

# connections

CHARTER OAK STATE COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2010 VOL. XXXIV NO.2



 CharterOak<sup>SM</sup>  
STATE COLLEGE  
Degrees Without Boundaries  
2010  
COMMENCEMENT

Members of the Class of 2010 head for the June 5 commencement ceremony at which they were honored as degree recipients.

## “Life Happens,” Is Theme of 2010 Commencement Ceremony

Wearing environmentally friendly caps and gowns, 450 members of the Class of 2010 received bachelor's degrees during Charter Oak State College's commencement ceremony held June 5. The youngest of the graduates was 17; the oldest, 80.

An honorary degree, Doctor of Humane Letters, was presented to Astrid T. Hanzalek, former Chair of the Board for State Academic Awards (BSAA), a position to which she was appointed in 2007 by Connecticut Governor M. Jodi Rell. As a member of Connecticut's House of Representatives (1971-1981), Hanzalek took a leadership role in the

creation of the BSAA, the governing body for Charter Oak State College and the Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium (CTDLC). She has been recognized on numerous occasions for her dedication, leadership and public service in public policy and environmental organizations.

Charter Oak president, Ed Klonoski, addressed the graduates. The student speaker was Oxford, CT resident, Lisa Wildman, who serves as student representative to the BSAA and is a Student Association Council member. The ceremony was webcast across the country to graduates unable to attend in person.

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## Foundation Unveils 'Innovation' Award

FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology), a not-for-profit organization created to inspire the interest and participation of young people in science, technology, engineering and math, has received the Charter Oak State College Foundation's inaugural Innovation Award. The award, conceived by the Foundation Board to celebrate innovative approaches in fields other than education, is to be presented annually to an individual, organization or business that offers new and creative techniques for serving the public.

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# THE PRESIDENT'S TAKE



As part of its ongoing strategic planning process, the College has created something we call *The Visioning Team* whose mission is to keep all entities within the institution focused on achieving the strategic goals we've established for ourselves. Creating a vision for an organization, then linking subsequent decisions

and strategies to its realization, is much more difficult than corporate management textbooks make it sound. Often, vision falls victim to daily pressures, sudden crises, and a variety of other pressing concerns. But in reality, nothing is more important to the health of an organization than a shared vision and the feeling, by each participant, that he or she is making a key contribution to achieving it.

So we created a visioning team comprised of a nucleus of staffers who were already spending time on activities related to the strategic goals of the College. These were the folks who were measuring progress and then imagining what needs to be done next. So the Charter Oak Visioning Team is comprised of four executives and three key directors. Those three directors selected a faculty representative and an additional staffer to bring our total number to nine. We meet every two weeks.

The team's initial challenge was creation of a vision statement. I was more than a little nervous about this. I worried that we wouldn't agree on content, or that we might not be able to find the proper language to clearly express the vision. Well, my worries were for naught. After only two meetings the group created this insightful statement:

*“Charter Oak State College: A dynamic community of online learners, advancing the nation’s workforce one graduate at a time.”*

**Charter Oak State College: A dynamic community of online learners, advancing the nation’s workforce one graduate at a time.**

This statement is both internally and externally directed. It is aspirational, which means it is meant to be a reach; and it is specific, which means we are trying to grow along a specified path. That is why the team used the word “workforce.” If we were a liberal arts college, we would have used a word like “citizenry.” But as an adult-serving, degree completion institution, the best descriptor we

could find for our audience and for our niche in the world of higher education is WORKFORCE.

We have shared this phrase with students, alums, staff and our faculty. We shared it with the Board at the May meeting, and we will begin

using it in our communication. As you receive more of these communications, you will see that we are trying to organize our efforts to make this vision a reality. For example, we have just chosen a company to help us research academic programs so that we can develop new programming that really does “advance the nation’s workforce.” And the new document scanning system we are purchasing will move more of our work online, making our goal becoming a “dynamic community of online learners” more accurate within our administrative walls.

You will hear more about both the Visioning Team and our progress in achieving our vision in future posts.

