



Parent & Family Newsletter

May 2015

Hello Parents and Families!

With only a few weeks left in the semester, students prepare to take their final exams and head out for the summer. Spring semester was full of significant events and initiatives which worked to enhance our students' college experience. We are excited for new renovations, the opening of Campus Town and another great semester with our students in the fall.

We hope you have a wonderful summer, and enjoy the warm weather!

Susie Orecchio, MA, NCC

Assistant to the Vice President for Student Affairs

Coordinator of Parent and Family Programs

Highlights from the Vice President for Student Affairs (VPSA)



Dear Parents and Family Members,

As the year comes to a close, the summer welcomes new and exciting opportunities for our students. In May, we will celebrate Commencement with the graduating Class of 2015 as they begin a new journey.

For our upcoming sophomores, juniors and seniors, they will be returning to TCNJ this fall, and we are eager to see their growth and accomplishments as they continue their involvement in both their academic and out-of-classroom experiences.

After their hard work all year, I understand that they are looking forward to the summer break. While I hope that our students find time for rest and renewal, I know that summer is also a time for travel, internships, study abroad experiences, summer jobs, and volunteer opportunities. Whichever activities our students choose to be a part of this season, we wish them a happy, healthy and enjoyable summer break!

Best,

Amy Hecht, Ed.D.

Vice President for Student Affairs

The College of New Jersey

Inclusive Campus

Kerri Thompson Tillett, Esq., Associate Vice President/Chief Diversity Officer

Several events this semester highlight TCNJ's commitment to live a culture of diversity and inclusion. The highlights are designed to provide

only a glimpse into the diversity and inclusion programming on campus. There have been thoughtful conversations and dynamic speakers around this important strategic issue.



The Division of Student Affairs and Office of Institutional Diversity partnered beginning in January to create fora where students can discuss issues of inclusion. These fora are called "Inclusion Forum" where all students are invited to identify/share areas of concern with the goal of identifying specific action items to make the campus more inclusive for all students. The fora have been well attended and will continue into the next academic year.

In celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday, the campus community attended a viewing of the movie, *Selma*, at a local movie theater. Three busloads of TCNJ faculty and staff supported this event. Dr. Charles Ogletree, Harvard Law School professor and Founding and Executive Director of the Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice, was the College's Black History Month speaker. Dr. Ogletree's lecture was entitled, "Does Race Matter"? The lecture was followed by a thoughtful question and answer session, where many students had the opportunity to ask questions of and personally interact with Dr. Ogletree.

For Women's History Month, the campus enjoyed a lively discussion by Dr. Deborah Spar, President of Barnard College. She spoke on the topic, "Wonder Woman and the Quest for Perfection". Her lecture resonated with all who attended and provided historical and political insight on why women's lives have, or have not, changed over the last 50 years.

These and other programs demonstrate TCNJ's commitment to diversity and inclusion. These programs create educational awareness and build an environment of support and respect for students of all backgrounds. Stay tuned for innovative and dynamic diversity and inclusion updates for the future!

Great Summer Volunteer Opportunities

Victor Deihl, Project Specialist for the TCNJ Bonner Institute

The need and opportunity for TCNJ students to serve the communities of Greater Mercer County continue beyond the academic year. By volunteering through TCNJ's Bonner Institute, your student will have the opportunity to serve with nonprofit organizations that have a proven record of effective anti-poverty work. Our diverse volunteer opportunities are carefully crafted to create meaningful experiences for students who are intellectually curious, social justice driven, and value service to others.

With a decade of producing nationally recognized volunteer programs, the TCNJ Bonner Institute offers volunteer opportunities that advance the anti-poverty mission of its deep community partners. Ranging from food security and workforce development to increasing adult literacy and academic mentoring, TCNJ Bonner Institute summer student volunteers have a unique opportunity to extend their learning beyond the classroom and gain first-hand experience. An example of our long-standing nonprofit partners include: the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen (TASK), an organization striving to end hunger in Trenton; the Academic Sports Academy (ASA), a program designed to foster learning through rigorous academic tutoring; and Habitat for Humanity of Trenton, who work to build quality affordable homes and create healthy, vibrant and self-respecting communities.

While the TCNJ Bonner Institute offers a plethora of volunteer positions serving Trenton, Ewing, and Mercer County, we encourage you to visit www.Idealist.org, www.VolunteerMatch.org, and www.VolunteerConnectNJ.org, to explore volunteer opportunities throughout New Jersey and the nation.

We encourage questions and look forward to speaking to you and your daughters and sons about volunteering through the TCNJ Bonner Institute. Even in the summer, the TCNJ Bonner Institute mobilizes faculty, staff, and students to improve the lives of TCNJ's neighbors in Mercer County; our office hours are 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM, Monday through Thursday. Please feel free to call or email the TCNJ Bonner Institute: [\(609\) 771-2548](tel:6097712548), bonner@tcnj.edu.

