

 **President's Report**

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TO: Atlantic Cape Community College Board of Trustees  
FROM: Dr. Barbara Gaba  
DATE: February 28, 2023  
(Mays Landing Campus)

### **Innovation Center Ribbon Cutting**

- The college held the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new *Innovation Center* on February 9<sup>th</sup>. With over 100 people in attendance, the event featured speeches by Dr. Gaba, elected officials, and an Esports student. Following the ribbon cutting and photos, guests were offered tours of the building by our students. The event showcased the new opportunities in cybersecurity and esports with cutting-edge technology that are available to our students and was a great success.
- Dignitaries in attendance included: Lieutenant Governor Sheila Oliver, Secretary of Higher Education Dr. Brian Bridges, Senator Michael L. Testa, Jr. (Legislative District 1), Senator Vince Polistina (Legislative District 2), Assemblyman Donald Guardian (Legislative District 2), Assemblywoman Claire Swift (Legislative District 2), Commissioner John Risley (Chairman, Atlantic County), Commissioner Caren Fitzpatrick (Atlantic County), Commissioner Andrew Parker (Atlantic County), Commissioner Andrew Bulakowski (Cape May County), and Commissioner Jeffrey Pierson (Cape May County).

### **Legislators on Campus**

#### *Southern New Jersey Development Council "Meet the Legislators"*

- The Southern New Jersey Development Council (SNJDC) hosted their "Meet the Legislators" event on February 22<sup>nd</sup> at Careme's for the second year in a row. Elected officials from the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> districts in attendance were: Senator Michael Testa, Assemblyman Antwan McClellan, Assemblyman Erik Simonsen,

Senator Vince Polistina, Assemblywoman Claire Swift, and Assemblyman Don Guardian.

- Dr. Gaba delivered welcoming remarks, and each legislator presented their priorities regarding business and the economic development in South Jersey.
- With over 70 people in attendance, including Trustees Clemans and Money, this was an excellent opportunity to showcase the college to the South Jersey business community.

### **Technology Upgrades**

- The email domain name change project is currently in progress. This project will change the college email addresses from @atlantic.edu to **@AtlanticCape.edu**.

### **Community Outreach**

- Atlantic Cape hosted the *Mexican Consulate of Philadelphia* at the Worthington Atlantic City Campus for the third year in a row on January 28-29. Over 300 community members from Atlantic City and surrounding areas were serviced and able to acquire vital documents that facilitates their livelihood in Atlantic and Cape May Counties.
- Atlantic Cape hosted the *Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office Community Safety Press Conference* at the Worthington Atlantic City Campus on January 31<sup>st</sup>. The program brought together invited press, dignitaries, faith-based leaders, and community leaders. Dr. Gaba provided welcome remarks.
- Atlantic Cape welcomed the *Vietnamese Group of Atlantic City and Bangladesh Association of Atlantic County* to the Worthington Atlantic City Campus on February 2<sup>nd</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. Organization leaders met with Lizbeth Castro-James, Director of the Worthington Atlantic City Campus & Community Outreach, to discuss how we can work together to spread the word about all of the opportunities that Atlantic Cape has to offer.
- Atlantic Cape continues to host the 2nd Saturday in Midtown Monthly Arts Program at our Worthington Atlantic City Campus on January 14<sup>th</sup>, February

11<sup>th</sup>, and March 11<sup>th</sup>. This event is free and open to the community, a collaboration between the South Jersey Cultural Alliance, AtlanticCare Foundation, and the Midtown Community Development Corporation.

- Victor Moreno spoke to the organization MudGirls about the educational opportunities Atlantic Cape offers. MudGirls Studios is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing opportunities in art and entrepreneurship to economically disadvantaged and at-risk women by providing training and skills to transition out of poverty and onto a pathway of self-sufficiency. They were excited to introduce their women to the possibilities that higher education can offer.
- Dr. Kalpana Jain, Dean of STEM, and Professor Kenneth Cabarle, Chair of the Science Department, spoke at the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce's monthly membership meeting on February 16<sup>th</sup>, along with Mr. Bob Mullock, developer of the Cape May Point Science Center. Their talk focused on the development of the new Cape May Point Science Center's research endeavors on avian and marine life. The Cape May Point Science Center is the former Saint Mary's by the Sea Retreat and will be working in partnership with Atlantic Cape students studying environmental sciences.

### **Community Partnerships**

- Atlantic Cape is once again partnering with the Boys and Girls Club of Atlantic City to provide the Boys and Girls Club participants with an *Introduction to Career Development* course with a focus on hospitality and culinary careers. The course started on January 31<sup>st</sup> and will continue through May 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- The first cohort of 26 Atlantic City residents has graduated from the 14-week Atlantic City Infrastructure Program (ACIP), an energy workforce training program that began on November 1, 2022 by the City of Atlantic City and Atlantic City Electric. The program provides city residents a path to careers in the energy field, with a job opportunity for every program graduate with Atlantic City Electric or one of the company's contractors. The program focuses on members from the under-resourced population in Atlantic City, enabling participants to gain utility training and work-ready skills to prepare them for

promising careers in the energy field. Atlantic Cape provided the program education in partnership with the Atlantic County Workforce Development Board. The program will continue to take place twice a year.

### **Student Engagement**

- Student Engagement welcomed back all students for the Spring Semester at all three campuses to join a student club/organization and learn more about our college resources for support and guidance.
- Atlantic Cape has been celebrating Black History Month with educational events and entertainment throughout the month of February, including a full slate of events from flag raisings and panel discussions to movie screenings and virtual gatherings at the college's Mays Landing, Atlantic City and Cape May campuses.
- The Student Support Services and Men of Atlantic Cape program participants visited Montclair State University for a college tour in December. Their most recent excursion this month was to Camelback Mountain Resort in the Poconos to experience snow tubing and the indoor water park. In addition to providing academic support to our students, the Student Support Services program's goal is to expose our students to enriching experiences that most of them have never had a chance to encounter.

### **Athletics**

- Atlantic Cape's Basketball team officially made NJCAA Region 19 Playoffs for the second season in a row. Playoff games began on Feb 25<sup>th</sup>.
- Atlantic Cape sophomore **Samantha Dangler** was honored by the New Jersey Association for Intercollegiate Athletics (NJIAAW) for Women as a 2023 Woman of the Year recipient during an awards ceremony at Seton Hall University on February 18<sup>th</sup>.
- Dangler, who was also named to the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) All-Region 19 and All-GSAC (Garden State Athletic Conference) women's volleyball teams this past season, was honored along with other female student-athletes from across New Jersey during half-time of

the Seton Hall/Xavier Women's Basketball game at center court in Walsh Gymnasium.

### **Alumni Accomplishments**

- **Soleil Yakita**, Class of 2022, wrote a poem, "Sonnet No. 1", in a poetry course taught by Professor Richard Russell, that has been selected for publication in Phi Theta Kappa's *Nota Bene* literary journal, the only national literary journal for community college students. PTK received 800 entries, and Ms. Yakita's poem was one of only 24 selected for publication this year.
- **Greg Lasher**, Class of 1997 and 2022 Distinguished Alumnus, has been appointed as the Superintendent of Schools for Lower Cape May Regional School District.

### **Faculty and Staff Accomplishments**

- **Dr. Gaba** was recognized at the Greater Atlantic City Chamber's *Business Excellence Awards* on February 23<sup>rd</sup> with the *John G. FitzPatrick Community Leader of the Year Award* for her dedication to bettering the Greater Atlantic City region.
- **Dr. Gaba** was a speaker at the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) *National Legislative Summit (NLS)*, held in Washington DC on February 5-8, serving on a panel entitled "Conducting an Effective CEO Search."
- **Dr. Gaba** has been appointed to the Board of Directors of the National Aerospace Research and Technology Park (NARTP).
- **Myrna Morales-Keklak, Dean of Nursing & Health Sciences**, was recognized with an "Impact Award" by the NJ Student Nurse Convention's Dean and Directors at their luncheon on February 16<sup>th</sup>.