

# Connections

The Newsletter of Charter Oak State College

VOL. XXXII NO. 2

AUGUST 2008

## President Klonoski Inauguration Slated For October 3

*Day of Celebration To Mark College's 35th Anniversary*



**Ed Klonoski**

Charter Oak State College will celebrate two milestones on October 3—the inauguration of its fourth president, Edward D. Klonoski, and the college's 35th anniversary.

This special day in Charter Oak's history will begin at 1:30 p.m. with the inaugural ceremony. Students, alumni, faculty and staff are expected to be

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## 'Perfect Day' for Class of '08



**Honorary degree recipient, Chandler Howard, is hooded by Charter Oak president, Ed Klonoski, and Core Faculty member, Irene Clampet.**

June 1 was a meaningful, picture-perfect day for the more than one thousand guests who joined members of the class of 2008 in Welte Auditorium, on the campus of Central Connecticut State University, for Charter Oak Commencement Day. The graduates, many of whom attended the event in person while others participated via a Webcast—in keeping with their distance learning experiences—included 286 women and 194 men from 41 states, Great Britain, Canada, Germany

and Dubai. A number of the graduates earned their degrees while serving overseas with their military units. The average age of class members is 41. The youngest is 21; the eldest, 66.

Charter Oak's newly-appointed president, Ed Klonoski, welcomed those gathered at the event and congratulated members of the graduating class observing, "I know this has been a long awaited dream come true, and we

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# From The President

The fall of 2008 marks a special moment for the College and for me. On October 3rd, we will hold an inauguration ceremony publicly celebrating the transition to a new president. This is the first time in eighteen years that the College has needed such a ceremony, and it seems a propitious moment to reflect on changes—both personal and institutional.

For me, this is what the IT folks call a career moment. As I write this, I am five months into the job and beginning to see just how large and exciting a challenge it is. I am thrilled to be Charter Oak State College's new president and grateful for the support and encouragement I am receiving from staff, students, and alumni. But as I assist with planning for the inauguration, I am forced to face just how significant a moment this is for the institution; and that is a more solemn proposition.

The economic challenges that swirl around all of us require that we execute the College's strategic plans with special care. But these difficult conditions also reveal the wisdom of our previous efforts. As the cost of fuel rises, the cost effectiveness of distance-delivered education becomes clearer to everyone. We now have over 200 online courses, with new courses being added with every launch date. Our courses are delivered in 5-week, 8-week, and 15-week versions, and we begin new "semesters" across the whole calendar year. Clearly, our distance learning efforts have placed on the right side of history as higher education moves to deploy the power of modern communication technologies to project learning to the learner.

In addition, the economic landscape is being shaped by the looming retirements of baby boomers and the decline of their college-age offspring. These two demographical realities point toward adult learners as the population that will require intense educational support in the coming years. Charter Oak State College's distance learning expertise and its 35 years of adult learner focus will become its sharpest tools in meeting that challenge. As it becomes increasingly difficult to find new workforce talent, we expect that companies will be working furiously to find ways to keep their workers prepared and educated. We are preparing the College to assist with that challenge by using its ability to deliver education to the workplace and to construct that learning to serve adult learners.

So, the strategic focus of the College over the next months will include preparing ourselves for increases in online learners and wider public interest in online learning. Already, the College is being included in a variety of workforce proposals that seek to educate the Connecticut workforce using the tools of technology-mediated education. We have launched a Corporate Partnership Program to increase our visibility in Connecticut's workplace, and we are continuing our efforts to find partners whose educational content can be combined with the College's advising and eLearning capabilities.

Stay tuned. It should be an interesting journey.



Ed Klonoski

## President Klonoski Inauguration Slated For October 3

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joined in attendance by key political, business and education leaders from throughout the state of Connecticut. There will be opportunity for attendees to meet President Klonoski following the inauguration ceremony.

The Shea Lecture, with keynote speaker Stanley B. Greenberg, will follow at 3:30 p.m. Greenberg is the internationally renowned pollster and political advisor whose clients have included President Bill Clinton, Prime Minister Tony Blair and Prime Minister Ehud Barak, as well as businesses and sporting franchises including The Chicago Cubs, CNBC, United Healthcare, TIAA-CREF, Sun Microsystems, the NBA and General Motors. His presentation is entitled, "The Economic Mandate for 2009: Reflections based on Greenberg's Dispatches from the War Room." The event is free and open to the public. Greenberg is the husband of Connecticut's U.S. Representative, Rosa L. DeLauro.

