

Summer 2006

Invention

THE MAGAZINE OF THOMAS EDISON STATE COLLEGE

State of the Artists

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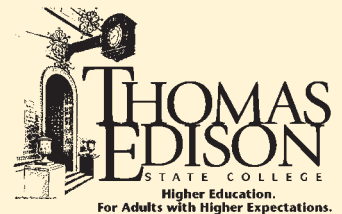
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Cover Story: **6**
State of the Artists



Cover Photo: Jennifer Bulava





Dear Alumni, Students and Friends,

Achieving our goals often requires us to take a chance, especially when what we strive for is something we think is beyond our grasp. But when we go for it, we learn something new about ourselves.

The renowned painter Mark Rothko said, “Art is an adventure into an unknown world, which can only be explored by those willing to take the risk.” This edition of *Invention* focuses on three Thomas Edison State College graduates who have taken that risk.

In this issue, you will meet Gary Bykowsky (BA, '91), Christopher Evan Taylor (BA '86) and Pamela Gilbreth Watkins (BA '99), who each explain how Thomas Edison State College helped them leverage their passion for art as they earned their college degrees. They discuss how that process transformed their lives.

Like these graduates, Thomas Edison State College also leverages its strengths to achieve its goals. One of those goals is to expand educational opportunities for adult learners. Two recent examples of this ongoing effort are featured in this issue of *Invention*.

In the first, the College recently signed an international partnership with the University of South Africa, one of the largest distance learning institutions in the world. This new partnership focuses on the development of two new joint degree programs and a commitment to share resources and expertise in the development of online courses and assessment models.

In the second, the College continued to expand its Corporate Choice™ program, which attracts such employers as Virtua Health, one of the largest healthcare systems in southern New Jersey. Virtua recently became the first healthcare system in New Jersey to enroll in the Corporate Choice™ program so that it could offer educational opportunities through Thomas Edison State College for both clinical and nonclinical employees.

We are honored to serve and work with organizations and individuals who are dedicated to accomplishing their goals. I hope you enjoy this edition of *Invention*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George A. Pruitt". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "G" and "P".

Dr. George A. Pruitt
President

College Forges International Partnership with the University of South Africa



Pictured from the left are UNISA delegates: Prof. Narend Bajjnath, vice principal for Planning, Strategy, and Partnerships; Prof. Barney Pityana, principal and vice chancellor of UNISA; and Siza Magubane, director of International Relations; and Thomas Edison State College participants: Dr. George A. Pruitt, president; Ida Hammond, chair, College Board of Trustees; and Bill Seaton, vice president and provost.

Thomas Edison State College and the University of South Africa (UNISA), one of the largest distance learning universities in the world, are partnering to develop two joint degree programs as well as online courses and other college-level learning opportunities for adult students throughout the world.

The new partnership focuses on the joint establishment of two baccalaureate programs: a Bachelor of Science in Energy Utility Technology degree and a Bachelor of Environment degree. Through the partnership, the institutions will also share resources and expertise in the development of online courses and assessment models as well as collaborate on joint research programs on pedagogy and using communication technologies in distance learning.

“We’re from different hemispheres and different cultures, but we share a commitment to providing high-quality programs for adult learners,” said Dr. George A. Pruitt, president of Thomas Edison State College. “This partnership will give our students access to some of the finest course materials in the world and

will enable UNISA students to take advantage of new degree programs relevant to both South Africa and the entire African continent.”

The new partnership builds on a previous five-year agreement that was established in 2000 between the College and UNISA. At a formal signing ceremony held on May 16, 2006, at Thomas Edison State College, Prof. Barney Pityana, principal and vice chancellor of UNISA, said the new partnership



represents a deeper level of friendship and commitment between UNISA and the College.

“Our two institutions have a lot to share with each other,” said Prof. Pityana. “We are constantly learning from experiences in other places and this partnership with Thomas Edison State College allows us to do more of that and helps us become a premier international school, especially in the area of distance learning.”