Construction Updates

Campus Town Updates

Curt Heuring, Vice President for Administration

The College of New Jersey is anxiously awaiting the completion of the largest campus construction project in its history. This project, called Campus Town, started as a glimmer of an idea in President Barbara Gitenstein's imagination as far back as 2009. The Campus Town complex is the result of a public-private partnership between TCNJ and The PRC Group from Long Branch, New Jersey and will create 278,000 square feet of student housing, retail shops, restaurants, and services on 13 previously underutilized acres near the College's main entrance. The project broke ground in March 2014 and is on schedule for a grand opening in the fall of 2015.



Dr. Gitenstein's goals for the project included 1) enhancing the appeal of the College to students, faculty and staff; 2) creating a development that is vibrant and exciting for the campus and local community; 3) improving the physical appearance of the campus; 4) strengthening the relationship between the College and its host community of Ewing; and 5) creating partnerships with regional entities to achieve mutual goals. The project is not only achieving these goals but expected to exceed them.

The project contains a total of 446 student beds in single, double and quad apartment styles. Each apartment has its own washer and dryer, kitchen, dining/living space and bathroom facilities. The units have individual controls for air conditioning and heat and each sleeping room is separately locked. Access to the apartments is via a key card controlled elevator that is dedicated solely to the residential tenants.

The project also includes the following amenities:

- Barnes and Noble Bookstore, 14,600 square feet;
- Student Fitness Center, 11,500 square feet;
- New restaurants including a Red Berry Yogurt, Yummy Sushi, Mexican Mariachi Grill, Panera Bread, Piccolo Trattoria and a brew pub;
- New services including a Spencer Savings Bank, a hair and nail salon, a tanning studio, a mobile telephone store and a pharmacy;
- A clock tower with a public square for community events.

Interest in the residential component of the project has been strong. Every one of the 446 beds in the complex was booked within months of the start of leasing. PRC Group has a waiting list of approximately 80 students waiting for openings. The retail leasing of the ground floor has been strong as well, with the majority of the retail space currently leased or under agreement. In view of the strong demand for the student housing, TCNJ's President and Board approved Campus Town Phase 2 which will yield approximately 166 new beds in the same apartment configuration as the Campus Town Phase 1. Construction for Campus Town Phase 2 will start this spring and be open for students in the fall of 2016.

TCNJ's Campus Town development is an outstanding example of how higher education is innovating to provide new facilities and services to students while minimizing tuition and fee increases and generating revenue for the institution. The entire cost of the development of Campus Town is born by the developer, PRC Group and they are paying the College to lease the land for the project. The project will also impact the state's economy by creating partnerships that are beneficial to businesses and organizations. The Campus Town development earned the honor of being one of the State's Leading Infrastructure Projects by exhibiting the ability to generate revenue for the institution while enriching the College and the local communities. The Campus Town development will also reduce tax rates, create employment opportunities and further partnerships with local and regional groups.

Brower Student Center Renovations

Sean O. Stallings, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs

So it begins. The Brower Student Center, standing as the living room of the campus, is set for renovation. The fences have gone up and cleanup has begun. The investment in this facility is a commitment to our students and represents an understanding that the college experience is enhanced through campus life. We intend to use our understanding to create spaces where our students can grow, expand their education, and broaden their perspectives. Our renovated facility will feature a Global Corner – an interactive section of the building where news from around the world will broadcast and small discussion groups led by faculty will be able to take place.



For group collaboration, we are developing a Media Corner – another area of the building where students engaged in group projects can nestle in a focused space and engage with technology. Student organization work space has been re-imagined. The student center will become a nexus of social and intellectual exchange. Student organization offices will be more functional than ever before allowing for work with today's technology. Only feet away, other student organizations will be able to gather and work jointly on projects using interactive movable wallboards that permit the expansion and contraction of new temporary spaces.



Because there is so much demand for space on campus, we were sure to create spaces that can transform with the needs of the community. Serving as the College's entertainment hub, the new addition of an event room will be capable of hosting cinema released movies with telescoping seating, comedy shows and lectures, or transform into a formal banquet hall. When such a space proves too much, students can retreat to the newly designed campus restaurant for a coffeehouse poet or listen to the latest local band. Regardless of the interest level, there will be something for everyone because the Brower Student Center is a place for everyone! A place where lifelong memories will be created; a place that will re-emerge as the hub of engagement and enrichment for the entire campus community!

Faculty Corner

Three Easy Ways to Become More Mindful

Corinne Zupko, EdS, LPC



Do you ever find yourself on automatic pilot? Perhaps driving from point A to point B and having no recollection of the trip in between? If so, you are not alone. We are often so caught up in our own thoughts, that we often miss out on what is happening in the present. The practice of mindfulness is the opposite of automatic pilot.

Being mindful is associated with a multitude of health benefits. It has been shown to reduce stress, anxiety, and depression, boost the immune system, create positive changes in the brain, and improve academic test scores.

The good news is that you ALREADY know how to be mindful – you pay attention all of the time. This is a skill, however, that can be developed in order to experience greater equanimity.

Mindfulness can be defined as “Paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally” (Kabat-Zinn, 1994). When we practice continually re-directing our wandering attention to an anchor (e.g. the breath or sound), we build new neural circuits in the brain, which are associated with the health benefits listed above.