The day will conclude with a Charter Oak State College Foundation reception to raise funds for the College's endowment that supports students in need and innovative program development. Tickets for the reception, scheduled for 4:30 p.m., are \$150 and \$75.

The Inauguration and Shea Lecture will take place on the campus of Central Connecticut State University. The Foundation Fundraiser will be held in Charter Oak's Fleet Conference Room.

CharterOak STATE COLLEGE

1973-2008  
**35 YEARS**

Entrust ~ Enlighten ~ Endow



## 'Perfect Day' for Class of '08

—continued from page 1

are pleased to be able to celebrate this accomplishment with you.”

Chandler J. Howard, who served from 2001 until 2007 as Chairman of the Board for State Academic Awards, Charter Oak's degree-granting authority, was awarded the honorary degree Doctor of Humane Letters during the commencement ceremony. Howard, who has enjoyed a long and successful career in banking, was recognized for his service to the College and for his efforts, over the years, in serving the interests of numerous public organizations and their beneficiaries. He is currently President and chief Executive Officer of Liberty Bank in Middletown, CT.

Among the members of the class of '08 is Elizabeth Horton Sheff, a former Hartford, CT city councilwoman who led a trailblazing court battle that became known throughout the nation as *Sheff vs. O'Neil*. The landmark civil rights lawsuit sought to redress the inequities in public school education.

Another class member is Jimmy Adams, a supervisor training instructor at a Mississippi federal prison. As a result of his personal Charter Oak experience, he has been able to facilitate a program that enables prison inmates to pursue their college degrees while incarcerated.



## From your Alumni Association President

If you're a new alum or previous Charter Oak graduate unaware of the important primary role of the College's Alumni Association, allow me to briefly explain. Simply, the Association, through its nationwide network of members, strives to spread the word of Charter Oak's position as a key institution of higher education that provides affordable, online degree completion opportunity for adult learners.

We are always in search of alumni eager to share the positive aspects of their Charter Oak learning experiences with prospective students. Of course, every organization requires a 'steering' committee and, in essence, that is the function of our Alumni Board. We encourage dedicated individuals to join the Board and welcome volunteers to play important roles in developing and promoting Association functions designed to enhance the Charter Oak image. It is not necessary that you reside in Connecticut to participate. Our teleconferencing capabilities place you in the 'same room' with your fellow alums allowing for a valuable exchange of ideas.

There are other means through which to remain in touch with your alma mater and fellow alumni. The College's Discussion Board (<http://www.charteroak.edu/alumniboard>) and a newly-created Alumni Network on LinkedIn (<http://www.charteroak.edu/linkedinalums>) allow you to establish constructive, long term relationships with your fellow alumni and to share ideas and opinions on a variety of College and non-College-related issues.

Please, participate in our Association in any way you're able. Our alumni are one of the College's most important assets. We welcome your input at all times, and we, in turn, strive to keep you informed about Charter Oak throughout the year using e-mail and our Web site. Keep an eye peeled for details about attending our next alumni 'meetingcast' scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 16.

Please feel free to contact Lori Pendleton—Charter Oak's Director of Admissions and Alumni Association advisor—with your questions, comments and innovative ideas. You can contact her at 860-832-3858 or by e-mail: [lpendleton@charteroak.edu](mailto:lpendleton@charteroak.edu)

Sincerely,

Carlo Esidore

President, Charter Oak State College Alumni Association



## Stay Connected through Connections

We'd like to hear from you about job changes, graduate degrees, marriages, births, and other significant events and successes in your life. We'll publish your news in the next edition of *Connections*. Please use the form below, or write us a note. Send to: Public Information, Charter Oak State College, 55 Paul J. Manafort Drive, New Britain, CT 06053-2150—or email to [calbert@charteroak.edu](mailto:calbert@charteroak.edu).

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

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_

## Keep Connected—Get LinkedIn!

Charter Oak has made a pair of easy-access Web sites available to alumni. They allow you to network with your fellow graduates regarding your career and academic goals and to discover career opportunities.

Keep in mind that Charter Oak graduates reside in every state and many foreign countries, and the two sites allow you to communicate with them 24/7. These alumni are teachers, doctors, computer specialists, consultants, business professionals and others who have



achieved success in dozens of fields of endeavor. They share, with you, a common alma mater and the success of degree completion.