**Ed Klonoski, President**

“Life Happens” continued from pg. 1

In his remarks, Klonoski noted the untraditional nature of Charter Oak students and the sometimes difficult and circuitous route they take to earn their degrees. He characterized the graduates as ‘second- chance learners’, often balancing work and family while completing their degrees. He told the graduates, “As you know better than I do, today did not happen by accident. It most likely began a number of years ago...and I suspect it didn’t go smoothly. Things happened that derailed your first efforts at college. Life happened.”

Klonoski continued, “...life happened, and your degree hopes were put aside. But that dream of a degree didn’t die when you turned 25. It is true that many of you had your education derailed by life events, but it is equally true that each of you is here because some other life event drove you to start back up and persevere until you finished.”

The College’s president concluded by encouraging the graduates to “Never doubt that you can accomplish great things. You have. You graduates are

proof to yourselves and to the rest of us that we can all achieve great things, not in spite of what life throws at us, but because life happens.”

Shirley Adams, Charter Oak’s Provost, in addressing the graduates and their guests, noted that 61% of the Class of 2010 were women, that 69% were Connecticut residents; that 24% were minority; and that class members hailed from 35 states and 12 countries. 🌱

## We Hope You're Enjoying a Relaxing and Productive Summer!

Your Alumni Association has been busy since the last edition of *Connections* was published. In conjunction with the Charter Oak State College Foundation Board, we held a fund-raising reception at the Connecticut Science Center in downtown Hartford. Many Alumni, their families, Charter Oak staff and friends of the Foundation were in attendance. This year's Alumni Citation was presented to Matt Fleury, '05, President and CEO of the Connecticut Science Center.

I would like to thank the following officers for their commitment to our Association during the past year and for agreeing to serve for another term: Vice President, Eddie Rodriguez; Treasurer, Marcia Anderson-Esson; and Secretary, Carolyn Brown. I also eagerly look forward to serving your Alumni Association as President for another year.

This reminder – you can assist your alma mater in its efforts to spread the word about the incredible opportunity Charter Oak offers adult online learners – like you – to secure their professional futures through degree completion.

## Legislature Honors Two Charter Oak Achievers

Each year, Connecticut state lawmakers honor outstanding students from Connecticut's public and private colleges and universities. The students are selected based on academic achievement and extracurricular involvement within their respective institutions.

Two members of Charter Oak's Class of 2010, both Connecticut residents, were among only 42 state college students recognized this year for 'possessing outstanding academic qualities.'

John H. Bensenhaver, of Middletown, and Peter Bergenholtz, a resident of Rocky Hill, received official citations of recognition from the General Assembly and were formally introduced to members of the state Senate and

The College's Alumni Association has established an Alumni Ambassador's Club whose members work toward helping recruit out-of-state students. As an 'Ambassador,' you would support Admissions staff at recruiting events held in or near the city or town in which you reside. The most important aspect of your involvement would be to share your personal Charter Oak experience with prospective students who attend the events.

Admissions personnel would communicate the dates and locations of planned gatherings in advance to enable you to clear your schedule and play an important role in informing event attendees about the opportunities Charter Oak offers.

You can become an Ambassador's Club member by simply e-mailing Nancy Taylor, the College's Assistant Director of Alumni Relations and Corporate Recruitment, at [nataylor@charteroak.edu](mailto:nataylor@charteroak.edu). She's eager to hear from you!



John Bensenhaver (l) receives his Legislative recognition certificate from State Representative Richard Roy.

House of Representatives prior to gathering with other honorees at a state Capitol reception.

Both Bensenhaver and Bergenholtz, who have now joined the ever-growing ranks of Charter Oak alumni, maintained near-perfect Grade Point Averages. They earned Bachelor of Science degrees with Honors in General Scholarship. 🌱



Carlo Esidore, President, Charter Oak State College Alumni Association

I want to thank Jason Jakubowski, who has served as Charter Oak's Director of Alumni Development, for his guidance and assistance to the Association. He recently left the College to accept a new career challenge, and Nancy Taylor has assumed his duties. She will be working closely with the Association to help make our services to you even more valuable.

As always, it has been a pleasure serving our many alumni. If you would like to become personally involved with the Association, or have ideas that will assist us in assisting you, please e-mail me at [cesidore@charteroak.edu](mailto:cesidore@charteroak.edu). I do hope to hear from you!!

