

President's Report

TO: Atlantic Cape Community College Board of Trustees
FROM: Dr. Barbara Gaba
DATE: May 20, 2025
(Cape May County Campus)



Inlet Development Community Corporation

- For the second year, the Inlet Development Community Corporation (CDC) received another \$950,000 donation from Ocean Casino Resort through the Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit (NRTC) Program of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs. The check presentation occurred at Ocean Casino in Atlantic City, with leadership from Atlantic Cape Community College, Inlet CDC, and Ocean in attendance.

Advocacy to Our State Legislators

- Staff and students accompanied Dr. Gaba to Trenton for the **Budget Hearing of the Senate Higher Education Committee** to make the case for restoring \$20 million in operating aid to community colleges. In addition, the advocacy campaign also focused on cuts to financial aid (CCOG, summer TAG, Student Success Incentive Funds, and other programs (Hunger Free Campus, Centers for Adult Transition, etc.).
- Dr. Gaba was accompanied by students **Juwan Torres, the President of the Student Government Association (SGA), Michael Heston, the Vice President of the SGA, and Charlene Maycott**, at Senator Polistina's office about their experience at Atlantic Cape. The students shared their inspiring stories with

Senator Polistina in support of restoring \$20 million in operating aid for community colleges in the Governor's FY26 budget.

Staff Spotlight

- **Tasha Rivera, the Director of One-Stop Enrollment and Recruitment**, is one of only ten recipients of the highly competitive Conner Scholarship awarded by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO). Each year, this scholarship attracts around 18,000 applicants. The scholarship will enable her to attend and participate in AACRAO's annual meeting, providing essential opportunities for learning, professional development, and collaboration with other colleges and universities that support institutional goals and enhance student success.



- Atlantic Cape was a sponsor of the MBCA's Annual Scholarship Luncheon, whose mission is to support graduating high school seniors who are the future of Atlantic City and Atlantic County with their educational goals. **Alexandra Ditzel** from the Atlantic County Institute of Technology, ACIT, is the Atlantic Cape scholarship recipient and will be joining Atlantic Cape this fall, and plans on joining our Women's Volleyball Team.
- The Center for Student Success (CSS) presented awards to graduating students for their outstanding academic achievements, as well as faculty and staff members for their unsung dedication this school year during the *Annual Graduate Awards Ceremony* on May 2 in the Walter E. Edge Theater on the Mays Landing campus. Over 265 students were recognized for their successes at this year's event.

The Class of 2025 kicked off the graduation season with a festive *Graduation Fair* on May 1 at the Mays Landing campus. Inside the Student Center, students picked up caps and gowns, decorated their headpieces, posed for

photos, connected with college departments, explored transfer opportunities with schools like Stockton and Rutgers. The day ended on a high note with a Graduation Toast, as students raised their glasses to celebrate their achievements.

- Atlantic Cape's Men of Atlantic Cape (MAC) celebrated the academic and personal achievements of five student members and two mentors during its *Annual Jacket Presentation Ceremony* on May 7 at the Mays Landing campus. Congratulations to students **Alex Barr, Christopher Cruz, Jayden Mixson, Thomas Nguyen, and Isaiah Watson**, along with mentors **Emanuel Neil and Erick Wilson**.
- Four students from the Hospitality Management Program at Atlantic Cape received scholarships from the New Jersey Casino Reinvestment Development Authority Foundation (CRDAF) and the Greater Atlantic City Concierge Association (GACCA). The scholarships, awarded to sophomores **Lilly Guest, Charlotte Johnner, Clive Morgan, and Renata Riesenber**g, will help cover their tuition and other expenses at Atlantic Cape.
- The Student Government Association (SGA) hosted the annual *Club Recognition Celebration* on May 8. This year's theme, "Night at the Museum," featured creative displays showcasing each club's accomplishments and celebrated the spirit of student engagement and involvement on campus. Dr. Katz and Dean Zacharoff delivered featured remarks, recognizing the impact of student leadership and participation throughout the year.
- Atlantic Cape students and staff, including **Dr. Gaba, Dr. Devonish, Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, and Victor Moreno, Student Affairs Project and Operations Lead**, attended the *Community College Student Leadership Summit* on April 25 at Brookdale Community College, hosted by the New Jersey Council of County Colleges (NJCCC). Student leaders represented the Student Government Association, Phi Theta Kappa, athletics, Student Support Services, and the Educational Opportunity Fund.
- The Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) Program celebrated the *EOF Statewide Graduate Achievement Award Ceremony*, where 41 EOF graduates

from Atlantic Cape were recognized for earning a GPA of 3.2 or higher on April 17. Award qualifications included academic performance, leadership involvement, community service, and overcoming personal challenges. The Secretary of Higher Education honored the graduates during the New Jersey Graduate Award Ceremony.



