

 **President's Report**

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TO: Atlantic Cape Community College Board of Trustees  
FROM: Dr. Barbara Gaba  
DATE: October 24, 2023  
(Worthington Atlantic City Campus)

### **University Partnerships**

- Atlantic Cape and Stockton University held a signing ceremony at Atlantic Cape's Mays Landing Campus for our *3+1 program in Liberal Studies* on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Under this agreement, Atlantic Cape students will earn an Associate in Science Degree in Advanced and Continuous Studies, remain enrolled at Atlantic Cape for the Junior year, and then transfer up to 90 credits to Stockton University, where they will complete their Senior year and graduate with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Liberal Studies. This will allow students to complete three years at Atlantic Cape's affordable tuition rate.

### **Community Outreach – Atlantic County**

- *Hispanic Heritage Month* celebrations continued in the community with Atlantic Cape and the Inlet Community Development Corporation (CDC) sponsoring the *Atlantic City Latino Festival* presented by the Hispanic Association of Atlantic County (HAAC). The event was held at Showboat Convention Center in Atlantic City on September 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. Atlantic Cape's Community Outreach and Recruitment teams were on site and hosted an information booth.
- The Inlet CDC hosted an *Inlet Neighborhood Public Meeting* on October 12<sup>th</sup> where neighborhood residents had the opportunity to learn about available grant opportunities for Inlet homeowners and business owners through the Inlet CDC homeowners buying program.

- Atlantic Cape and the Inlet CDC hosted their first annual *Pumpkin Patch Festival* in the Inlet section of Atlantic City in partnership with the Absecon Lighthouse and the Oceanside Family Success Center on October 13<sup>th</sup>. This event was free and open to the neighborhood residents.
- Atlantic Cape partnered with the Midtown CDC to present a *Halloween Movie Night* on our Worthington Atlantic City Campus for the community in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward neighborhood of Atlantic City on October 23<sup>rd</sup>. The Atlantic County Council of Education Associations and the Atlantic Cape Community College Education Association sponsored refreshments for attendees.

### **Community Engagement – Cape May County**

- The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce awarded the *2023 Community Betterment Award* to the Cape May County Campus at Atlantic Cape Community College at their Annual Meeting and Installation Dinner on October 18<sup>th</sup>.

### **Cape May County bizHub**

- In September the bizHub hosted an Introduction to Business Ownership class; the start of the *Small Business Seminar Series*, offered free to local businesses. Future seminars will include Target Market and Marketing Plan Development; Starting Up, Registering, and Running a Business; and Financial Resources and Small Business Lending.

### **Cape May County Zoo Education Program**

- Construction at the Cape May County Campus for the Zoo Education Program is ongoing with completion expected by February 2024.

### **Atlantic Cape Speaker Series**

- The Atlantic Cape Speaker Series proudly hosted Stedman Graham, best-selling author, business advisor, and chairman & CEO of S. Graham and Associates, who gave a talk about identity leadership at the Cape May County Campus on

September 26<sup>th</sup>. This event was sponsored by the Atlantic Cape Foundation and the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce.

- The Speaker Series also featured bestselling author Weina Dai Randel on October 3, 2023 in the Walter Edge Theater on the Mays Landing Campus. Dai Randel spoke of her upbringing, her writing style and purpose while also discussing her two latest novels. This event was also sponsored by the Atlantic Cape Foundation.

### **Opportunities for International Students**

- Atlantic Cape Community College is now a *Language Learning School*, recognized by the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP). Two paths for international F1 visa holders are offered: the ESL Certificate and the ESL Pathway Program. With these opportunities, Atlantic Cape is laying a solid foundation for an international student's journey to higher education and success toward their associate degree.
- The ESL course offerings are going to support and enhance our degree seeking international students' experience at Atlantic Cape. Aside from becoming a *Language Learning School*, Atlantic Cape now accepts Duolingo English test scores along with IELTS and TOEFL scores, giving students an additional opportunity to qualify as an Atlantic Cape international student. With these added opportunities within Atlantic Cape, our international registrations will continue to grow.

### **Recruitment**

- Atlantic Cape participated in the Egg Harbor Township School District's *EHT Pride Day* on September 30th. This event serves to highlight all of the services that Egg Harbor Township Schools have to offer. Many sports teams, clubs, and groups from the high school, middle schools, and elementary schools attend this phenomenal event in order to showcase opportunities and attract more members. The college hosted an informational college booth.

