven initiatives that uplift students, support families, and strengthen engagement between Essex County College and its alumni community.

## **STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION REPORT Presented to the Board of Trustees**

**Date:** December 16, 2025

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This report provides an overview of significant Student Government Association (SGA) governance activities and leadership developments from November to December 2025. These events reflect SGA's ongoing commitment to effective student representation, transparency, and accountable leadership during a transitional period.

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### **SGA Board Meeting – November 11, 2025**

On November 11, 2025, a scheduled in-person meeting was held at 1:50 p.m. in the SGA Office, Dasher Center, Room 202. The meeting was attended by President Cynthia Fancher, Vice President Yamile Arcela Rivera, Secretary Daphnee Demervil, Treasurer Valerie Ramirez, Senator of Communications Jeri Johnson, Senator Metisha Monroe, and Senator Ininitae Stockton, who joined the meeting at 2:45 p.m. General members present included Oluwanajuolasimi Akinsola and Matthew Veloso, who arrived later.

Discussions focused on SGA's engagement during the holiday season, improving communication and visibility, and addressing student concerns such as cafeteria pricing. Vice President Yamile Rivera proposed organizing both formal and informal meetings to raise awareness of the SGA, alongside the creation of a holiday-themed sketch to engage the student body.

Additionally, board members discussed the importance of maintaining clear communication within the SGA and enhancing student participation. Secretary Daphnee Demervil emphasized the need for earlier communication about meetings and events, given the diverse schedules of members. Jeri Johnson raised ongoing concerns regarding cafeteria pricing, and members agreed that this would be addressed further in future meetings.

The board also addressed challenges with scheduling the upcoming General Board (GBD) meeting. After considering the availability of members, it was agreed that the GBD meeting would be scheduled for Tuesday, November 25, 2025, at 2:30 p.m., with all members committed to participation.

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### **Student Holiday Celebration Initiative**

On **December 10, 2025**, several student organizations collaborated to organize a holiday celebration for the student body, held at **Mary Burch Hall**, fostering engagement and community-building on campus. The event was hosted by President Cynthia Fancher, with Senator Jeri and Senator Metisha Monroe introducing themselves and providing an overview of

their respective roles within the Student Government Association. These introductions gave students a clearer understanding of SGA leadership, its responsibilities, and the ways in which the association serves as a resource and advocate for the student community.

The initiative highlighted the collaborative efforts of multiple campus organizations while reinforcing the SGA's commitment to fostering connection, inclusion, and active participation among students. The event successfully showcased leadership, promoted engagement, and strengthened the relationship between SGA and the broader student body.

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### **Emergency SGA Leadership Meeting – December 15, 2025**

On December 15, 2025, at 2:00 p.m., an emergency virtual meeting was convened at the request of Dean Bello to address the resignation of the SGA President and Vice President. The meeting was attended by Dean Bello, Mr. Graham, President Cynthia Fancher, Vice President Yamile Arcela Rivera, Secretary Daphnee Demervil, Treasurer Valerie Ramirez (who arrived late), Senator Metisha Monroe, Senator of Communications Jeri Johnson, and Senator of Grievances Infinitae Stockton.

During the meeting, both the SGA President and Vice President formally resigned, creating immediate vacancies within the executive leadership. Under administrative guidance, nominations were opened in accordance with the Student Government Association's constitution and established governance procedures. Jeri Johnson self-nominated for the Vice President position and nominated Senator Infinitae Stockton for President. Secretary Daphnee Demervil also nominated Senator Stockton for the presidency. Senator Metisha Monroe self-nominated for the Vice President position. A formal vote was conducted. Senator Stockton received the majority vote for President but respectfully declined the position. Consequently, the presidency was offered and accepted by Jeri Johnson, who is now the President of the SGA. Matisha Monroe was elected and accepted the position of Vice President.

Upon her arrival, Valerie Ramirez expressed interest in running for Vice President but was informed that the position had already been filled. She inquired about the timeline for future elections, and Dean Bello confirmed that the next elections would be held between May and July 2026.

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From November to December 2025, the Student Government Association experienced both routine and transitional moments in its governance structure. Through transparent communication, swift decision-making, and adherence to democratic processes, the SGA maintained operational stability. The leadership transition, while unforeseen, was conducted with a focus on ensuring continuity of service to the student body.

The SGA remains committed to empowering students, fostering collaboration, and upholding high standards of governance.

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**Respectfully submitted,**

Daphnee Demervil

Secretary, Student Government Association

Essex County College

**Essex County College Faculty Association (ECCFA)  
Memorandum**

**To:** Ms. Marion Bolden, Chair of the Essex County College Board of Trustees  
**From:** Jean-Wilner Alexandre, Associate Professor, ECCFA Representative to ECC Board of Trustees  
**Date:** Tuesday, December 17, 2024  
**Re:** December 2024 ECCFA Report to ECCBOT

**General Comments**

Good evening, members of the Board of Trustees, Dr. Augustine A. Boakye, Cabinet Members, and the entire College Community,

It is a privilege to address you once again on behalf of the faculty and the Essex County College Faculty and Administrators Association (ECCFAA). As we come to the close of another year, I am honored to present the ECCFAA December 2024 Report to the Board of Trustees.

This report reflects the unwavering commitment and collaborative efforts of our faculty in ensuring academic excellence, supporting student success, and contributing to the growth and vitality of our institution

**ECCFA Update**

**New Faculty**

ECCFAA would like to begin by warmly welcoming our new professors to our midst. We extend our gratitude to the Board for approving their appointments: Prof. Debashis Sarkar, Prof. Kristine Lo, Prof. Guerdie Nonez, Prof. Bergenie Celony, and Prof. Candice McEwan. We wish them great success in this institution, where faculty are family, and careers span many rewarding years.

**Contract Negotiation**

ECCFAA has scheduled the first negotiation meeting with the administration for January 16, 2025. I would like to clarify my earlier statement regarding the absence of a date for the faculty negotiation team and the administration negotiation team. What I meant was that we did not have a definitive date due to changes in the previously proposed schedule.

ECCFAA members Professor Victor Stolberg, Dr. Bridget Turner, and Professor Renita D. Mangru attended the Essex County Legislative Action Team (ECEA LAT) reception on Tuesday, December 3, 2024. This gathering is significant as it provides an opportunity for union members in Essex County to develop strong relationships with our elected officials who are supportive of education.

### **Dean William Retirement**

On Friday, December 6th, faculty from different departments joined staff and administrators at the retirement party. His contributions have been exceptional, making him not just one of the best, but the best.

### **Employee Recognition**

On December 10th, the College held its employee recognition event. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to all our faculty members who have reached exceptional milestones.

### **Member's Benefits Fair on Campus**

ECCFAA hosted a successful NJEA Members' Benefit Fair on December 10th, 2024. This event is particularly important as it provides members with valuable information about their membership benefits. The fair was well-received, and we have a tentative date for the next NJEA Members' Benefit Fair during the Spring 2025 Semester, scheduled for February 11th, 2025.

### **Other ECCFA Updates**

On December 11, 2024, Jean-Wilner Alexandre attended the ECCEA Rep Council meeting to represent the ECCFA Executive Board at the county level. During the meeting, he received all the updates from NJEA and shared them with the membership.

The college hosted the Holiday Tea for the college community on December 17, 2024, and it was well attended by faculty members despite the final exams.

On December 17th, ECCFAA held an Executive Meeting to prepare for the last general meeting that will be held on Thursday, December 19, 2024, and to plan the official reopening of the faculty lounge.

## **Africana Institute**

### **Dr. Akil Khalfani**

On December 5th, the Africana Institute, under the leadership of Dr. Akhil Khalfani, held a pre-Kwanzaa celebration titled “Celebrate the Spirit of Kwanzaa!” This event provided a wonderful opportunity for the college community to learn and celebrate the principles and traditions of Kwanzaa.

On December 5th, 11th, and 12th, the Africana Institute, under the leadership of Dr. Akhil Khalfani, hosted the African Marketplace where African products were displayed to the college community.

## **Business Division**

The ACBSP Self-Study Report was completed and submitted on December 15, 2024. The following faculty members were involved in the writing of this document: Professor Raquel Pernia, Dr. John Olotewo, Professor John D. Hammond, Professor Jean-Wilner Alexandre, and Professor Patrick Saint Fort, with great support from the Chair, Professor Germaine Albuquerque.

Special thanks to:

- The President’s Office for their invaluable support and editing assistance.
- The Office of IEPA and its Director, Dr. John Runfeldt, for his unwavering support.
- Public Safety for their continued assistance.

The Business Division hosted a Financial Literacy Seminar under the leadership of Professor John D. Hammond, the coordinator of the finance program, on November 26, 2024. These meetings are very important for the college community to learn how to manage their finances.

The Finance program launched the Portfolio Management Club on November 5th, led by Professor John D. Hammond. There will be important seminars in the months to come on different investment strategies.

On December 6, 2024, Professor Jean-Wilner Alexandre, Dr. John Olotewo, Professor Patrick St. Fort, and Professor John D. Hammond attended the NJCBAA Bright Ideas Award event on behalf of the Business Division.

## **Equal Opportunity Fund**

### **Professor India Calloway**

Professor India Calloway attended the Counselor Workshop at Montclair State University on Friday, December 6th, 2024.

### **Carmen Martinez-Castaneda, Lecturer/Counselor**

Professor Carmen Martinez-Castaneda attended the Counselor Workshop at Montclair State University on Friday, December 6th, 2024.

## **Social Science Department**

### **Dr. Bridget Turner**

Dr. Bridget Turner, the Education Coordinator, Academic Advisor, and Assistant Professor of Education, is recognized as one of the most active tenured track faculty members, and we are very proud of her contributions. Each month, she reports numerous extra academic activities beyond her regular responsibilities related to teaching, advising students, and attending committee meetings. The most significant of these activities are highlighted below.

1. Outreach and Marketing via emails and social media for CDA Program, Education Program, and NEW Autism Spectrum Disorders Instructional Certificate Program and Praxis Core Preparation Course (EDU 233).
2. Supported Education Major students and future CDA students at the Saturday CDA Symposium. Six students participated on Saturdays from 9 am to 11 am (Professional Portfolio Development, Early Childhood Resources and Information, Networking, and Professional Development).
3. Recruited Students and Potential Students interested in the CDA Saturday Symposium Sessions (Under the Perkins Grant) for Spring 2025.
4. Conference Presenter at the Mid-Atlantic Christian Schools Association-Abundant Life Academy in Nutley
5. Participated in training for CASA for Children of Essex County: Fostering Futures
6. Attended the NJEA Convention Nov. 6-9th.
7. Planned and attended the Autism Awareness Conference Advisory Board Monthly Meeting.
8. Future Teachers Club Fundraiser Raised 331.00 this month.
9. Attended NJEA Professional Development Meeting
10. CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) client support meeting (16-year-old girl) completing high school and need support transitioning to college.

### **Dr. Clare Kajura**

On November 8th, Dr. Kajura attended the Aging & Brain Health Alliance Community Stakeholders Meeting and Community Brain Health Salon Luncheon organized by the Community and University partners at Rutgers University, Newark's Aidekman Neuroscience Center at 197 University Avenue, Newark, NJ.

On November 14th, Dr. Kajura participated in the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) Hot Career's Forum where she presented and answered student questions on the Social Sciences Programs and related careers.

On November 21st Dr. Kajura and some of her students volunteered in the Newark Emergency Services for the family's Thanksgiving grocery distribution to members of the community.

### **Student Development and Counseling**

#### **Professor Victor B. Stolberg**

Professor Victor B. Stolberg's exceptional dedication and engagement have earned him a spot on the list of our most active faculty and counselors. His monthly activities consistently surpass his basic responsibilities, with over 10 notable contributions. We are immensely proud of his accomplishments. Below are some of the key highlights of his remarkable activities:

1. William Paterson University's Counselors Reception (11/18)
2. Outreach events including the Essex County Education Association (ECEA) Reception (11/7), as well as the NJEA's Annual Convention, including sessions such as "Curriculum Restoration & Repair for Higher Education (11/8)," "De-escalation Techniques (11/7)," and "Right Relationships: Lenape & Indigenous Studies & People in Curricula (11/)."
3. Meetings for the Faculty Contract Negotiation Team, ECC Faculty Association (ECCFA), ECCFA Executive Board, Board of Trustees, the Catalog Team, APAC, FDC, and Chairing a meeting of the Academic Standards Committee (11/14).
4. Honorlock Webinar: "Mitigate Test Anxiety (11/6)."
5. Chronicle of Higher Education Webinar on "How AI May Change Student Engagement (11/13)."
6. New Jersey Division on Civil Rights Webinars on "Words Matter: Navigating the Language of Diversity" and "Having Anti-Bias Discussions in Class (11/21)."
7. Udemy courses: "Breath Secrets" and "PowerPoint for Beginners (11/26)."
8. Medscape trainings, including "Diabetes," "Epilepsy," "Mental Health," and "Schizophrenia (11/5-19),"
9. Accompanied students on field trip to Bloomberg Headquarters and led mini-tour to the National American Indian Museum/Smithsonian Institution (11/15).

## **Vision Care Technology**

### **Professor Renita D. Mangru**

On November 12, Professor Renita D. Mangru attended the Essex County Education Association (ECEA) Legislative Action Team Reception, which took place on November 7 along with other colleagues.

### **Concluding Remark**

Our faculty members are working very hard to finalize grades and ensure they are posted by the exact deadline.