Partnership with Give Something Back

- Atlantic Cape has partnered with *Give Something Back*, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping students attend and complete college without the burden of debt. This program offers full scholarships that cover 100% of tuition at partner colleges and universities. However, it provides more than just financial assistance. Students also benefit from long-term mentorship, life skills training, and personalized guidance that begins in high school and continues throughout their college experience. *Give Something Back* establishes a strong support system that helps students navigate their college journey and build a future they can be proud of.

Community Outreach – Atlantic County

- Atlantic Cape's Atlantic City Campus Community Outreach Department, in partnership with the Oceanside I Family Success Center, hosted the *All Hands-on Health: Mind & Body Resource Fair* on April 23. Over 300 community members were in attendance, and guests enjoyed free health screenings, cooking demos, access to mental health and insurance resources, fresh produce, food, drinks, and much more.

Community Outreach – Cape May

- **Krista McConnell, Director of the Cape May County Campus and Community Outreach**, attended the Superior Courts Resource Fair on May 7. This event

was designed for Drug Court participants and industry professionals. During the fair, she provided information about Atlantic Cape and the various resources available in Cape May County, particularly emphasizing our Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor (CADC) Program.

- The Cape May County campus hosted its “Out of This World” stargazing event on April 29, attracting over 50 attendees. The event included an interactive solar system demonstration, outdoor telescopic observations of celestial bodies in the universe, and a presentation by Atlantic Cape Professor David Jungblut.
- The Academy of Culinary Arts hosted a table at the *Feasting on History Gala* at the Wildwood Aviation Museum on May 6. Under the leadership of **Chef Joe Sheridan, Director of the Academy of Culinary Arts**, guests enjoyed a signature dish that the Academy prepared.

Cape May County bizHub

- **Chris Stenger, the Director of the Cape May County bizHub**, attended the Lower Township Chamber of Commerce’s Business to the Community Night at the Naval Air Station Wildwood Aviation Museum on April 29. At the event, Chris hosted an information table highlighting the unique services offered by the Cape May County bizHub for business owners and entrepreneurs at our Cape May County campus.

Center for Accessibility

- In honor of *Autism Acceptance Month*, the Center for Accessibility (CFA) hosted a vibrant “Bubbles for Autism” event celebrating neurodiversity on all three campuses. Students and staff wore red and blew bubbles, symbols of joy, hope, and connection, to promote acceptance and raise awareness for individuals on the autism spectrum. The event was held in partnership with local organizations such as Connecting the Dots and Faces for Autism.

Athletics

- **Anthony Young**, a 37-year-old at Atlantic Cape Community College, is a unique addition to the college's baseball team as its oldest player. Known for his boxing nickname "Juice," Young has an impressive boxing record of 23-3 and was once ranked in the top 12 welterweights after a notable victory over former WBO champion **Sadam Ali** in 2019. After a pause in his boxing career, he decided to join the recently revived Atlantic Cape baseball program, aiming to earn credits for a coaching career while reigniting his passion for the sport he played in his youth.
- Atlantic Cape Archery participated in the *2025 Eastern Regional Collegiate Championships* held at James Madison University on April 25–26. In the men's recurve division, **Dan Luna** secured 10th place, while **Juno Gregory** finished in 16th. In the women's recurve division, **Madison Ventura** achieved 10th place, with **Kat Smith**, **Cecilia Yang**, and **Gianna Tanner** finishing in 14th, 15th, and 16th places, respectively.
- Atlantic Cape Esports partnered with the GSE to host a High School Smash Tournament on May 3, welcoming 60–70 esports players from Atlantic and Cape May Counties. The event also featured campus tours and information tables from various departments and clubs, offering students a glimpse into college life.
- The *Annual Buccaneers Athletics Banquet* was held at Harbor Pines Country Club on May 9. Student-athletes were honored for their accomplishments during the 2024–2025 season. The event welcomed approximately 150 attendees, including **Trustee Money**, **Trustee Dawson**, and **Trustee Bey**.

Recruitment

- Our *Spring Open House* on April 22 at the Mays Landing Campus was a great success. There were 168 attendees, including 86 potential students. The event featured campus tours, program presentations, and opportunities to meet faculty and staff. It was a fantastic chance for prospective students and the community to learn more about our services.