UNISA is a comprehensive, open learning and distance education institution with a student body of more than 250,000 students. Since 2004, the university has gone through a transformation. This process included the creation of a single, comprehensive distance education institution through the merger of UNISA and Technikon Southern Africa, which offered career-oriented technical degree programs, and the incorporation of Vista University, a teacher training institution. The result is the creation of a new UNISA that is more representative of South Africa.

Dr. Pruitt noted that continuing the College’s relationship with UNISA is important as the university positions itself as an international leader in distance education programs.

“As post-apartheid South Africa continues to rebuild, we want to ensure our partnership can assist the development of the new South Africa,” he said.

Professional Certificate in Gerontology Launched

Responding to the demand for a talented workforce that understands the unique health and fitness needs of seniors, Thomas Edison State College's School of Professional and Continuing Studies recently developed the Professional Certificate in Gerontology: Senior Health and Fitness.

This noncredit certificate program is designed for anyone interested in the rapidly growing industry of senior health and fitness, including those who want to demonstrate a new level of expertise working with seniors or those who are seeking a career change who want a jump-start into a new field.

"Today's older Americans are the wealthiest, healthiest and most active in our history, creating unlimited business and employment opportunities for those with the knowledge to understand and serve this population," said Dr. David M. Grossman, vice provost and dean of the School of Professional and

Continuing Studies at Thomas Edison State College. "Earning this professional certificate will give those working in this explosive field — at fitness and wellness centers, Ys (YMCA's, YWCA's, YMHA's, YWHA's), spas and senior health centers — a competitive edge as the senior population grows."

People aged 65 and older are the fastest-growing segment of the American population, and today's older Americans are wealthier and more active than any previous generation of seniors. According to the Federal Interagency Forum on Aging-Related Statistics, the senior population in the United States is projected to grow to

71.5 million by the year 2030, which will represent nearly 20 percent of the country's total population.

The Professional Certificate in Gerontology: Senior Health and Fitness is offered completely online and includes five modules that provide an overview of the field of gerontology with an emphasis on wellness and fitness. Students work at their own pace through approximately 40 hours of study and earn a certificate that validates their new expertise. Most students complete all five modules within six months.

"The course materials bring together everything needed to engage elder adults in health and fitness," said Dr. Grossman. "Every day you read in the newspapers about amazing seniors: the 88-year-old training for the triathlon; the elderly husband and wife who start their day exercising together at the local gym. This certificate program captures the wave of this trend demonstrating to those working with seniors not only about exercise that is appropriate for older adults, but also how to attract them to their facility."

For more information about the Professional Certificate in Gerontology: Senior Health and Fitness, visit www.tesc.edu and click on "Professional Certificates."



Virtua Health Partners with Thomas Edison State College

Virtua Health, the largest healthcare organization in Southern New Jersey, has become the first healthcare system in New Jersey to partner with Thomas Edison State College to enhance access to higher education for nursing and non-nursing staff.

Virtua and the College have signed two partnership agreements that enable employees to maximize Virtua's tuition assistance program and enroll in regionally accredited undergraduate and graduate degree programs designed exclusively for working adults.

"Virtua has an extraordinary commitment to helping employees grow professionally, and we offer a range of programs to support this," says Richard P. Miller, Virtua's president and chief executive officer. "Our recent agreement with Thomas Edison State College provides adult learners the

opportunity to obtain a degree online."

Registered nurses at Virtua Health may enroll through the College's School of Nursing to complete a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree, or both a BSN degree and a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree. Registered nurses who already have a BSN degree can continue their education through the school's new MSN degree program. All graduates of the MSN program will receive a Nurse Educator Certificate upon completion of the program, in addition to the MSN. Registered nurses who already have a MSN degree may enroll in the Nurse Educator Certificate program.

In addition, Virtua Health has become the first healthcare organization in New Jersey to join the College's Corporate Choice™ pro-

gram. Non-nursing staff members can now enroll in a wide range of degree programs including those that focus on organizational leadership, business and management.