Cordially,

Carlo Esidore  
President, Charter Oak State College  
Alumni Association 🌱

## connections

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Issued semi-annually by the Board for State Academic Awards for alumni and friends of Charter Oak State College.

 CharterOak<sup>SM</sup>  
STATE COLLEGE

Chuck Albert, Editor

State of Connecticut  
M. Jodi Rell, Governor

Board for State Academic Awards  
Ed Klonoski, Executive Director



'FIRST' Program Coordinator, Mike Sperber (c), is shown with Charter Oak President, Ed Klonoski (l) and Michael Meotti, Commissioner of Higher Education, who presented the first annual Innovation Award to Sperber.

Foundation Unveils 'Innovation' Award continued from pg. 1

The first Innovation award was presented May 4 during the Foundation's Spring Reception held at the Connecticut Science Center in Hartford. Mike Sperber, FIRST's volunteer program coordinator and Program Manager at Hamilton Sundstrand Corporation, accepted the award presented by Michael Meotti, Connecticut's Commissioner of Higher Education.

Charter Oak president, Ed Klonoski, said "We are very excited to honor FIRST and

most grateful for the important work our Foundation has done to ensure ongoing assistance to students in need." Proceeds from the spring fundraising event will be used to support Foundation scholarships for in-need and underserved Charter Oak students.

Foundation president, Rebeka Scalia, observed that "the Foundation takes great pride in supporting the needs of adult students, many of whom have been afflicted by the economic challenges that grip our state and nation."

A word of thanks goes out to Charter Oak alumnus and Connecticut Science Center president and CEO, Matt Fleury, for providing his impressive venue as the setting for the Foundation reception and to the event's sponsors, Hamilton Sundstrand – a United Technologies Company, the Charter Oak State College Alumni Association and Simsbury Bank.

*As Charter Oak State College strives to sustain its leadership role in adult higher education, we look to our alumni and friends to lend a helpful and caring hand. By making a charitable, tax deductible bequest to the Charter Oak State College Foundation, you will help provide the resources required to preserve the future of the College and assist us in fulfilling our mission and commitment to our students. Your generosity is also a way of expressing your appreciation to the institution that positively impacted your life and career. Gifts of any size are important, and we hope that, in your own way, you will leave a legacy. Please contact the Foundation through the office of Charter Oak President, Ed Klonoski, (860-832-3876) to discuss your bequest.*

*For more information about the Charter Oak State College Foundation, please visit our new Foundation Web site – [www.coscf.org](http://www.coscf.org).*

## Charter Oak Presents, Learns at Jenzabar Annual Gathering

In June, eleven members of the Charter Oak staff traveled to the 2010 Jenzabar annual meeting, held in Orlando, Florida, to both learn from and inform their contemporaries representing institutions of higher education from across the nation.

Jenzabar, Charter Oak's 'student database,' is software designed to support institutional success by optimizing administrative operations

and business processes at colleges and universities. The software is further geared to delivering enhanced results in student enrollment, retention, and advancement rates.

The Charter Oak group attended more than 50 educational sessions designed to assist in improving systems and processes that would maximize technological services provided to online students. Staff members also

presented eight conference sessions addressing the aspects of technology, business office functions, computer security, the growth of online learning and means through which to improve services to the distance learner.

Charter Oak was recognized, during the conference, as one of America's innovative colleges in the area of online learning.

## Cassiday Award Shared By Eight Graduates

The Doris G. Cassiday Award, given annually to Charter Oak graduates who have achieved excellence in innovative learning and who exemplify the essence of the Charter Oak mission, is shared, this year, by eight accomplished students. They were recognized for their initiatives in availing themselves of a broad range of learning options while earning credits both inside and outside the traditional classroom setting.

Two of the award recipients are Connecticut residents: *Rosabell Rincon*, of Waterbury, who earned a BS with a concentration in Child Study, and *Christopher J. Rohland*, of Danbury, who graduated with a BS in Individualized Studies.

Three others who were recognized with a Cassiday Award also earned their bachelor's degrees by pursuing

a concentration in Individualized Studies. They are *Rodney Rios*, a Mobile, Alabama resident; *Jason Bernie Shearer*, who calls Syracuse, Utah home; and *Mary Townsend* who resides in Socorro, Texas.

