

 **President's Report**

TO: Atlantic Cape Community College Board of Trustees
FROM: Dr. Barbara Gaba
DATE: March 22, 2022
(Worthington Atlantic City Campus)

COVID-19 Update

- In keeping with state COVID-19 guidelines, revised CDC guidelines, and the downward trend of positive cases college-wide and throughout the state, our mask and testing requirements were changed beginning Monday, March 21.
- Indoor masking became optional on all campuses for all individuals except in the following cases:
 - Nursing students and faculty in clinical settings, nursing classrooms, and laboratories must continue to wear a mask;
 - Individuals exposed to someone with COVID-19;
 - Individuals instructed to wear a mask by a healthcare provider;
 - Individuals feeling ill with upper respiratory symptoms.
- Also, as of March 21, testing is no longer mandatory for unvaccinated students, faculty, or staff. However, Atlantic Cape will continue to offer free COVID-19 testing at all three of our campuses.

NJ STEM Month “Collaboration of the Year” Award

- To kickoff NJ STEM Month (recognized in March), the New Jersey STEM Pathways Network and the Research & Development Council of New Jersey held *NJ STEM Month Awards* on Friday, February 25th. Atlantic Cape was recognized in the “STEM Collaboration of the Year”, awarded to Atlantic Cape and our partners at Atlantic City High School, Mindbytes, the NJ Department of Community Affairs, South Jersey Industries, & South Jersey STEM and

Innovation Partnership (SJSIP) won the award for creating an apprenticeship pathway in Cybersecurity.

Senate Appropriations Funding

- In May 2021, the college applied for FY2022 Senate Appropriations funding through Senator Booker and Senator Menendez's offices. Atlantic Cape was awarded \$211,000 for the Cape May County BizHub. The award will fund a full-time director to oversee operations and build capacity, as well as other personnel, supplies, and capacity-building activities for the Cape May County BizHub.
- The purpose of the BizHub is to create jobs by supporting entrepreneurs in starting and sustaining their own businesses, and the director will meet the business development and resource needs of Cape May County's entrepreneurial community. The BizHub has been in development for over two years, and, after extensive feasibility research and needs assessments, is ready to scale up to full service operation.
- Atlantic Cape was one of only three community colleges that were awarded funding through this appropriation.
- Additionally, the PELL maximum has increased by \$400 to \$6,895, the largest Pell increase in a decade; and funding for Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) increased by \$34 million to \$183 million.

Government Relations

- Dr. Gaba attended the press conference of Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin highlighting the *NJ College Affordability Act (NJCAA)* tax savings programs. Part of a larger public awareness campaign, the programs are significant for affordable access to college and provide meaningful incentives to encourage New Jersey students to stay in the state. Speaker Coughlin was joined by Mila Jasey, Assembly Higher Education Committee Chair, co-sponsor of the bill; and David Socolow, HESAA Executive Director. The event was hosted by Dr. Kathryn Foster, President of The College of New Jersey (TCNJ).

New Jersey Pathways to Career Opportunities Initiative

- Atlantic Cape has been awarded \$19,048 from the New Jersey Community College Consortium for Workforce and Economic Development for the college's participation in the planning phase of the *New Jersey Pathways to Career Opportunities* initiative. Atlantic Cape will participate in the Centers of Workforce Innovation focusing on Patient Care and Renewable Energy.
- The *NJ Pathways to Career Opportunities* initiative is an education and training pathways initiative that will innovate the state's workforce for residents, businesses, and the state economy for years to come. The ten Centers of Workforce Innovation of this initiative will develop new curriculum and strengthen existing education and workforce training pathways aligned with the needs of employers to build an innovative workforce.
- Partnering with the NJ Business and Industry Association (NJBIA), they will coordinate the participation of employers, industry associations, labor unions, education institutions, and workforce partners to provide students and workers the career pathways they need to find new career opportunities, while also ensuring that employers have access to a highly skilled workforce to meet critical labor market needs.

Wind Training Center

- Construction to the Wind Training Center on the Worthington Atlantic City Campus began on March 1st with completion scheduled for August. The asphalt has been removed from the parking lot, the footings are complete, and the foundation walls are being formed for concrete to be poured.