"This new partnership enables employees of Virtua Health to pursue their educational goals without sacrificing their personal and professional obligations," said Dr. George A. Pruitt, president of Thomas Edison State College. "Our entire academic program revolves around the unique needs of adults. We understand that working adults cannot put their lives on hold to sit in a classroom at a specific time and place. At Thomas Edison State College, they do not have to."

Virtua has more than 7,200 employees in its four hospitals, two rehabilitation and nursing facilities, two outpatient surgical centers, its home care services and a number of community health, fitness and wellness facilities. Virtua was named one of the top three best places to work last year by the *Philadelphia Business Journal*.



Virtua Health partners with Thomas Edison State College to provide educational opportunities for its employees. Standing left to right are Susan M. O'Brien, EdD, RN, dean of the School of Nursing, Thomas Edison State College; George A. Pruitt, PhD, president of Thomas Edison State College; Richard P. Miller, president and CEO, Virtua Health; Catherine Kotecki, RN, DNSc, APN C, director of clinical education and research, Virtua Health; Ann Campbell, RN, MSN, CNA, chief nursing officer, Virtua Health and Sylvia G. Hamilton, vice provost for Strategic Partnerships, Thomas Edison State College.



Student Helps to Revitalize New Jersey's Capital City

Annie M. Pott applies the same dogged determination to rehabilitation projects in downtown Trenton that she does to completing her baccalaureate degree at Thomas Edison State College.

Pott, a Trenton, N.J., business owner, recently earned a Wachovia Scholarship and is currently pursuing her Bachelor of Arts degree in English at Thomas Edison State College. She and her husband, Roland, are the owners of Urban Word, LLC, the managing company of the music and cultural venues Conduit – A Music Club and The 449 Room, both located in Trenton; and Trenton Makes, LLC, a property management company providing studio space for local artists as well as office and retail space in the city.

"My husband and I plan to grow our business and expand into more property development in the downtown Trenton area," said Pott. "Although I'm contributing to the rebuilding of downtown Trenton already, I feel as though I will be even more of an asset to the community once I complete my BA, and then my master's degree in business."

In addition to managing buildings on South Broad Street in Trenton, Pott and her husband are redeveloping a property at 118 S. Warren St. Their vision is to have a retail tenant on the first floor with the second and third floors available as boutique office space.

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Thomas Edison State College Ranked "Best Buy" in Higher Education

The baccalaureate degree program in business at Thomas Edison State College was ranked as one of the top 25 best buys in the country for online regionally accredited undergraduate business degrees, according to a national survey conducted by *GetEducated.com*.

According to the survey, which examined publicly posted tuition and fee rates at 78 institutions throughout the country, the undergraduate business degree program at Thomas Edison State College ranked fifth.

The survey reinforces a trend identified in national surveys focusing on online master's degrees conducted by *GetEducated.com*: best buys most often come from public institutions.

GetEducated.com also conducted a survey ranking the top 10 best buys in the country for online regionally accredited undergraduate human resources degrees, which included the baccalaureate degree program in human resources at Thomas Edison State College.

Founded in 1989, *GetEducated.com*, LLC designed and directed America's first online counseling center for adult learners seeking accredited online college degrees. Today, *GetEducated.com* serves as the only online clearinghouse in the country dedicated exclusively to showcasing accredited online degrees. *GetEducated.com* has been featured in several national publications and news reports about distance learning, including *Time*, *Newsweek*, *The New York Times*, *Forbes*, *Fortune*, *US News & World Report*, CNN and CBS News.



State of the Artists

THREE ALUMNI DEMONSTRATE HOW COMBINING NATURAL

TALENT AND WORK EXPERIENCE WITH A COLLEGE DEGREE

CAN TRANSFORM ONE'S LIFE INTO A MASTERPIECE

Gary Bykowsky's Captain of Industry was part of The Eagles Have Landed public art project coordinated by the Burlington County Office of Cultural and Heritage Affairs.

Gary Bykowsky has never found it difficult to keep up with demand.

A prolific visual artist and 1991 Thomas Edison State College graduate, his range is nothing short of astonishing. Bykowsky's Roebling, N.J., home is filled with his work in clay, plaster, fiberglass, wood and metal as well as paintings in both oil and acrylic.