Now, you can discuss your professional experiences, career-related challenges and objectives and address a

wide variety of subjects—both education and non-education oriented. It's easy. It's enlightening!

Charter Oak's 'Alumni Discussion Board' ([www.charteroak.edu/alumniboard](http://www.charteroak.edu/alumniboard)) and the LinkedIn Alumni Network ([www.charteroak.edu/linkedinalums](http://www.charteroak.edu/linkedinalums)) provide an abundance of information and opportunities to exchange ideas in real time, and you can connect to these valuable resources at your leisure.



## College Launches Fall Marketing Campaign

Charter Oak recently launched an integrated marketing campaign to generate fall enrollments. The campaign targets Connecticut residents seeking to complete their degrees online. Sixty-one percent of Charter Oak's enrollment consists of Connecticut residents; and more than 71% of its distance learning population (students not enrolled in a degree completion program but who take courses online) reside in-state. The campaign runs through late August.

"We recognize that today's adults are busy raising families and working at professional careers," said Charter Oak president, Ed Klonoski. "For thirty-five years, our college's mission has been to help adult students fulfill their dreams

of obtaining a bachelor's degree. We want Connecticut residents to know that there is an affordable way to complete their degrees from the convenience of their own homes."

The marketing campaign consists of 60-second radio commercials, print ads and online advertising and features the stories of Jeff Mulholland and Katherine Mauriello, members of the class of 2008. Charter Oak marketing director Carolyn Hebert said, "The stories of our adult students are also key differentiators to other institutions of higher learning. We wanted to present the benefits of Charter Oak's degree completion program from the viewpoint of our students."

Charter Oak also uses a variety of media, including the Internet, to reach prospective students worldwide.



## Charter Oak Assists Gibbs College Students

Charter Oak has entered into an agreement with Gibbs College—Connecticut that will provide Gibbs' associate degree graduates advanced standing should they choose to pursue their bachelor's degrees at Charter Oak. Gibbs has announced that it will cease its Connecticut campus operations on December 31, 2009 and is no longer accepting enrollments.

Alluding to the agreement, Charter Oak President Ed Klonoski said, "We're

pleased to be able to offer this opportunity to Gibbs College graduates and to be responsive to their needs. Gibbs College has been an important contributor to its community and the state, and many of its graduates continue to live and work in the area. This is an extension of Charter Oak State College's mission—to provide diverse and alternative opportunities for adults to earn degrees."

The agreement between the two schools stipulates that Charter Oak

would offer advanced college standing to students who graduated from Gibbs after 1998 with an associate degree and have earned a minimum of 90 credits. Gibbs graduates wishing to enroll at Charter Oak would follow the Charter Oak admissions process. Interested parties can apply online at [www.charteroak.edu/apply](http://www.charteroak.edu/apply).



## New Programs Respond to Paralegal Workforce Demand

Employing the results of government and education association research and the guidance of practitioners, lawyers, educators and the Connecticut Bar Association (CBA), Charter Oak has rolled out new paralegal degree completion and certificate programs.

“There are few job categories offering brighter current and future prospects,” observed Dr. Barry J. Vroeginday, director of Charter Oak’s distance learning program. The college’s newly-introduced Paralegal concentration and Post-Baccalaureate Paralegal Certificate programs have been designed to meet fast-growing workforce demand. “The need for highly educated paralegals brings the issue of education to the forefront since career advancement in the field may, in fact, hinge upon the professional holding a higher college degree,” Vroeginday said.

The Charter Oak Paralegal programs provide a total understanding of the pro-

profession’s nature and scope and the role of the paralegal in executing ethical and professional practices. The programs’ courses, structured in a convenient, 8-week format, are taught by lawyers and legal professionals expert in their fields and are geared to assist students in mastering both the substantive and procedural aspects of the Law.

“Individuals who add the Paralegal concentration to their Charter Oak degree completion efforts, or who seek the paralegal certificate, will be prepared to think clearly from a legal perspective upon completion of their programs,” noted Raymond J. Ryan, a long-time member of the Bars of Connecticut and New York State and a member of the advisory committee that worked closely with the College to develop the paralegal curricula. Of note is the fact that students taking the online concentration will be assigned projects based on



**Charter Oak Paralegal programs provide a total understanding of the profession's nature and scope.**

laws applicable to the state in which they intend to practice. Beyond satisfying the concentration’s course requirements, program participants can shape the remainder of their academic program by taking other 8 and 15-week Charter Oak online courses, by participating in the College’s portfolio assessment process, by taking standardized college tests or by taking courses offered at other regionally accredited institutions.



## New Alum Literary Publication Is Well Received

“Literature is not only a way to describe something to the world, it is also a way to examine ourselves...much of the writing, here, is not an experiment in form but an experiment in self discovery.”

Such are the observations of Edmond Chibeau, Ph.D., as they appear in the introductory pages of a new and well-received literary publication—*Alumni Reflections*—a collection of creative expressions...—brainchild of the Charter Oak Alumni Association Board of Directors and its advisor, Lori Gagne Pendleton, the College’s Director of Admissions.

Earlier this year, a call went out to Charter Oak alumni and students to submit original writings, artwork and photography for consideration for inclusion in a new publication conceived to recognize creative achievement. Dr. Chibeau, a member of Charter Oak’s Core Faculty and Assistant Professor of Communication at Eastern Connecticut State Uni-

versity, was assigned the difficult task of reviewing the dozens of resulting submissions and selecting those to be published in the 60-page, limited edition book.

On June 5, scores of alumni, staff and friends of Charter Oak gathered in the College’s Fleet Conference Room to enjoy a wine and cheese reception that featured readings by several of the publication’s selected authors, to view published paintings and photography and to receive their personal copies of *Alumni Reflections*.

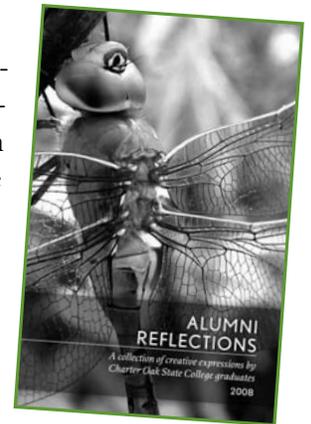
Outstanding achievement awards were presented to three authors whose works were published. The first place recipient was Carolyn J. Brown, ’03. Second place recognition went to Doris Frost, ’01, and Matthew Marotta, ’03, garnered third place honors.

“This was an important and productive project that brought both our institution’s alumni and students together and demonstrated the bond that

has been established and sustained between the College and those individuals who have enjoyed and benefited from their Charter Oak experience,”

Pendleton commented.

A limited number of copies of *Alumni Reflections* are available for purchase. Proceeds from the publication’s sales will benefit future Alumni Association projects. To obtain a copy, please send a check for \$5.00, made payable to the Charter Oak State College Alumni Association, to: Charter Oak State College Alumni Association, 55 Paul J. Manafort Drive, New Britain, CT 06053-2150.



## Donors Honor Dr. Harris with Foundation Gifts

The following have made donations to the Charter Oak State College Foundation in honor of the retirement of Dr. Merle Harris and in recognition of her contributions to the growth of the College during her 18-year presidency.

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## Cassiday Award Shared By Six Students

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 six students. The award recognizes individuals who avail themselves of a broad range of learning options while earning credits both inside and outside the traditional classroom setting.

Those receiving recognition were Connecticut residents, Dale Champaner Cohen, New Britain; William Perez, Andover; Elizabeth Horton Sheff, Hart-

ford; and Ruth G. Torres, West Haven. Miriam Kozlowski of Brooklyn, New York and Rodney C. Trumpf, a Battle Ground, Washington resident, were also Cassiday Award recipients.

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



**Doris Cassiday (r), presents the award, created in her name, to Dale Champaner Cohen during 2008 commencement ceremonies.**



# THANK YOU DONORS

The Charter Oak State College Foundation and the College thank our donors. Your generosity is making a difference for individual students and the College. The list of donors, below, includes those who made a contribution to the Annual Fund or Endowment between July 1, 2007 and June 30, 2008. A double asterisk following a donor's name indicates that the donor has given \$100 or more for three consecutive years. To learn more about the Foundation and giving opportunities, please visit [www.charteroak.edu/foundation](http://www.charteroak.edu/foundation)—or contact Dr. Merle Harris, Interim Executive Director, by e-mail at [mharris@charteroak.edu](mailto:mharris@charteroak.edu).