It is easy to bring more mindfulness into your day. Get started by practicing these 3 simple steps:

Learn how to STOP: Stop, Take a Breath, Observe, Proceed. Whenever you find yourself feeling scattered, remember to STOP. Begin by taking a pause, take a deep breath, observe your feelings and environment, and make a conscious choice of how to proceed.

Say goodbye to multitasking. Multitasking is a myth. Our brains literally cannot do more than one thing at a time. Practice instead being fully present to what you are doing while you are doing it. You might find that your performance improves and work satisfaction increases.

When you are eating a meal, just eat. Nowadays, when we eat a meal, we are likely also on our laptops, on our phone, or trying to get something else done. Instead, experiment with being fully present to your food. Notice what

happens in your mouth when you take your first bite of food. Take time with the process of chewing and tasting. By doing so, you may find that food is more satisfying and that your digestion improves.

The practice of getting present is exactly that – a practice. It is normal for our minds to jump from one thought to another, so it is important to be patient. Just like lifting weights builds muscle over time, you are literally creating new neural connections in your brain through the practice of mindfulness.

Your TCNJ student is welcome to attend free mindfulness sessions every Tuesday and Thursday from 12:00pm-12:30pm in the Spiritual Center meditation room.

TCNJ Recovery House

We understand that students in recovery from alcohol or other drug addiction may have unique needs, but would very much like to be a part of the residential community at TCNJ. The College is fortunate to have the ability to offer the Recovery House as a residential option starting this fall. The Recovery House is a substance free living and learning community that brings a small group of students together in a College-owned house close to campus. Residents will live with a graduate advisor who will provide programming, resources, and support. To apply or learn more about this exciting new program for your student, please visit tinyurl.com/RecoveryHouseTCNJ.

You may also learn more by contacting Joe Hadge, Assistant Director of the Alcohol and other Drug Education Program (ADEP) at hadgej@tcnj.edu or [\(609\) 771-2572](tel:6097712572).

Important Summer Closing Information

All residence halls close for the summer at 8:00 PM on Tuesday, May 19. All students are expected to vacate their room within 24 hours of their last exam or by 8:00 PM on May 19, whichever comes first. Any student who is not able to vacate by these times should contact their Residence Director. Please note that exceptions are rare and are for only

extreme circumstances.

In an effort to make your student(s) check-out smoother and more efficient, we highly recommend they bring items home during the weekend of May 8-10. This will help with traffic congestion around the residence hall as well as waiting in line to return dormitory keys.

For Check Out Guidelines, please visit the TCNJ Residential Education and Housing:
<https://housing.tcnj.edu/files/2015/05/End-of-Year-Closing-Information.pdf>

Apply for Parent and Family Association Executive Board

Are you interested in joining our team? Our Parent and Family Association Executive Board assists in planning and coordinating events, such as Parent and Family Day coming up this year on September 26, 2015. We work with our Parent and Family Executive Board to brainstorm and develop new ideas and improve existing initiatives. **The deadline for the application is July 15, 2015.** We look forward to your applications, and to adding new members to our Board!

Please visit the following link to access the application:

https://tcnj.qualtrics.com//SE/?SID=SV_bIV0bHSdm2OWO69.

For additional information about the Parent and Family Association Executive Board, please contact Susie Orecchio, Coordinator of Parent and Family Programs at sa@tcnj.edu.

Coming Soon: Parent & Family FAQ Page

Our office is in the process of collecting Frequently Asked Questions from various offices and departments on campus to create an FAQ page for parents and family

members. These will include Frequently Asked Questions concerning Residential Education & Housing, Dining, Student Activities and more.

Please feel free to submit any questions you believe are especially beneficial to include on the FAQ page to sa@tcnj.edu or [\(609\) 771-2201](tel:6097712201).

TCNJ Business Institute for Non-Business Majors

Starting this summer, TCNJ is rolling out a program that brings student scientists, writers, artists, engineers and all non-business majors a new perspective on their future careers. TCNJ Business Institute for Non-Business Majors is a 5-week academic and professional development curriculum made exclusively for non-business majors.

For additional information on this new program, please visit the website at: <http://BusinessInstitute.tcnj.edu/>

Wilson Reading System: Professional Development for New Jersey Teachers

TCNJ school of Education/Dyslexia Initiative is hosting a Wilson Reading program. For more information please visit:

<http://dyslexiacenter.pages.tcnj.edu/files/2014/05/Wilson-Workshop-Flyer.pdf>

If you have any questions regarding these programs, please contact George Hefelle, External Programs Specialist in the Office of Graduate, Professional, and Continuing Education at hefelleg@tcnj.edu

TCNJ's 2015 Commencement

- May 21: The Main Commencement Ceremony will begin at 5:30pm in Lions Stadium. The stadium will open at 4:30pm, and guests are encouraged to find their seats by 5:15pm.
- May 21: Departmental Ceremonies
- May 22: Continued Departmental Ceremonies

Please visit the TCNJ Commencement website for additional information including times and locations for Departmental Ceremonies: <https://commencement.tcnj.edu/>.

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You have subscribed to receive Parent & Family emails which include updates on important events and initiatives going on at TCNJ and our quarterly Parent & Family Newsletter.

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