"For me obtaining a degree was a personal challenge. I wanted to see if I had true talent," said Bykowsky, who earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in fine art. "What I discovered was that talent, or the lack of it, was secondary. What matters is hard work and dedication. It's the necessary ingredients in a true artist, whether you're famous or unknown."

A long-time New Jersey Bell Telephone Company employee, Bykowsky's technical expertise threads its way through much of his

wrenches that are adhered with resin, which results in a surprisingly liquid pattern. Displayed at New Jersey Transit's River Line Station in Florence, N.J., Captain of Industry was one of 13 eagles created by local artists for the project entitled "The Eagles Have Landed."

Bykowsky's piece celebrated Roebling's chapter in the industrial golden age of southern New Jersey river towns.

The eagles were sold at a gala auction, which raised \$39,000 to benefit local New Jersey arts and cultural organizations. Bykowsky's Captain of Industry was purchased by Whitesell Construction Company, Inc. and is currently on display in their headquarters in Delran, N.J.

Prior to attending Thomas Edison State College, Bykowsky received an associate degree in art and design from Burlington County Community College. He is a past

“What I discovered was that talent, or the lack of it, was secondary. What matters is hard work and dedication. It's the necessary ingredients in a true artist, whether you're famous or unknown.”

art. Many of his pieces, including his Captain of Industry eagle sculpture commissioned for a Burlington County public art project, have a decidedly industrial aspect.

Captain of Industry is composed with nuts, bolts, cable, washers, wires, masonry nails and antique

recipient of the Burlington County Art Guild's Robert Ransley Memorial 1st place prize in both painting and sculpture and is a three-time winner of the Cultural and Heritage Show. He has exhibited his work at The Artful Deposit gallery in Bordentown, N.J., since 1993.



Gary Bykowsky, BA '91, among his work at his home in Roebling, N.J.

MAKING AN IMPRESSION

Alumnus **Christopher Evan Taylor** can also be counted among the more than 50 successful, practicing artists who've graduated from Thomas Edison State College.

Taylor discovered Thomas Edison State College while taking an art course at Brookdale Community College in Monmouth County, N.J.

"Prior to that, I had been kind of jumping all over the place—at the same time I was working," said Taylor.

Taylor earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in art in 1986. He works in oil paintings that are rendered from photographs he takes of the Northeast landscape and has been studying with renowned artist Grace Graupe-Pillard since 1993.

"When I started at Thomas Edison State College, I had a portfolio review and an assessment of the credits in art classes I had already taken," said Taylor. "I was soon registered in the program with the help of a College advisor. The culminating requirement for my degree was a verbal exam that assessed my expertise."



(left) Christopher Evan Taylor's Copper Beach Tree, Thompson Park, oil on canvas, 32" x 36"
(below) Christopher Evan Taylor, BA '86, in his garden in Lincroft, N.J.



He admits that the final verbal exam, which took him about four months to prepare for, was, "more than a little nerve-racking. It focused on the Impressionist Movement, which was my chosen area of study. The College mentor responsible for my assessment was an expert in the field of art history and visual art which made the final hurdle a daunting, but ultimately very gratifying, task."

“The final verbal exam, which took about four months to prepare for, was more than a little nerve-racking... but ultimately, a very gratifying task.”

Taylor's work has been exhibited widely in the Monmouth County, N.J., area, including the prestigious Monmouth Museum, The Guild of Creative Art, The Art Alliance and Thompson Park. Solo exhibits have included the Johnson & Johnson Corporate Center and the Middletown Township Public Library. He'll soon be exhibiting at the Mitchell Sanborn Gallery in Keyport, N.J.



(left) Christopher Evan Taylor's Garden Party
(above) Christopher Evan Taylor's Cassandra Under the Trumpet Vine

MONUMENTAL WORK

Monumental is a word that would best describe the work of **Pamela Gilbreth Watkins**, a 1999 graduate who works predominantly with bronze.