Award winners *Kyna Hively*, of Philadelphia, Tennessee, and *Mathew Muto*, who lives in Brookfield, Massachusetts, earned their bachelor's degrees in History, and Greendale, Wisconsin's *Sam Salo* received his BA in Liberal Studies.

The Cassiday Award was created in 1998 in the name of Doris Cassiday, a founding member of Charter Oak State College, in recognition of her



Doris Cassiday presents an award, created in her name, to Jason Bernie Shearer during June commencement exercises.

longstanding commitment to higher education. She currently serves as Assistant Director of Academic Programs at the College and as an academic counselor. 🌱

## Matt Fleury is Alumni Citation Recipient



Matt Fleury, President and Chief Executive Officer, The Connecticut Science Center, Hartford, CT.

Matt Fleury, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Connecticut Science Center, and a member of the Charter Oak State College class of 2005, has received the Charter Oak State College Alumni Citation awarded annually to a graduate on the basis of "accomplishment in a field of endeavor and loyalty to the College."

Fleury has given back to his alma mater unhesitatingly. He was elected, last year, to a six-year term on the Board of the Charter Oak State College Foundation. At the time of his appointment he said he agreed to accept the Board position because he felt it important to show that Charter Oak alumni are on board and ready to contribute to the future of the College and its students. "You need," he emphasized, "to remember those who helped you become who you are."

And 'remember' he has! This spring, he opened the doors of the critically acclaimed Science Center to a private College Foundation donor event.

The event was designed to generate new scholarships for Charter Oak students adversely affected by the economic challenges that have gripped our nation.

In the fall of last year, he appeared as one of two Charter Oak alumni spokespersons featured in a successful broadcast, print and online marketing campaign developed to attract new students to the College, and he continues to support his alma mater in a multitude of other ways.

Today, Matt guides the workings of one of America's newest and most innovative projects – the Connecticut Science Center – designed, as he says, "to light up young minds." He appreciatively notes that "achieving this career success may never have come to fruition without the help of Charter Oak State College." 🌱

# alumni profile

Meet  
David Matthews, '92



David Matthews

*You simply can't call him anything other than 'worldly'!*

Meet the accomplished David Matthews, a member of Charter Oak's Class of 1992. He grew up in Morocco, France and Turkey. Always on the move and never able to pursue an undergraduate college degree as a traditional student, he earned his BS in Political Science from Charter Oak in 1992. "Without Charter Oak," he says,

"it would not have been possible for me to accomplish what I have to date. I am so grateful."

And accomplish he has! Begin with February of this year when he arrived in Kabul, Afghanistan to begin his deployment to the International Security Assistance Force Headquarters – part of the U.S. Department of Defense Civilian Expeditionary Workforce – where he serves as the primary expert of Economics and Development and is involved with counterinsurgency strategies. Prior to that: a two year stint with the Department of State as Senior Economic Advisor/Team Lead for the Provincial Reconstruction Team in Diyala Province, Iraq.

Following his Charter Oak educational experience, David earned an MCF in Public and International Affairs at Princeton. Most of his career has been spent in the private sector managing business operations that include construction, redevelopment, land use and manufacturing. He has additionally served as management consultant,

negotiator and investment advisor to numerous business entities. He 'took a break' from the business world in the mid-90s to serve as Country Director for the Peace Corps in the Kyrgyzstan capital of Bishkek.

And with all this career activity where, you may ask, has he found time to become an instrument-rated pilot for aircraft and balloon; to sail with the Soviet team in the Whitbred Round of the World Race (now known as the Volvo Ocean Race); to climb Kilimanjaro, Huascaran and Rainer; and to become an accomplished woodworker, rower and skier?

We'd like to think it's all a result of his Charter Oak blood line!

*(EDITOR'S NOTE: If you are interested in sharing your success story with us, please contact Nancy Taylor – Charter Oak's Assistant Director of Alumni Relations and Corporate Recruitment – and let her know. She can be reached via e-mail: [nataylor@charteroak.edu](mailto:nataylor@charteroak.edu), or by telephone: 860-832-3863.)* ✨

## We Have News for You!

From time to time, Charter Oak State College sends – via e-mail – informative, alumni-oriented material such as our *Connections* newsletter, *Alumni Spotlight* feature and other information of interest about the College. In consideration of alumni who prefer not to receive e-mail from us, we will no longer send electronic information without your 'opt-in' permission.

To opt-in to receive future e-mail communication, please visit <http://CharterOak.edu/update> and complete the Alumni Information Update form **being sure to leave the opt-in box checked**. It's QUICK, and it's EASY!

If you choose not to complete the form, you will no longer receive Charter Oak e-mails alerting you to special alumni offers, alumni

publications and other pertinent, alumni-related information.

Please complete the Alumni Update Form at <http://CharterOak.edu/update> to remain informed.

**We want to stay in touch!** ✨

## Charter Oak Online Shop Is Popular Shopping Spot

Charter Oak's new Online Shop continues to flourish as alumni and students, alike, access the Shop Web site ([shop.charteroak.edu](http://shop.charteroak.edu)) to make selections from its wide range of imprinted merchandise and apparel.

In response to many alumni requests, the Online Shop now makes available a handsomely-designed diploma frame (see accompanying photo). Rich in its appointments, the frame allows you to proudly display your Charter Oak diploma in an at-work or in-home setting.

Among other items in the Online Shop inventory are warm weather and fall-winter apparel such as golf

and T-shirts, hooded and non-hooded sweat shirts, twill shirts, long-sleeve fleece jackets and vests and micro-fiber and soft-shell jackets for both men and women. You'll also find such appealing items as scarves, hats, blankets, bags, mugs, coasters and Charter Oak window decals.

Each Online Shop product bears the Charter Oak logo or name. Clothing articles are available in a variety of sizes and appealing colors. Your online order will be processed and shipped directly to you from the Shop warehouse. If there is a special imprinted item you'd like to see inventoried, let us know by



e-mailing ([chebert@charteroak.edu](mailto:chebert@charteroak.edu)), and if demand is great enough, we'll stock it!

Check out our exciting product line at [shop.charteroak.edu](http://shop.charteroak.edu). We think you'll like what you see! 🌱

## New Funding Boosts WIT Program

Charter Oak State College's Women in Transition program (WIT), a unique distance learning and technology initiative designed to assist underserved and underemployed single Connecticut mothers, has received new funding.

Now in its eleventh year, WIT has been sustained by generous donations from the corporate community and foundations and from federal, state and institutional financial assistance as well as internal College resources. The program has been newly refreshed through commitments for financial support from several sources including a \$40,000 grant from Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. Other entities contributing financial support were Leipold Foundation, Inc.; Daphne Seybolt Culpepper Memorial Foundation, Inc.; the Smith Whiley Foundation; NewAlliance Foundation; Main Street Community Foundation (Bristol, CT Women's and Girls' Fund); and the Charter Oak State College Foundation. This new funding will allow Charter Oak to open doors to college degrees for qualified women in many Connecticut communities.

Since WIT's inception in 1999, more than 150 students have enrolled in the program. To date, 45 have earned bachelor's degrees, 12 received associate degrees and an additional 16 were recipients of both associate and bachelor's degrees. Forty-two WIT students are currently working toward degree completion.

Students accepted into WIT are loaned laptop computers and provided Internet access allowing them to participate in the online program. They additionally receive financial support for college tuition, fees and the purchase of textbooks. To qualify for the WIT program, participants must be single mothers working in low-paying jobs and must have earned at least 21 college credits prior to matriculating at Charter Oak. They must also meet federal student financial aid requirements and be



WIT participants who received their degrees at June commencement ceremonies are (l-r), Brenda James, Tiffany Kinion, Gloria Deyo, Kim McKoy, Sherona Godfrey, Tracey Josey, Jennifer Bareisa and Olive Flynn. Center is Delores Bell, WIT program coordinator.

prepared to take a minimum of two courses each semester.

The College extends its sincere thanks to all organizations that have contributed to the support of this important initiative. If you would like to make a personal contribution to the Charter Oak State College Foundation WIT-endowed Fund, please visit [www.coscf.org](http://www.coscf.org). 🌱

# alumni spotlight

**1979**

**Susan B. Sweeney**, recipient of a Charter Oak honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree and a former member of the College's Foundation board, has been named senior vice president and chief investment officer at New Jersey's Selective Insurance Group, Inc.