Community Relations

- Atlantic Cape again hosted the Mexican Consulate of Philadelphia at the Worthington Atlantic City Campus on February 26-27. More than 300 local residents from Atlantic and Cape May County were able to obtain consular identifications, passports, as well as birth certificates. This is the second year that Atlantic Cape has hosted this event in partnership with the Mexican government as a service to our community. A college information table was

available, and information regarding free training opportunities available through the Atlantic City Works Training Program, ESL, and CCOG was shared.

- Victor Moreno, Senior Manager of Campus Operations and Community Outreach, has been invited to join the Jewish Family Services (JFS) Community Advisory Board. Moreno will represent Atlantic Cape and will join other Community Advisory members including the Police Chief of Atlantic City and Pleasantville, Alex Marino from Stockton University, and Samantha Kiley from AtlantiCare. The goal of the committee is to make recommendations to the Board of Directors, the Governance Committee, and Chief Executive Officer; as such, the committee will help the agency be more responsive to the needs of the surrounding community. This is also a continuation of the existing partnership between Atlantic Cape and Jewish Family Services (JFS).

Cape May County Campus

- Cape May County Clerk Rita Rothberg gave a presentation, *“The Vote Is Our Voice: Cape May County and Suffrage”*, at the Cape May County Campus on International Women’s Day (March 8). Mrs. Rothberg, an alumna of Atlantic Cape, was elected County Clerk in 2005.
- Mrs. Rothberg’s presentation focused on the suffrage movement in Cape May County. She also summarized new changes for voters in the 2022 election cycle.
- Mrs. Rothberg’s presentation was one of many events celebrating Women’s History Month, and the event served as the kick-off event for the Smithsonian Institute's *Voices and Votes* lectures and exhibit.
- Atlantic Cape received a grant of \$4,000 from the New Jersey Council of the Humanities as part of the *Conversations in Democracy Project*. The Mays Landing Campus will be the site of an exhibit from the Smithsonian Institute about the history of voting in the US. The exhibit will be installed in July 2022.

Achieving the Dream (ATD)

- Dr. Jean Hernandez, the college’s ATD Coach, visited the college on March 10-11 and provided professional development for the Student Success Committee

and the Student Services staff, highlighting guided pathways best practices and providing a framework for a student success plan. This professional development opportunity was funded through the Opportunity Meets Innovation Challenge (OMIC) Grant.

- Twelve faculty and staff attended the annual ATD DREAM conference. Dr. Josette Katz and Dr. O'Brien-McMasters presented a pre-conference workshop, *“Reimagining Access Strategies that Stabilize Enrollment and Provide a Pathway through Higher Education for Minoritized and Underserved Populations”*.
- Also, as reported last month, the college has been recertified by ATD as a *Leader College* for a three-year term.

Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) REACH Awards

- Atlantic Cape has achieved a REACH award for the second year in a row from Phi Theta Kappa (PTK), the official and only honor society for two-year colleges. The REACH Rewards Program celebrates PTK chapters excelling in membership development, achieving or exceeding 15 percent for their membership acceptance rate. Thank you to Professor Stephanie Natale-Boianelli, the faculty advisor for this student organization.

Student Accomplishments

Jack Kent Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship Semifinalist

- PTK president and honors program student Madelyn Sacco was announced as a semifinalist for the highly competitive *Jack Kent Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship*. This year's 440 semifinalists were chosen from a pool of more than 1,200 applicants attending 180 community colleges in 35 states. The Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship recipients will be announced by early May.

Men's Basketball Team

- Basketball players David Coit and Richard Jones made the 2021-2022 Region 19 All-Region Basketball *First Team*, the top honor of the region awarded to

only five athletes, for their exceptional athleticism on the court, and Coit was named Region 19 Player of the Year for Men's Basketball and is the top scorer of all players in the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) for Division III Men's Basketball (see Resolution #77).

- Coit and Jones, both business majors, will receive scholarships to Division I universities this Fall, with Coit already committed to Northern Illinois University and Jones graduating from Atlantic Cape in May, receiving several scholarship offers.
- The Buccaneers' Men's Basketball Team has had an exceptional season, ending the regular season with an overall 18-6 record and tying with Brookdale Community College for Garden State Athletic Conference Champions for Division III community colleges with a 15-3 record.