Watkins has completed commissions to create several monumental sculptures, including the Texas State Game Warden's Association, the John Middleton Memorial Foundation and the Buffalo Gap Historic Village Museum in Texas. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in art from Thomas Edison State

“ Finding Thomas Edison State College was the cornerstone to getting on my feet and becoming financially independent. ”



Pamela Gilbreth Watkins, BA '99.



(left) Pamela Gilbreth Watkins' Andalusian Stallion, Bronze, 15" x 10" x 6"

(below) Pamela Gilbreth Watkins' Texas Game Warden Memorial



College and a Texas State Board for Educator Certification to teach kindergarten through 12th grade.

“I was originally interested in Thomas Edison State College because it offered the chance to complete my bachelor's degree without having to relocate or change my work schedule in order to sit in regular classes,” said Watkins.

In addition to being a professional studio artist, she currently serves as a fine arts instructor for the Clyde Consolidated Independent School District in Clyde, Texas.

“I had a great experience at Thomas Edison State College and plenty of help from the

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The Twelfth Annual Thomas C. Streckewald Golf Classic is a Success!



The foursome from Rider University came in first in the scramble format. Pictured from the left are Golf Committee Chair and Master of Ceremonies Eric Robert Lear, Lear & Pannepacker, LLP; Tricia Carroll and Brian Keane, Rider University; and Vice President for Public Affairs John P. Thurber, Thomas Edison State College. Not pictured from the Rider University foursome are Don Harnum and Tom Dempsey.

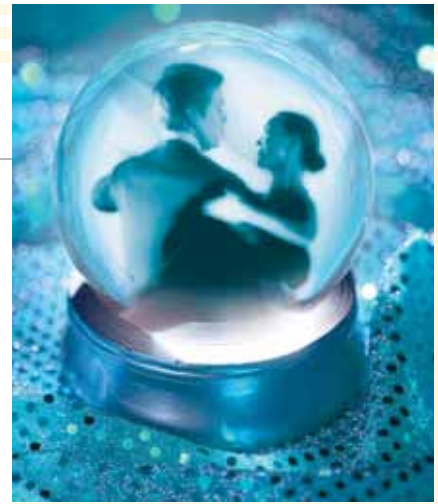


First place men's individual gross award winner Frank Fresca (left) with John P. Thurber, vice president for Public Affairs at Thomas Edison State College.



First place women's individual gross award winner Pat Vespia (left) with John P. Thurber, vice president for Public Affairs at Thomas Edison State College.

Perfect weather prevailed at the Twelfth Annual Thomas C. Streckewald Golf Classic on June 19, 2006. Eighty-two golfers participated in the event sponsored by the Thomas Edison State College Foundation and hosted at Jericho National Golf Club in New Hope, Pa. Premier tournament sponsors were Sun National Bank, Bank of America and Merrill Lynch. The foursome from Rider University Athletics, Brian Keane, Don Harnum, Tricia Carroll and Tom Dempsey, came in first in the scramble format. The foursome from Lear & Pannepacker, LLP, Scott Pannepacker, David Pannepacker, Daniel Hogan and Richard Speranza, took second place. Tom Dempsey of Rider University Athletics won the putting contest. First place men's and women's individual gross were Frank Fresca of Bank of America and Pat Vespia, respectively. Jim Ballard was closest to the pin on the 15th hole, while Sandy Durst was closest to the pin on the 2nd hole. Longest drive went to Michael Lettiere of Lear & Pannepacker for the men and Carron Albert of Thomas Edison State College for the women. Richard Speranza of Health Care Consulting Services, Inc., beat the pro. The event raised more than \$40,000 in gross revenues.



Save the Date

Saturday, Nov. 11, 2006

The Crystal Anniversary *Grande Ball* 2006

The Thomas Edison State College Foundation Board of Directors is pleased to announce The Crystal Anniversary Grande Ball - 2006 is scheduled to take place on Saturday, Nov. 11, at the Trenton Country Club in Trenton, N.J.

The black-tie gala will begin with a silent auction and cocktails at 6:30 p.m., followed by an evening of dinner, dancing and entertainment from 7:30 - 11:30 p.m.