## Student Engagement

- Dr. Gaba held *Pizza with the President* on the Mays Landing and Worthington Atlantic City campuses in October. Each event was well attended with over 40 students who spoke with Dr. Gaba about their experiences at the college. After the Atlantic City event, Dr. Gaba met with *the Cross-Cultural Student Association* to place a dedication plaque in front of the rose garden that the club donated to the college. *Pizza with the President* at the Cape May County Campus will be held in November.
- Student Engagement celebrated *Mental Health Awareness Day* on our Mays Landing Campus with an array of mental health resources from our local community partners for students on October 10<sup>th</sup>. *World Mental Health Day* is an international day for global mental health education, awareness, and advocacy against social stigma.
- Student Engagement closed out a month-long celebration of *Hispanic Heritage Month* with vibrant and meaningful events dedicated to showcasing and cherishing our diverse community on our Atlantic City and Mays Landing campuses. Events included panel discussions, movie screenings such as *Zoot Suit* for virtual viewing, in-person movie matinee *West Side Story II*, and nachos and mock margaritas provided by Rutgers at Atlantic Cape.
- Student Engagement observed *Domestic Violence Awareness Month* with an abundance of information and resources for our students. An Information Day occurred on October 17<sup>th</sup> at the Student Success Center on our Mays Landing Campus in partnership with Avanzar, previously the Women's Shelter.
- The *Turn the Campus Pink Breast Cancer Awareness* event was held on October 19<sup>th</sup>. Students, faculty and staff were invited to dress in pink and meet on the Quad for the Pink Ribbon aerial picture. This was more than a colorful gathering; it was a moment to reflect, support, and push forward the message of awareness and early detection.

## Athletics

### *Baseball Field Update*

- Dr. Gaba, Dominic Sambucci, and Dr. Natalie Devonish presented to the Atlantic County Commissioners regarding the reallocation of Chapter 12 funds to support the college's plan for a baseball field on the Mays Landing Campus. The Commissioners approved the project change request.

### *Buccaneer Madness Event*

- The Athletics Department hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual *Buccaneer Madness* event, featuring a Student vs. Faculty basketball game on our Mays Landing Campus on September 28<sup>th</sup>. Students and faculty joined to celebrate and acknowledge our student athletes.

### *Soccer*

- Atlantic Cape's Men's Soccer played against Bergen County College on October 5<sup>th</sup>. This was the first men's soccer home game being held on the Mays Landing Campus since 2012.

## Grants

- Atlantic Cape was awarded a supplemental EOF FY24 Special Project grant of \$131,785 by the NJ Office of the Secretary of Higher Education for the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) Technology Support Program.
- In June, the New Jersey Council of County Colleges (NJCCC) was awarded a \$200,000 grant from Achieving the Dream (ATD) and Jobs for the Future (JFF) entitled the *Improving Economic Mobility for Adult Learners Initiative*. Three community college partners were selected to receive subawards of \$50,000 each – Atlantic Cape, Hudson County College, and Union College. Atlantic Cape will use the funds for initiatives to engage adult learners with the goals of increasing enrollment, retention, student satisfaction, and applications for Prior Learning Assessment (PLA).

## Speaking Engagements in the Community

- Dr. Gaba was featured as a guest on *In the Community with Thelma Witherspoon*, a radio show on WEHA. Dr. Gaba spoke about the college, focusing on affordability, flexibility, convenience, and community engagement.

## Student Success Stories

- Academy of Culinary Arts freshmen baking and pastry students **Isabella Burke** and **Grace Carpenter** captured first place honors at the inaugural MRE (Meals Ready to Eat) Culinary Challenge held at the Mays Landing campus kitchens on October 6<sup>th</sup>. The competition featured 6 teams who had 60 minutes to prepare an entree and either an appetizer or dessert using MRE (Meals Ready to Eat), a self-contained complete meal designed to withstand rough conditions and exposure to the elements. Burke and Carpenter will travel for one day with the *Let's Chow Food Truck* that teaches students about mobile food operations where they will be able to take it wherever they wish.

## Trustee Spotlights

- **Trustee Flora Castillo** met with US Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg and has been named the national *Advisory Committee on Transportation Equity*, which will provide recommendations to the Secretary of Transportation on comprehensive, interdisciplinary issues related to transportation equity from a variety of stakeholders involved in transportation planning, design, research, policy, and advocacy in pursuit of the Department's equity goals.
- Trustee Dave Coskey and his wife Monica Coskey will be honored by the Garden State Council Boy Scouts of America's *Cape May County Distinguished Citizen of the Year Reception* on November 1<sup>st</sup>. The Mullock Family, longtime partners of the Atlantic Cape Foundation, will also be honored.

## Board Development

- **Dr. Gaba, Trustee Ellen Byrne, and Trustee Flora Castillo** attended the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) Leadership Congress in October. Dr. Gaba and Trustee Byrne made a presentation on the college's

work in the Inlet neighborhood of Atlantic City entitled, *Leveraging Private, Public, and Community Partnerships: Transforming the Inlet Neighborhood of Atlantic City*. Dr. Gaba and Trustee Byrne were also featured on a panel entitled, *Why Hold a Board Retreat?*.

### **Faculty and Staff Spotlight**

- **Krista Fitzsimons, Director of the Cape May County Campus and Community Outreach**, was appointed to the Board of Directors of the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce.