

Connections

The Newsletter of Charter Oak State College

VOL. XXXII NO. 1

JANUARY 2008

Charter Oak Develops Five-Year Blueprint for the Future

Against the backdrop of a shifting educational landscape, Charter Oak has positioned itself to play a more critical role than ever in supporting the education and workforce development needs of Connecticut and the nation. In executing its strategic plan that contains bold, new initiatives, the College will remain steadfast in its commitment to maintain the high quality of educational offerings and personalized student services that distinguish it from other institutions of higher education. The College is further committed to remain faithful to the fundamental goals of providing an accessible and affordable alternative route to degree completion and to helping adult learners succeed as students and in life.

During the next five years, Charter Oak will pursue key strategic goals that include –

- ▶ enhancement of its reputation as a distance learning entrepreneur and educational leader through more aggressive marketing activity.
- ▶ strengthening of academic programs through initiatives that focus on curriculum innovation, faculty

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New Student Information System Launched

In an effort to ensure that its students have access to a first-class Web portal and a technological environment that maximizes support of their academic progress, Charter Oak launched Jenzabar EX and Jenzabar's Internet Campus Solution, its new student information system and campus portal, on January 11.

During the past two years, the College has invested more than \$750,000 and significant staff time



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Grant Supports Restructure of RN Refresher Course

Charter Oak, in cooperation with the Connecticut League for Nursing, recently received \$32,500 grant to revamp its three-module RN Refresher course. A portion of the funds are targeted for development of a licensing online version of the refresher course to be used within a hospital setting. Danbury (CT) Hospital will participate in the development of the program pilot. Remaining funds will be used to conduct a feasibility study to deter-

mine the viability of new ways to provide the course's Module Three clinical practicum experience. The study is in response to difficulties encountered in placing students in precepted practicums and the need to ensure that practicum sites are available to students on an as-needed basis.

Information about participating in Charter Oak's RN Refresher Course is available by calling 860-832-3812.



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From the President

I am writing this shortly before I retire. Therefore, it is a time both to reflect on the past and think about the future of Charter Oak State College.

During my tenure as President of Charter Oak, I have witnessed many exciting changes. Among these have been:

- ▶ Doubling the size of the student body;
- ▶ Development of new concentrations to meet both student and workforce needs;
- ▶ Introduction and remarkable growth of our online course offerings;
- ▶ Utilization of technology as a tool in both learning and student services (with a major step in this evolution occurring over the next two months);
- ▶ Building the College's first permanent home, which it has already outgrown;
- ▶ Eligibility for federal student financial aid (Title IV) and the growth of state funds to assist needy students;
- ▶ Dramatic growth in the College's endowment, providing funds to support needy students and program innovation;
- ▶ Creation and growth of the Women in Transition program to assist low-income, single mothers complete a college degree; and
- ▶ Increased participation in programs to assist Connecticut in building its workforce, particularly in shortage areas.

None of these would have been accomplished without the commitment of a very hardworking staff and dedicated volunteers, including members of the College and Foundation Boards and alumni. It has never been a lack of will or ideas that has limited the expansion of the institution. Rather, at times, the lack of financial resources has delayed implementation of new initiatives and has particularly limited marketing efforts.

Through all of the changes noted above, there has been an important constant – the students we serve. I have reviewed Status Reports of every graduate during my 18 years and have read every graduation survey. (Many of the suggestions made by graduates on those surveys have been carefully considered and many suggestions have been implemented.) I am constantly amazed at the talent of the students who are earning Charter Oak degrees and their ability to complete a degree while meeting family and work obligations. So many Charter Oak graduates, with degree in hand, have moved on to remarkable careers. Many others had remarkable careers and finished their degree for the satisfaction of knowing they had completed what they had never quite accomplished many years earlier.

As I look forward, I see a bright future for Charter Oak State College and hope that the next President will look back and be able to boast about:

- ▶ Alumni support, both financial and in time, that created an alumni network, boosted recruitment efforts and provided the resources needed to support needy students and new programs;
- ▶ Technological innovations that connected students, faculty and staff, supported superior student services and created rich learning environments;
- ▶ A new facility to house the College's growing staff;
- ▶ A Master's degree program requested by so many of our graduates and the broader community, designed to meet the needs of adults who want to improve their management and leadership skills; and
- ▶ Continued involvement and commitment to serving the needs of the state of Connecticut.

I will continue to follow the changes that are a certainty as Charter Oak moves ahead!



Merle W. Harris, Ed.D.

Charter Oak Develops Five-Year Blueprint for the Future

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- engagement in the life of the college and learning outcomes assessment.
- ▶ increasing the number of matriculations and course enrollments by extending market reach and penetration.
- ▶ fortifying a student-centered culture and creation of a strong sense of community among students and alumni.
- ▶ leveraging of the College's technology infrastructure and employment of new technologies to support overall organizational effectiveness.
- ▶ strengthening the College's financial foundation by developing new sources of income.

Among the strategic plan's key initiatives are –

- ▶ aggressive marketing of distinguishing features that differentiate the College from its competitors.
- ▶ expansion of the College's role in meeting workforce development goals.
- ▶ development of new certificate programs.
- ▶ pursuit of approval to offer graduate-level studies and a master's degree program.
- ▶ sourcing of new endowed funds for use in attracting eminent visiting faculty.
- ▶ enrollment, retention and graduation of underrepresented minority students.
- ▶ deployment of a new student information system.
- ▶ procurement of a larger facility to address space-related operational inefficiencies and to ensure the ability to meet the expectations and needs of an expanding student body.

As Charter Oak implements this new blueprint for the future, institutional strength will be evident in increased public awareness of, and appreciation for, Charter Oak's unique brand of educational excellence.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Merle W. Harris".

Merle W. Harris



New Student Information System Launched

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in implementing the Jenzabar systems, an integrated, state-of-the-art technology solution that will deliver important, new functions for students including increased self-service capability, improved e-mail functionality and greater security and data protection for student records.

“These changes are part of our institution’s strategic plan and represent a very strong foundation for ongoing technological advances at the College,” said Charter Oak Chief Information Officer, George C. Claffey, who noted that the Jenzabar system will be phased in over a three-month period to ensure a smooth transition from the old system.

Jenzabar will provide access to a wide variety of user-friendly functions. Prospective students, for example, will have the ability to make inquiries, apply for admission and register for classes online. Matriculated students will have access to their grades, unofficial transcripts and account statements. The online course registration process will be greatly simplified, and access to library resources and financial aid records will be easier.

“We’re excited to be providing a first-class student information system that will serve as a foundation for future Web and operational efficiencies,” observed President Harris. It will help enhance Charter Oak’s mission of providing quality education, distance learning delivery and great customer service.”

JENZABAR®



Happy 2008 from the Alumni Association!

At the outset, the Alumni Association wishes Dr. Merle Harris all the best in her retirement. Dr. Harris has been a great inspiration to our students and alumni, and we appreciate all she has done for the College and the Association. We will miss her very much!!

The mission of the Alumni Association is to provide professional and social opportunities for alumni, to support graduates as they further their education and careers, to advance the reputation of the College and to support its educational services and goals.

Since September, we have held two meetings which have addressed several involvement opportunities for the Alumni Association, among them sponsorship of a literary publication, increasing our working relationship with the Foundation Board and development of an Ambassador Alumni club.

There are many great opportunities for the Alumni Association to assist our institution, and we are very much interested in adding new members to our Board of Directors which meets four to five times each year at the College in New Britain. Today’s technological advances allow our alumni to participate in Association activities from afar, so don’t let distance be a deterrent. We welcome your ideas and involvement. If you would like to participate in the Association’s planning process, please contact Lori Pendleton, Charter Oak’s Director of Admissions and Alumni Association advisor, at lpendleton@charteroak.edu.

Carlo Esidore
President, Charter Oak Alumni Association

Call For D’Amato Awards Applications

Charter Oak is currently accepting applications for the 2008 D’Amato Graduate Studies Award, a cash award presented annually at the College’s June commencement exercise. To be eligible for Award consideration, individuals must hold a bachelor’s degree from Charter Oak, be a Connecticut resident and have been accepted into a college graduate program. For detailed information

about how to apply and to request an application, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to:

*D’Amato Graduate Studies Award,
Charter Oak State College, 55 Paul
J. Manafort Drive, New Britain, CT
06053-2150.*

The deadline for submitting the application and supporting material is March 31, 2008.



Connections

January 2008 • Volume XXXII, Number 1

Issued semi-annually by the Board for State Academic Awards as an information bulletin for enrollees and alumni of the Charter Oak State College external degree program.

 CharterOakSM
STATE COLLEGE

Chuck Albert, Editor
State of Connecticut
M. Jodi Rell, Governor

Board for State Academic Awards
Merle W. Harris, Executive Director

WIN and WIT Working Together

The Hartford, CT office of Deloitte recently opened its internal employee career development workshop to participants in Charter Oak's Women in Transition (WIT) program. Deloitte is recognized as a leader in developing innovative talent management programs such as its Women's Initiative (WIN) program.

Noreen McGill, who serves as Audit Committee Chair on the Charter Oak State College Foundation Board and is a member of the Hartford Deloitte WIN Council, spoke to Deb Heikkinen, Hartford's WIN Council Leader, about establishing the local office's first outreach networking event. The concept was presented and approved by Deloitte-Hartford's Managing Partner, Laurie Londergan, and the first joint WIN-WIT meeting was held at Deloitte's Hartford office on December 18.

The very successful event was led by Deloitte's Susan Peterson, Management & Leadership Coach, and directed by McGill and Delores Bell, Charter Oak's WIT Program Coordinator.



Participating in the WIN-WIT workshop session were (l-r), Charter Oak's Marlene Woodman, Deloitte's Deb Heikkinen and Susan Peterson, Charter Oak WIT Coordinator, Delores Bell, and Deloitte WIN Council member, Noreen McGill.

"Reaching out to share our knowledge and professional development practices helps bring our values to our community," Londergan observed. McGill noted, "Based on the energy and level of personal interaction and networking I saw at the event, the value of the workshop to the WIT program graduates, its current students and our people was very real."

Charter Oak president, Dr. Merle W. Harris, expressed her appreciation

for Deloitte's outreach effort. "Opening your offices to allow participants in the WIT program to explore working styles and leadership development is the kind of public/private effort that should be encouraged and replicated," she said. "Career development information and networking are very important for women in our WIT program who, most often, are first generation college students."

Deloitte.

Donors Boost Annual Fund

The names of the following Annual Fund contributors were unintentionally left out of the donor list published in the August, 2007 issue of *Connections*.

Charter Circle (\$100 to \$249) –
Edmund Clark

Sustainer (\$50-\$99) –
*Kathy Carbone, Edward Mullady,
Deanna S. Niles*

Supporter (\$49 and under) –
John Rodriguez

Benefactor Generosity Accelerates Donor Tree Growth

Donors continue to respond generously as they purchase 'personalized leaves' on Charter Oak's Donor Tree. Gifts from corporations and individuals are permanently recognized with engravings of giver names on brass copper and aluminum leaves that adorn the tree. The symbolic oak is prominently displayed in the College's administration building.

Numerous opportunities remain for those interested in adding to previous gifts and those who would like to give anew to the Charter Oak State College



Foundation-sponsored tree project. Leaf donation categories are: Brass, \$1000; Copper, \$500; Aluminum, \$250. Donations, which are eligible for a 25% State match and are tax deductible, are used to support various Foundation outreach programs.

Gifts may be sent to Harry White, Charter Oak State College, 55 Paul J. Manafort Drive, New Britain, CT 06053-2150. Inquiries may be addressed to Mr. White at 860-832-3863 or, via e-mail, to hwhite@charteroak.edu.

Grant Provides Scholarships For After School Credential

Charter Oak has received a grant from CT Charters-a-Course to provide scholarships for students to participate in a cohort of two classes as a first step in the process of attaining the College's Credential in After School Education. The \$34,120 grant, awarded for the start of the Fall, 2007 semester, provides opportunity for as many as 40 professionals in the After School field to take the *Introduction to After School Education* online course (ASE 255) with an on-ground technical support component.

The need for applicable college level coursework for after school providers in Connecticut is clear and compelling. The licensing requirement for head teachers in after school programs is a minimum of 12 credits in their field. Program directors had reported difficulty in finding courses for their staffs that both pertain to after school and meet approved licensing guidelines. Additionally, a School-Age Care credential was successfully piloted in Connecticut several years ago,

then dropped due to lack of funding and institutional oversight.

Currently, after school courses are not readily available at most two or four-year Connecticut colleges. In response to this need, Charter Oak collaborated with the Connecticut After School Network and Connecticut Charters-a-Course to create the Credential in After School Education which is delivered through Charter Oak's distance learning program.

Since the Credential's inception in Spring, 2005, participation has been steadily growing. A total of 92 students have taken at least one of the four ASE courses. To fulfill all requirements for the Credential, students must complete four courses – 3 credits each – plus a one or three-credit field course practicum.

After school professionals enjoy taking these Charter Oak online courses because they validate their work with children and youth and provide the skills and knowledge that improve the quality of care they provide. As



The need for applicable college level coursework for after school providers in Connecticut is clear and compelling.

one student commented, "The course reinforced my confidence in myself on a professional and personal level ... there were so many ... new-to-me ideas that I found myself running in to my program to try it. This entire course was about growth for me."



Aetna Education Partnership Is Extended

Charter Oak has extended its existing educational partnership with Aetna, Inc. through 2011. Since the partnership began seven years ago, more than 100 Aetna employees, at sites across the nation, have earned Charter Oak degrees.

"Aetna's partnership with Charter Oak has been a win-win for both our company and our employees," said David Blair, Aetna's Learning Head for Service Excellence. "Charter Oak's convenient, affordable online courses have not only saved us thousands in tuition reimbursement costs, but have also helped us cultivate a high-caliber workforce. This is a perfect example of a public-private partnership that helps everybody. Aetna is proud to partner with Charter Oak."

We want you to know[®]



The Charter Oak-Aetna partnership allows employees at all Aetna locations to take Charter Oak online courses at in-state rates and waives application and matriculation fees. A full-time Charter Oak program advisor works on-site at Aetna's Hartford headquarters.

Aetna employees may work toward an undergraduate degree in any subject area, whether work-related or not. Employees are encouraged to pursue professional development goals in such areas as Health Care Administration, Business

Administration, Organizational Leadership and Organizational Management. The Health Insurance Customer Service and Project Management certificates are professional development options students can use as stepping stones toward degree requirements.

"We are very pleased that this partnership is continuing," said Charter Oak President, Merle Harris. "Our relationship with Aetna is a model for public-private partnerships across the country. Charter Oak is strongly committed to workforce development initiatives, and we have seen that Aetna is equally committed to the ongoing professional development of its employees."



Two Named To BSAA Board

John M. Whitcomb, president of Whitcomb Business Corporation, a Danbury, CT-based business consulting firm, and Lenny Winkler, an emergency room nurse and former member of the Connecticut State Legislature, have been appointed to the Board for State Academic Awards (BSAA), the governing board for Charter Oak State College and the Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium. The appointments were made by Connecticut Governor, M. Jodi Rell, who also named long-time BSAA Board member, Astrid Hanzalek, to serve as the governing body's new Chair. Whitcomb and Winkler succeed Chandler J. Howard, outgoing Chair, and Vincent Socci whose terms expired at the end of 2007.

Whitcomb, who achieved executive leadership success while serving in corporate environments in Georgia, Florida, Texas and New York State, has also served as Vice-Chair of the Connecticut State Contracting Standards Board which oversees ethical and business contracting standards for the purchase of goods and services at all levels of Connecticut government.

As a state legislator, Winkler played key roles in the enactment of major initiatives related to the area of health care. She was the primary sponsor of legislation addressing the overuse of psychotropic drugs by children. The legislation was hailed as landmark by medical authorities throughout

the United States. She was recently appointed to the Connecticut Public Health Foundation Board of Directors.

While serving as a Connecticut state legislator during the 1970's, Hanzalek took a leadership role in the creation of the BSAA. "I am more convinced than ever," she commented, "that Charter Oak State College plays an important role in the state's opportunities for higher education...the College fulfills the need for an ever-growing population of older students with limited financial resources or time, but with great potential."

 **CharterOak**SM
STATE COLLEGE 



John M. Whitcomb



Lenny Winkler



Astrid T. Hanzalek, Chair, BSAA

E-Mail Helps Us Stay In Touch With You

Charter Oak currently maintains e-mail addresses for about 70 percent of its nearly 9000 alumni. E-mail allows us to communicate news of interest to our graduates more frequently than we are able to through this *Connections* newsletter which is published twice annually. Our e-mail database is fully protected and is used *only* to communicate with alumni. If you have recently established a first-time e-mail address



or changed your old e-mail designation and would like to share it with us, please e-mail your information to calbert@charteroak.edu. We would also like to update new postal addresses and phone numbers, both 'Home' and 'Work,' if they have recently changed. We eagerly look forward to receiving your new information.

WIT Program Wins AAUW Award

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) Legal Advocacy Fund has awarded the Charter Oak State College Women in Transition (WIT) program its 2007 Progress In Equity Award. The award, which acknowledges the WIT program's work in advancing educational opportunities for women in a critically underserved population, was presented to Charter Oak WIT Coordinator, Delores Bell, by Legal Advocacy Fund Director, Lauren Kamik. AAUW-Connecticut president, Carol Virostek presided over the award ceremony held November 19 at Central Connecticut State University.

WIT provides opportunity for low-income, underemployed single mothers to earn their college degrees through online courses while working and caring for their children. The program's participants have become strong, empowered individuals and role models for their children. More than 100 students have participated in the program since its inception in 1999. They receive assistance ranging from support and direction counseling to financial aid for tuition, fees and textbooks. WIT students also receive laptop computers and computer training that enable them to participate in the online program. The AAUW award of \$5000 will be used by Charter Oak to fund the technology needs of WIT students.

Laura Fanelli, representing the Lieutenant Governor's office, and Valerie Lewis, Connecticut's Commissioner of Higher Education, addressed the gathered audience. A citation recognizing the AAUW award was presented to the College on behalf of Connecticut's Fifth District congressman, Chris Murphy.

President Harris said the College was pleased that the unique WIT program, now in its eighth year, has been able to help participants earn their college degrees and achieve self sufficiency. "We are honored and proud to have received this recognition from AAUW," she said.



Charter Oak WIT Program Coordinator, Delores Bell, addresses the AAUW event audience.



Shown at the AAUW presentation ceremony are (l-r), President Harris; AAUW Legal Advocacy Fund Director, Laura Kamik; Carol Virostek, AAUW-Connecticut President; and Valerie F. Lewis, Commissioner, Connecticut Department of Higher Education.



Joining Dr. Harris for the AAUW award celebration were WIT program graduate, Cecelia Peppers-Johnson (l), a community planning representative with the U.S. Department of Urban Development, and Linda Kelley, President of the Hartford Foundation For Public Giving.



Charter Oak Plays Key Role In Health Care Education Initiatives

Charter Oak State College has received a \$25,000 workforce development grant from the Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF) to review certified nursing assistant (CNA) programs throughout the state of Connecticut and the Connecticut Technical High School System's (CTHSS) Licensed Practical Nursing program. Grant money has been used to develop recommendations for career paths to other allied health programs and to study possible changes to the current programs. The programs have also been reviewed to determine if their content meets requirements to qualify for college credit. Charter Oak assembled advisory committees for each program. Committees were comprised of educators, employers, Department of Public Health and workforce agency staff and members of the state legislature.

The CNA advisory committee discussed current CNA program requirements, level of care provided by CNAs, program requirements in other states, and educational levels of CNAs to determine if current programs and requirements meet today's health care needs.

The College contracted with faculty with expertise in nursing, psychology, math, and science to review the LPN curriculum offered by the CTHSS. The committee's recommendations were accepted by the CTHSS administration.

Recommendations included algebra and composition prerequisites, that students take a course in general psychology before graduation, and that the curriculum be enhanced so students can receive credit for lifespan development and biology. These changes will make it easier for graduates to enter RN and other allied health programs and will better prepare students aspiring to become LPNs. Charter Oak and the CTHSS will additionally work together to develop an articulation agreement with the Connecticut community college system to accept the new credit recommendations. Once the agreement is finalized, graduates who complete the LPN to RN Bridge course will be accepted into the community colleges' nursing program with 35 credits.

The College has received an additional \$18,800 in funding, based on review recommendations, to assist the CTHSS in making curriculum changes and marketing its program.

Charter Oak also participated in the development of the *Jobs to Career: Promoting Work-Based Learning for Quality Care* proposal submitted by Capital Workforce Partners (CWP) to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The Foundation is the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to improving the health and health care of all Americans. Because of Charter Oak's



Curriculum enhancements will make it easier for graduates to enter RN and other allied health programs and will better prepare students aspiring to become LPNs.

expertise in curriculum review, the College will evaluate training programs being developed for CNAs to determine if training is equivalent to that required for college level credit. The Foundation's grant is designed to develop career ladders for CNAs based on additional training in specialty areas such as dementia and Alzheimer's, hospice and palliative care and in leadership/supervision.



Discover the Alumni Message Board!

Want to network, online, with your fellow graduates? Searching for online graduate programs? Interested in finding out about career opportunities or posting your own career needs on a reputable Web site? Then visit Charter Oak's *Alumni Message Board!* Charter Oak graduates live in every state in

the nation and many foreign countries. They are employed as teachers, doctors, computer software specialists, consultants...and have achieved success in hundreds of other fields of endeavor. They share, with you, a common alma mater and the success of degree completion. Now, *you* can share your profes-

sional experiences and discuss career-related challenges and objectives. It's all achievable through the Charter Oak *Alumni Message Board*. Go to <http://www.charteroak.edu/Alumni> and connect to this valuable resource.



Concentrating on the Concentrations

Two new concentrations have been introduced by Charter Oak State College for students interested in pursuing a bachelor's degree in *Paralegal Studies* or *Child Studies With a Montessori Focus*. In addition, the College has developed new courses that now enable students to complete their concentration studies through the exclusive use of Charter Oak-based courses. This presents the convenience of completing degree requirements online from a single higher education source.

Concentrations now supported by a full complement of Charter Oak courses are *American Studies*, *Business Administration*, *Health Care Administration*, *Information Systems Studies*, *Organizational*

Management, *Organizational Leadership*, *Public Safety Administration*, *Sociology*, *Psychology* and *Child and Youth Development*.

The most popular concentrations currently pursued by Charter Oak students are *Individualized Studies* and *Liberal Studies*. This makes perfect sense given the professional backgrounds and aspirations of the College's student population. Unlike 18 to 21-year-olds, Charter Oak students have had significant work experience, and many are in professional transition.

The interdisciplinary nature of the Individualized and Liberal Studies concentrations is often the perfect answer. It allows students to meet their degree re-

quirements by combining credits earned in the field in which they work with newly-earned Charter Oak credits. In addition to these interdisciplinary concentrations, *Business Administration*, *Child Studies*, *Psychology* and *Sociology* – all of which may be completed using Charter Oak online courses – remain popular choices. Interest in the College's Information Systems Studies concentration has also grown in popularity. The recent development of several new courses in this subject area now enables students to complete the concentration using only Charter Oak courses.



\$1.7-Million Grant To Improve Quality of Early Childhood Programs

Charter Oak has received a grant in the amount of \$1,700,000 from the Connecticut Department of Education to administer a Quality Improvement Grant (QPI) program that requires the participation of all agencies receiving School Readiness Program expansion funds. The requirement will ensure that a comparable level of quality is available across all early childhood education programs receiving new slot/program funds. The grant program has been approved by the Early Childhood Education Cabinet.



Kristin Adomeit,
ECERS Early
Childhood Coordinator

The process requires that these programs be assessed using the Early Childhood Environmental Rating System instrument (ECERS). Based on their ECERS scores, some programs will be required to submit quality improvement plans for funding. Others, with higher scores, may volunteer to submit quality improvement plans in order to be eligible to receive a Quality Improvement Grant. Charter Oak's responsibility will be to coordinate rating personnel, receive evaluations of programs rated, and evaluate and fund improvement plans submitted. These functions will be overseen by ECERS Early Childhood Coordinator, Kristin Adomeit. She will also work with the Early Childhood Research and Policy Council to conduct research on each program and



The QPI grant builds on other Early Childhood initiatives already in place at Charter Oak.

make recommendations back to the Cabinet at the end of each two-year grant.

The grant builds on other Charter Oak early childhood initiatives already in progress at the College. Existing Charter Oak programs include concentrations in Child Studies and Child and Youth Development; a Director's Credential in Early Care and Education; a Credential in After School Education, Pathway Exams; and the Alternate Route to Early Childhood Teacher Certification.



Call For Literary Magazine Entries

The Alumni Association will publish a special, one-time edition of a literary magazine to feature both the writings and art of Charter Oak graduates. Members of the College's faculty will judge submissions to determine which will be included in the publication scheduled for release in April. Recognition awards will be presented for those entries deemed 'most outstanding' by the panel of judges. Authors of published pieces will be invited to read their works at a wine and cheese reception to be held at the College in late April.

If you are interested in submitting a piece for consideration, please follow these guidelines:

- ▶ Entries (a limit of two) can be poetry, prose, memoirs or short stories of no more than 1200 words.
- ▶ The deadline for submission is February 28, 2008.
- ▶ Artists and photographers should submit their work in a jpeg format. (Art and photography will be included on a 'space available' basis.)



Please submit all entries electronically to: Lori Gagne Pendleton (lpendleton@charteroak.edu).



Initiative To Increase Access To Early Childhood Education

A new program that provides an alternate route to teacher certification in Birth Through Kindergarten has been born of the efforts of Governor M. Jodi Rell and the Connecticut State Legislature to increase access to early childhood education – and to address the workforce needs that must accompany the key initiative.

Charter Oak has been designated as project administrator for the new, accelerated Alternate Route to Certification (ARC) program that begins February 18 and continues through July 30. The program, to be delivered online during the week and in-person every other weekend, includes a four-week field experience for participants seeking teacher certification.

"I am pleased that this innovative certification program, which meets all of the state's standards, is now available for professionals who have already demonstrated a commitment to the field," Governor Rell said. "This is an important step in meeting the shortage of certified early childhood teachers in Connecticut."



Amy Watson, Charter Oak Early Childhood Education-ARC Coordinator

Both the Connecticut State Department of Education and the Department of Higher Education approved the program following careful evaluation of its components.

The ARC initiative is supported by a partnership that includes Charter Oak, Eastern Connecticut State University, Fairfield University, Mitchell College, Saint Joseph College, Southern Connecticut State University, the Univer-

sity of Connecticut and the University of Hartford. The program is built on standards established by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the Council for Exceptional Children, and the departments of Education and Higher Education.

"We are proud to have played a key role in the development of this important program," said President Harris, "and we are pleased to provide this certification alternative to early childhood professionals dedicated to serving the needs of Connecticut's youth and their families."

Prerequisites established for program participation are a bachelor's degree with 15 hours of coursework related to early childhood education and at least three years experience in the field of Early Childhood.

Development of the ARC program, created in response to the shortage of certified Early Childhood teachers in Connecticut, was coordinated by Amy Watson who serves as Charter Oak's Early Childhood Education-ARC Coordinator.



Alumni spotlight

1983

Bradford Howard, Jr. recently earned his doctorate in Ministry from the North Carolina School of Theology and serves as head of the Restoration Temple Deliverance Mission. He currently resides in Windsor, CT.

1991

Mark Graham is a principal in a New Orleans-based UNIX Systems consulting practice. His work, he tells us, takes him to client sites throughout the U.S.

1995

Jacquelyn Wolf earned her MSN from Southern Connecticut State University and serves as Patient and Family Education Coordinator with the VA Connecticut Healthcare System in West Haven, CT.

1999

Cheryl Cuozzo received her Master of Science in Nursing from the University of Hartford in May and has been inducted into the Sigma Theta Tau International Nursing Honor Society. In July, she joined Pfizer, Inc. where she serves as a Clinical Study Manager. She additionally serves as adjunct faculty in the Nursing program at Connecticut's Gateway Community College. Cheryl has authored a manuscript titled *Pharmaceutical Research and Development: How Medications Are Born*, which has been accepted for publication by *Advance for Nurses Magazine*.

2003

John Griese recently gave his first presentation, as a James Cook University (Australia) doctoral student and professional astronomy historian, to the XXVI Symposium of the Scientific Instrument Commission of the International Union for the History and Philosophy of Science. The meeting was held at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Randall Orner earned a Master of Science in Information Technology in 2004 from Touro University International and has completed a graduate certificate in Healthcare Risk Management from the University of Florida. He is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Business Administration at Northcentral University.

2004

Debra Neisler has graduated from the University of North Carolina-Charlotte with a master's degree in Social Work.

2005

Teri Baber has graduated with an MSW from the University of Connecticut's School of Social Work.

Timothy Kulig, who serves as Chief Financial Officer for Wall Systems, Inc., of Rocky Hill, CT, has been named to the College Board CLEP Advisory Committee.

Andrea Mullin, a Client Manager at United HealthCare, Uniprise, in Hartford, CT, happily announces that she was the recent winner of a \$200 men's wardrobe in a major department store contest. She split her winnings down the middle with her two sons.

Keith Roberts has earned his MBA in Business Administration from American InterContinental University, Weston, Florida.

2006

Roy Bolus, who has been incarcerated at the Shawangunk Correctional Facility in Wallkill, New York, for the past 5 years, has penned an article focusing on the need for incarcerated individuals to pursue their college degrees.

Michelle Gallagher was recently promoted to Clinical Supervisor at the National Council of Alcoholism and Drug Dependence. She is currently pursuing a master's degree in Counseling at Ottawa University, Phoenix, AZ.

2007

Glenn Lawless, who was inducted into the Alpha Sigma Lambda National Honor Society during commencement exercises last June, has been accepted into the Master of Management program at Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA.



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