**1993**

**Thomas Wentland** and his wife Lisandrea ('95) have announced the recent birth of their third child, Stephen Lawrence. The Wentlands live in Reston, VA.

**1995**

**Lisandrea (Gierlach) Wentland** and her husband, Thomas ('93) have informed us that newly-arrived son, Stephen, has joined siblings Logan and Teagan as members of the Wentland's Reston, VA household.

**1997**

**Steve Courtney** won the 2009 Connecticut Book Award for Biography/Memoir for his book *Joseph Hopkins Swichell: The Life and Times of Mark Twain's Closest Friend*, published by the University of Georgia Press. Steve resides in Terryville, CT.

**2002**

**John G. Allen**, a Lieutenant in the United States Coast Guard, has received a master's degree in Public Health from the University of West Florida. He also holds a master's in Health Administration, earned in 2005, from Baylor University. John serves with the Coast Guard's Health, Safety and Work-Life field office in Mobile, Alabama.

**Elizabeth Gutierrez** has been appointed Executive Director of the Fairfield (CT) Housing Authority. In her new position,

she will organize and direct all operations of the Authority and will assume responsibility for the organization's community relations and program development.

**Tony Kula** informs us that he graduated from the first Rhode Island Teaching Fellows (RITF) cohort last year. RITF is a highly-selective alternative teacher certification program. He is currently teaching tenth grade at Central Falls (RI) High School. He had previously served as a public relations manager for Connecticut's Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation.

**2003**

**Joy Mlozanowski** completed her MS in English at Southern Connecticut State University in 2008 and will enter that institution's MFA Creative Writing program this fall. She has published her first fiction novel and has completed certificate programs in Financial Management through Cornell University and in Marketing Management through Rutgers University. This busy lady, who resides in Haddam, CT, tells us her Charter Oak degree "has provided me with a wonderful foundation to pursue my many interests with confidence."

**2004**

**Edwin R. Bailey**, who spent 11 seasons as a member of the National Football League's Seattle Seahawks, has been promoted to Director of Operations for Camp III, at AMIKIDS, Savannah River, Georgia.

**Ellen V. Makar** received her master's in Nursing from Yale University in 2009 and is now a doctoral student at Barnes Jewish College (St. Louis) School of

Nursing. She was named an Alliance for Nursing Informatics (ANI) Emerging Leader and became board certified in Nursing Informatics last fall. She says, "I am thankful that Charter Oak was there for me...opened doors to a whole new world of higher education..."

**2005**

**Elsie Rogers**, a Bloomfield, CT resident, graduated, last December, with an M.S. in Management Strategy from St. Joseph's College, West Hartford, CT.

**2006**

**Magdalenar Rosales-Alban** has been named Executive Director of New Haven, Connecticut's LULAC Headstart program and was recently welcomed into the NWLC Progressive Leadership and Advocacy Network, a program that supports a diverse group of emerging advocacy leaders working to make positive change for low-income women and their families.

**2007**

**Shannon Brandl**, of Montgomery, IL, recently earned her master's degree in Teaching-Special Education at National-Louis University, Chicago.

**Debra Markel** writes from Powhatan, VA that she has received her MA in Health Studies from the University of Alabama's School of Human Environmental Science. She tells us that she hopes to soon teach online classes in health and nutrition. "Charter Oak gave me the foundation, the confidence and the motivation to keep going straight through for my master's degree," she says while adding, "thanks ...for being such a flexible way for older students to obtain their college degrees."

**Deborah Rhinesmith**, following her Charter Oak graduation, entered Ohio's Methodist Theological School from which she recently earned a Master of Divinity degree. She maintained a 3.89 GPA and was awarded that institution's Interpretation Journal Award. Deborah resides in Fairlawn, Ohio.



## 2008

**Christine Canapinno** is pursuing an MS in professional counseling at Grand Canyon University. "My husband and I both graduated from Charter Oak, so it's a family affair for us!" says Christine. "We are very grateful that Charter Oak provided us with the opportunity to finish our college degrees. Our future looks brighter than ever!" The Canapinnos live in West Haven, CT.