Highlighting the evening will be the presentation of the Spirit of Edison Awards. Dr. George A. Pruitt, president of Thomas Edison State College, will present Anthony G. Dickson, president and CEO of New Jersey Manufacturers Insurance Company, with the Spirit of Edison Community Leader Award; and U.S. Army Second Lt. Eric J. Petrevich, BSMS 2005, with the Spirit of Edison Distinguished Alumnus Award.

For more information about tickets and sponsorship opportunities, please contact Elisabeth Dey at (609) 984-1588, ext. 2083, or via e-mail at edey@tesc.edu.

Roxanne L. Globis Appointed Director of Alumni Affairs

Thomas Edison State College has appointed Roxanne L. Globis as director of Alumni Affairs. She is responsible for the planning and implementation of the overall alumni program and serves as the College's primary liaison to alumni.

Globis, who herself has been an adult college student, said she was inspired to leave the corporate sector so she could bring her passion for providing high quality programs and services to Thomas Edison State College and to enhance the College's efforts to reach out to alumni.

"I was attracted to Thomas Edison State College because I want to be part of an organization that makes a significant impact on people's lives," she said. "I am also excited about having an opportunity to work with extraordinary people to help the College respond to new challenges."

Globis has been charged with developing new strategies to partner with the College's academic deans and other staff members to leverage alumni to help increase enrollments, identify potential corporate partners and develop an alumni ambassador program.

"Roxanne has had a very successful career in customer service, sales and marketing and will energize the College's efforts to develop relationships with our alumni," said John P. Thurber, vice president for



Roxanne L. Globis, newly appointed Director of Alumni Affairs at Thomas Edison State College.

Public Affairs. "We are very fortunate that she has joined our staff to enhance our outreach to Thomas Edison State College graduates."

Prior to joining the College, Globis was a senior branch manager and assistant vice president with Commerce Bank in Princeton, N.J., where she supervised overall operations, including business development, customer service and community relations. Globis attended the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, Mass., and at Villanova University in Villanova, Pa., and is a board member of the YWCA in Princeton, N.J., and a member of the Princeton Regional Chamber of Commerce. She plans to finish her degree at Thomas Edison State College.

In Remembrance: Richard Pearson

It is with great sadness that Thomas Edison State College announces the loss of Richard Pearson, a past trustee of the College and former chair, who passed away on June 2.

Pearson was appointed to the Board of Trustees on May 18, 1973, and served through June 30, 1979. He served as chair of the Board from 1976-1979.

In addition to his service to Thomas Edison State College, Pearson was a founding trustee of Mercer County Community College, where he served as chairman of the board from 1968-1972; and a past president and member of the Princeton Township Board of Education.

A U.S. Army veteran of World War II, his service included work with the Army Air Force's Aviation Psychology Program, which was responsible for selection tests for pilots, bombardiers and navigators. After the war, Pearson began a career in educational testing, working for both the College Entrance Examination Board and the Educational Testing Service, culminating in his appointment as president of the College Board from 1965-1969. Later, he served as a consultant for the Ford Foundation in the Philippines. From 1970-1987, he was in the administration of John Jay College of Criminal Justice at the City University of New York.

Matthew C. Addison BA '04

Lt. Matthew C. Addison, meteorologist in the United States Air Force, was awarded the Air Force Commendation Medal for Outstanding Service while deployed as the lead meteorologist in Baghdad, Iraq. After returning from Iraq, Addison deployed to New Orleans, La., as the lead meteorologist for evacuation/rescue operations due to Hurricane Katrina. He was awarded the Army Achievement Medal and Humanitarian Service Medal for his contributions. Addison has served in the Air Force for 11 years and plans to make it a career. He is currently stationed at Fort Hood, Texas, providing the 1st Cavalry Division weather support. Addison lives with his wife Ruth and two boys, Gabriel and Jared.