Those faculty members who serve as faculty advisors to clubs are also working diligently to help students conclude the year and semester with great end-of-year parties. For instance, ALPFA is hosting a fantastic party in West Essex, and the Haitian Students Association will hold their celebration on Friday here at the Dasher Center.

Finally, The Essex County College Faculty Association (ECCFA) extends warm holiday wishes to the Board of Trustees, the President and their Cabinet, and the entire college community.

**End of Report**

## Memorandum

**To:** Dr. Lewis & the Board of Trustees  
**From:** Dr. Augustine A. Boakye, *President, Essex County College*  
**Date:** December 16, 2025  
**Re:** President's Monthly Report

### General:

Our Fall 2025 term ends on December 22<sup>nd</sup>. We served 7,673 degree-seeking students enrolled in 75,450 credit hours this semester, outperforming Fall 2024 in both categories.

Our Human Resources staff, in collaboration with the campus community, organized our 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Employee Recognition Ceremony on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, honoring those who have served the College from 5 to 55 years. The highlights included:

- Prof. Frank Duroy - 55 Years of Service
- Prof. Maria Bruan - 50 Years of Service
- Dr. Keith Kirkland - 40 Years of Service
- Dr. Eunice Kamunge - 35 Years of Service
- Mr. Lawal Laguda - 35 Years of Service

### Academics / Enrollment

- Our 2025-2026 Winter Intersession runs from December 23<sup>rd</sup> to January 8<sup>th</sup>.
- The Welcome Center will remain open to support Winter Intersession and prospective students.
- Our Student Affairs office will also provide tutoring services for students participating in our Winter Intersession.
- The College will close from December 24<sup>th</sup> to January 2<sup>nd</sup>. We will resume normal operations on January 5<sup>th</sup>.
- Spring 2026 classes begin on Monday, January 12<sup>th</sup>.

### Student Affairs

- Our Student Affairs Office presented its “re-engagement pilot project” success stories at the ReUp *Some College No Degree* convention on December 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Our Student Affairs office distributed Thanksgiving food items to more than 100 students at the Newark and West Essex campuses from donations provided by the Community Food Bank of New Jersey and ShopRite.
- The November 4<sup>th</sup> Transfer Fair for graduating students attracted 22 colleges and universities from New Jersey, New York and Delaware.

### The President's October/November Engagements have included:

- November 20<sup>th</sup>: Held an exploratory partnership meeting with Visions Federal Credit Union.

- November 21<sup>st</sup>: Launched the ECC AI initiative with a keynote address by Dr. Marie Pryor, leader of the Microsoft TechSpark initiative at the New Jersey AI hub.
- November 21<sup>st</sup>: Held an exploratory partnership with United Airlines.
- November 25<sup>th</sup>: Held an exploratory partnership meeting with Mercury LLC.
- December 2<sup>nd</sup>: Participated in our 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Employee Recognition event.
- December 3<sup>rd</sup>: Participated in the JED Workshop, Creating a Community of Care, organized by our Student Affairs office.
- December 4<sup>th</sup>: Participated in the Business Division’s First Year Experience course training for faculty.
- December 4<sup>th</sup>: Held an exploratory partnership meeting with Ari Fox at Audible.
- December 5<sup>th</sup>: Attended the President’s meeting on Workforce Consortium Governance at Middlesex College.
- December 8<sup>th</sup>: Attended the President’s Council Executive Board meeting.
- December 8<sup>th</sup>: Participated in the annual ECC Tree Lighting ceremony organized by our Student Affairs office.
- December 9<sup>th</sup>: Met with the ECC Alumni Association leadership.
- December 9<sup>th</sup>: Participated in the Newark Anchor Collaborative meeting.
- December 9<sup>th</sup>: Attended the Business Division’s Annual End-of-Year celebration.
- December 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>: Attended the Middle States Commission on Higher Education conference in Philadelphia. PA.

**Finances**

- Our General Ledger team, the Deputy Comptroller and Ms. Perkins are fully engaged with PKF auditors.

**Projects:**

- The Center for Technology renovation project is ahead of schedule. Currently focused on interior work, including electrical, plumbing, HVAC systems and painting.
- Renovation of the 2nd-floor corridors is underway and is expected to be completed before the start of the Spring semester.

I thank the College community and our Board of Trustees for your commitment to student success and wish you a restful and safe winter break.

**Join us on:**

- December 18, 2025 - President’s Annual Employee Tea.
- May 26, 2026 – Commencement at the Prudential Center.

**[Mr. Chair, this ends my report. Thank you.](#)**