**Ruth Garby Torres**, who recently retired as a 20-year veteran of the Connecticut State Police, is using a \$20,000 scholarship to work on her Mid-Career Master's in Public Administration at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. She will be entering the Lucius N. Littauer Master in Public Administration Program.

## 2009

**Gary Canapinno** is attending Troy University where he will earn a master's in Public Administration. Gary is married to Christine Canapinno, Charter Oak class of 2008.

**Ruth Kenneth-Barbieri** has graduated from American International University with a master's degree in Education. "I am very excited about this accomplishment," says Ruth. "If it wasn't for Charter Oak, I would have never been able to pursue my dreams. In reality, so many more adults are heading back to school, but with busy work schedules and family it is difficult to follow dreams. That is why online colleges are so important today!"

Ruth serves as a board member of the Charter Oak Alumni Association.

## 2010

**Joseph Lawrence Herrmann** has been promoted to Senior Teacher and Department Head of English Studies in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. He completed his Charter Oak degree while studying online from Vietnam.

"It is really something," he says, "how dedicated people...not only guide Charter Oak students, but are indirectly affecting the lives of other people around the world." 🌱

## IN MEMORIAM

### VINCENT A. SOCCI

Former Board Member,  
Board For State Academic Awards,  
Charter Oak State College

## A Productive Race In The Rain

On May 8, 35 individuals representing Charter Oak State College and the Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium (CTDLC) donned colorfully designed T-shirts (created by Carolyn Hebert, Charter Oak Director of Marketing and Public Relations) to join in the 3rd annual *Race In The Park*, a run/walk event established to raise money for the Connecticut Breast Health Initiative.

The day's wet weather couldn't dampen the spirits of the participants who ran, walked and cheerfully slogged their way to the finish line. Ed Flugrad of the CTDLC led all team participants in the 5K run and was among the top overall finishers in the event that took place in New Britain, Connecticut's Walnut Hill Park.

Commenting on the race in which he was an active participant, Charter Oak President, Ed Klonoski, pointed out that "our involvement was an opportunity not only to give back to the New Britain community, but to simultaneously raise money to fight a deadly disease." 🌱



CTDLC's Ed Flugrad, center, doesn't look particularly 'dog tired' after finishing among the leaders in the recent Run In The Park fund raiser in which Charter Oak and CTDLC staff members participated. Provost Shirley Adams, shown far left, and Carolyn Hebert, Director of Marketing Public Relations, second from right, also participated in the event.

## STAY CONNECTED THROUGH connections

We'd like to hear from you about promotions, graduate degrees, awards, marriages, births, and other significant successes in your life. We'll publish your news in the next edition of *Connections*. Please use the form below, or drop us a note. Send to: Alumni News, Charter Oak State College, 55 Paul J. Manafort Drive, New Britain, CT 06053-2150 – or e-mail [nataylor@charteroak.edu](mailto:nataylor@charteroak.edu).

Your name and address \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_ Class of \_\_\_\_\_

My news \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## College Makes Three Administrative Appointments



Dr. Dana Wilkie



Jennifer Washington



Nancy A. Taylor

Three individuals, each bearing impressive credentials and extensive experience in higher education, were recently appointed to administrative posts at Charter Oak State College.

Dr. Dana Wilkie was named to the newly-created position Academic Dean, Undergraduate Programs. Among her responsibilities will be management of the Charter Oak distance learning faculty and development, with that faculty, of sound undergraduate academic policies and programs. She will additionally oversee assessment of undergraduate academic programs and the College's online library; will lead distance learning program growth and development; and will facilitate the distance learning committee and development of the distance learning budget. She will also advise Charter Oak Provost, Dr. Shirley Adams, on a variety of educational matters.

Dr. Wilkie comes to Charter Oak from Marist College, Poughkeepsie, NY, where she served as Assistant Dean of Domestic Programs at the School of Global and Professional Programs.

Prior to her Marist affiliation, she was Assistant Dean and Director of Graduate Programs at Fairfield (CT) University's Charles F. Dolan School of Business.

Jennifer Washington has assumed the position of Registrar, succeeding the recently retired Pat Derech who served in that position for nearly three decades. Jennifer comes to Charter Oak after having served as Registrar at West Hartford, Connecticut's St. Joseph College. She also served as Assistant Registrar at Norwalk (CT) Community College and as Online Services Coordinator at Post University. She holds a B.A. in Sociology and a master's degree in Marketing.

Nancy A. Taylor comes to Charter Oak as Assistant Director of Alumni Relations and Corporate Recruitment. Most recently the owner of a consulting firm that assisted non-profit organizations in advancing their missions, she brings to Charter Oak lengthy experience in nonprofit and corporate management and community outreach. She served corporate giant, Aetna, Inc., for 14 years, as its Vice President for Public Affairs. 🌱

## Foundation Names Scholarship Recipients

The Charter Oak State College Foundation has awarded 2010 scholarships to several students requesting financial assistance in order to pursue the degrees that will help them meet their educational and professional goals.

Recipient of the *D'Amato Award for Graduate Studies* is *Sandra O'Connell*, a member of the Charter Oak class of 2009. The award was established in 1992 by a Charter Oak alumna for the dual purpose of supporting alumni committed to pursuing a graduate degree and to foster strong links between the College and its graduates. Ms. O'Connell, who lives in Wethersfield, CT, is pursuing her master's degree through Tiffin

University's online Criminal Justice/Forensic Psychology program.

*Dana Robinson-Rush*, a Waterbury, CT resident who is studying for a degree in Public Administration, is the recipient of the *R. Wayne Clugston Organizational Leadership Scholarship* created to assist individuals preparing for defined leadership roles in service-based organizations.

*The George R. Dingwall Scholarship*, awarded to a Charter Oak student in good academic standing and pursuing a degree in Public Safety Administration, was given to Vernon, CT resident, *Bryan Kowalsky*.

Two students, *Maryjane Malavasi* of East Haddam, and *Tracy Belbusti* of Waterbury, both Connecticut, have

received *Beverly and Rodney Hawes, Jr. Scholarship awards* that assist students who demonstrate qualities of leadership and commitment to community.

Finally, the *Harris-Wiener Scholarship*, created to assist employed but in-need women who wish to continue their education, particularly those wishing to pursue careers in education, social service, or public service, has been awarded to *Glenna Martin*, of Mooresville, NC. Her concentration is Child Studies.

...and these, dear reader, are some of the fine individuals who benefit from your tax-deductible donations to the Charter Oak State College Foundation. Won't you help? ([www.coscf.org](http://www.coscf.org)) 🌱

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Alumni wishing to purchase a class ring should contact Josten's representative Steve Fitzgerald. He can be reached directly at [stephenfitzgerald@jostens.com](mailto:stephenfitzgerald@jostens.com) or at 401-683-5675.

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## Make Social Networking Work For You

Career oriented Charter Oak alumni can benefit in a multitude of ways by connecting with social networking Web sites, particularly those on which the College maintains an ongoing presence. Included are those sites that enjoy the greatest popularity.

For example, *LinkedIn*, which maintains a strong image as the 'professional social network,' allows you to connect with other individuals working in your career field and to reconnect with business associates and colleagues with whom you may have lost contact for one reason or another. In fact, Charter Oak has created its own official alumni group that you can access at <http://CharterOak.edu/LinkedInAlums>. This valuable resource allows you to share professional experiences and discuss



solutions to career-related challenges. You'll quickly discover *LinkedIn's* versatility!

*Facebook*, on the other hand, is an ideal source for connecting with former classmates and professors and to source updates on what's going on at Charter Oak. You can visit our *Facebook* page simply by going to <http://facebook.com/CharterOak>, and the nice part is that you don't need a *Facebook* account to access the site. If you're already a member, or once you become one (no cost involved!), go to the site and become a 'Fan' of the College to show your pride as an alum and to share information with other Charter Oak grads.



*Twitter* (<http://twitter.com/CharterOak>), also accessible without an account, will lead you to dozens of places on the Web that talk about Charter Oak. You'll learn of the whereabouts of some of your former classmates and about innovative, new programs introduced at your alma mater, and you'll read informative articles that focus on such areas as online learning's impact on higher education.



You may also want to consider viewing videos of Charter Oak alums and current students and hearing from our staff members on *YouTube!* These videos are available at <http://youtube.com/CharterOakState>.

***It's all about social networking – about connecting with people, places and events.*** 