Dr. Nancy J. Arduengo BSBA '98

After graduating from Thomas Edison State College, Dr. Nancy J. Arduengo continued her educational pursuits obtaining a master's degree in organization development at American University in Washington, D.C., in December 1999. She followed that accomplishment by completing the requirements for Doctor of Philosophy in Human Development at the Fielding Graduate University in Santa Barbara, Calif., in August 2005. Currently Arduengo is a principal consultant at The ArdLen Group, LLC, specializing in providing leadership development and effective communication skills programs for small- to medium-sized corporations.

Kenner Bisch

ASM & BSBA '93, AAS '03, BSAST '04

Kenner Bisch is the author of "Death to Fool Boys Incorporated," a newly released fiction novel that blends classic chills with timely topics. The suspense-laden novel is about a string of serial FBI killings that occur in the "dog-eat-dog" environment of the war on terrorism. Published by Author House, the novel is available in bookstores.

William Braun BA '81

William Braun earned a Master of Professional Arts degree in urban ministry from Alliance Theological Seminary in Nyack, N.Y. Braun noted, "God has called me to be an evangelist and chaplain."

Lisa M. Carlucci MSM '01

Lisa M. Carlucci was invited to present her research findings from her paper, "Modern Era Technology Helps Merge Cultures and Overcome Language Barriers," at the 8th Annual Digital Stream: Literacy in Language Learning with Technology Conference held at California State University in Monterey Bay, Calif.

Barbara G. Dan BA '86

Barbara G. Dan has completed a historical novel, "O'Rourke's Bridge," a tale of the western frontier, set against a backdrop of the silver mines of Virginia City, Nev., a lumber camp in the Sierra Nevada range and the American theatre in 1864. The first novel in a two-book contract, it is being published in October 2006 by Kensington Books. After earning her baccalaureate degree in theatre arts from Thomas Edison State College in 1986, Dan went on to get her Master of Arts degree in humanities from California State University—Dominguez Hills in Long Beach, Calif. She has been the publisher of Eden Publishing since 1994. She noted, "Wherever I go, I mention Thomas Edison State College to other working adults who want to further their education and improve their jobs opportunities. Thanks, Thomas Edison State College!"

Alan G. Graffin, JD BA '94

Alan G. Graffin was promoted to manager in AIG Domestic Claims' Pollution Insurance Department in September 2005. Graffin noted, "Since my graduation from Thomas Edison State College, I have attended and graduated from Rutgers Law School-Newark (N.J.) in 1998 and was admitted to the New Jersey State Bar in 2000. For the past three years, I have worked for AIG, handling claims and cases involving pollution." Considering his recent promotion, Graffin added, "Obviously, my degree from Thomas Edison State College was the catalyst that made my current career possible."

Deborah "Jessy" Hamilton BA '99

Deborah "Jessy" Hamilton, who earned her first master's degree—which was in counseling psychology—in 2002, earned a second master's degree in December 2005 in criminal justice with a specialization in behavioral science from Nova Southeastern University in Florida. She is a member of the Omega Tau Chapter Phi Sigma, the National Criminal Justice Honor Society. After being employed in Florida as a probation and parole officer, she transferred approximately 18 months ago to Virginia, where she works for the Commonwealth of Virginia as an investigative probation and parole officer on the sex offender team.

Maria E. Jensen BA '94

Maria E. Jensen earned her master's degree in Management and eCommerce from Cambridge College in Cambridge, Mass. Jensen noted that was "especially important" because she completed her last two terms while pregnant with her third child, who was born during her third semester of the program.

Robert L. McGowan MSM '00

Robert L. McGowan, who retired from the military in 2000, noted that his MSM degree helped him to enter the healthcare industry as an assistant business manager. Several years later, he assumed his current position as an assistant administrator with Buttonwood Hospital of Burlington County. McGowan completed a 100-hour course, which was required by the state of New Jersey, along with 1,700 hours of on-the-job training. He passed the exam to be licensed in New Jersey in January 2006.

Byron McKenzie AAS '04

Byron McKenzie recently completed a Bachelor of Science degree in healthcare management from Southern Illinois University. McKenzie is a veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom, serving there from February through September 2005.

Ruth Olinsky BA '84

Ruth Olinsky is a retired administrative secretary with the Trenton Board of Education and is now active in the arts and poetry. She has had her poetry with illustrations published in several magazines.

Franco Paoletti MSM '04

Franco Paoletti recently returned from Japan as part of the Japan Fulbright Memorial Fund (JFMF) Teacher Program. He was one of 600 teachers nationwide that was awarded this prestigious honor.

Sigmund Selowentchich BA '02

Sigmund Selowentchich, who "graduated in 2002 at 83 years young," noted that he is proud to be an alumnus of Thomas Edison State College. "I am an example of anything being possible and I hope I can be an inspiration to those who think a bachelor's degree is unobtainable." Selowentchich, who turned 86 years old on Thanksgiving 2005, encouraged, "If I can do it, so can you. Don't ever give up on the dream of education." Selowentchich shared a milestone with "the love of his life" his wife recently celebrating 60 years of marriage.

Eloise E. Waller AAS '02

Eloise E. Waller recently accepted a new position with the First National Bank of Olathe in Kansas as a construction loan processor. Waller writes, "Earning my AAS degree while raising two girls was a positive experience for the whole family. My daughters are now determined young women earning their degrees."

Please tell us about your...

- ▶ New Job
- ▶ Promotion
- ▶ Award
- ▶ Marriage
- ▶ Baby
- ▶ Career Switch

If it's **news** to you, it's **news** to us!

We invite you as a member of our family of Thomas Edison State College Alumni to tell us about the exciting things happening in your life. Let us know what's new with you since you graduated from Thomas Edison State College or how your experience at the College changed your life, and we may include your updates in a future issue of *Invention*.

To contact us, please fill out the form below and mail it to: Thomas Edison State College, *Invention* Editor, 101 W. State St., Trenton, NJ 08608-1176; fax it to (609) 777-1894; or e-mail your good news to invention@tesc.edu. You may include photos to accompany your news. Items will be published as space permits.

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E-mail Address _____

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Student ID# _____

Class Year _____ Degree _____

Information for *Invention*: _____

Student Helps to Revitalize New Jersey's Capital City

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Her connection with the Trenton business community runs deep. "My grandfather, Anthony Born, emigrated from Germany to Trenton in the early 1900s and formed a plumbing company. My father, Fred Born, and his brother, Albert Born, took over the family business. My father was a master plumber in the city for more than 40 years. Now that my father is retired, and visits the redevelopment projects on which I am working, he remembers working in many of the buildings during his years in business."

She and her husband live in the city's historic Mill Hill neighborhood.

It seems unlikely that Pott would have time for other pursuits, but somehow manages her rigorous work schedule alongside her studies at Thomas Edison State College. In addition to business and academic pursuits, she is a member of the Trenton Historical Society and serves on the Preservation Committee's Stop the Wrecking Ball planning committee.

She said the College's online programs enable her to pursue her degree without putting her life on hold. "That's why Thomas Edison State College is so great for me," said Pott. "The flexibility of online learning is ideal for someone like me who has a lot going on."

Information and applications for Thomas Edison State College scholarship programs can be found by visiting www.tesc.edu/financialaid and clicking on "Scholarships," or simply by calling (609) 633-9658.

State of the Artists

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advisors," she said. "I appreciated the College's instructors being willing to review my portfolio and recognize the capability demonstrated by my prior work rather than being in a program which forced me to take classes in areas I'd already mastered. I felt that I was given the respect I had earned through many years as a professional artist, without being made to start over at the apprentice level."

It's with palpable gratification that Watkins reported that she was recommended for the Texas Art Educator's Association Award by her students, their parents, colleagues and professional associates.

"I am glad I earned my bachelor's at Thomas Edison State College. Having it allowed me to obtain a Texas State Teaching Certificate by completing a few hours of education training and passing a standardized test," she said. "While I continue to practice as a studio artist, the security of having a career in education is a wonderful economic advantage to me as a single parent. Finding Thomas Edison State College was the cornerstone to getting on my feet and becoming financially independent."

Watkins' work has been exhibited throughout the southwest at invitational juried shows and solo shows in both public and private venues.

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