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by Doris Duggins  
Sandra Morgan  
by Carolyn Rogers  
Gregg Nodelman  
by Linda & Bill Berlinger  
Stewart Remele  
by Sara Donohue,  
Howard Willoughby  
Allan Sheridan  
by Dianne Sheridan  
Ruth Garby Torres  
by Carolyn Anderson,  
Pirjo Garby  
Dale Tucker  
by Frances Tucker  
Barry Vroeginday  
by Mark Wessinger  
Rebecca Wareing  
by Richard Wareing  
John Whelchel  
by Sofia & Corinne Whelchel  
Nancy Whitehead  
by Gerry Whitehead

## IN MEMORY OF

Bruce Cassiday  
by Doris Cassiday  
William Burns  
by Merle & David Harris  
Jeffrey Emerick  
by Merle & David Harris  
Joyce Goldsmith  
by Merle & David Harris  
Edward D. Hoch  
by Doris Cassiday  
Inez Lanning Jones  
by Merle & David Harris  
Kara Wilks  
by Brian Ledbetter  
Anne Mayer  
by David Emerick,  
Merle & David Harris,  
Marlene Woodman,  
The McGoldrick Family  
James Taft  
by Linda Larkin  
Richard Cohn  
by Sandra Morgan  
Louise Turner  
by Anna Kochan,  
Prescott Turner, Jr.

\*\* Members of Oak Leaf Society



## Charter Oak Initiates Corporate Partnership Program

**C**harter Oak has embarked on a new partnership program for Connecticut-based corporations that gives companies a seamless way to educate their employees using the services of the College's online course programs.

"As an online college we are particularly well-suited to be quickly responsive to Connecticut's workforce needs," noted President Klonoski. "We recognize that to remain competitive in the 21st century, businesses must employ and retain the best and brightest professionals. To help Connecticut companies meet this need, we have created a program specifically designed to help corporations grow an educated workforce and gain ground among their competitors."

In addition to the online delivery of educational courses to employees, major components of the program include working with companies to develop industry and workforce-specific curricula and providing support for employees in the form of academic advising, a Char-

ter Oak hallmark. Advising would take place at the sites of participating companies. Electronic face-to-face conferencing will be available for employees at out-of-state facilities.

"Online learning is a convenience to employees because they can learn on their own time from the comfort of homes," Klonoski observed. "Employers would benefit because there is no loss of productivity related to classroom schedules," he said.

More than 150 Aetna, Inc. employees have completed degree and certificate programs through Charter Oak State College. Company employees in California, Colorado, Florida, New Jersey, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Texas have made the trip to New Britain to participate in the College's annual June graduation ceremony.

"Aetna's 6-plus year 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 they 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."

The new partnership program will offer in-state rates for corporate employees whether they are located in Connecticut or at out-of-state offices of participating companies. As part of the program, companies will promote Charter Oak as one of their preferred providers for online higher education.

Alumni are urged to make their employers aware of the partnership program. Company officials interested in the program should call Jason Jakubowski, Charter Oak's Director of Corporate, Community & Educational Development, at (860) 832-3902 or visit [www.charteroak.edu/corporate](http://www.charteroak.edu/corporate).



## Dan Cahill is Alumni Citation Recipient

**D**an Cahill, a member of the class of 2003, 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."

Cahill has unhesitatingly 'given back' to his alma mater. For the past five years, he has devoted both his time and energy to advancing Charter Oak's image as New England's premier public distance learning institution. He served as a member of the Alumni Association's Board of Directors for 3 years and as Association president for two. He led several Association image awareness and fund raising initiatives including the 'Degrees Without Boundaries 5-K Road Race' in 2005 and 2006 and played a major role in planning and staging the first-ever Student/Alumni Art Exhibit that called



**Dan Cahill**

attention to the artistic achievements of Charter Oak students and graduates.

Cahill, who serves as a financial analyst at the Hospital of Central Connecticut, is an accomplished photographer in

his own right. One of his photographs was selected for inclusion in the Alumni Association's newly-published literary publication. He has helped build the College's photo portfolio by voluntarily employing his talent at a bevy of Charter Oak-sponsored events including the annual commencement-eve student reception and Alumni-Student Association Brunch. He is a regular contributor to the Charter Oak State College Foundation and has been successful in procuring donation-matching commitments from the corporate community. Above all, he has shared his passion for Charter Oak with friends, acquaintances and co-workers, alike, and is most deserving of the recognition the Citation represents.



## U.S. Navy, Charter Oak In Learning Partnership

The United States Navy's Center for Personal and Professional Development (CPPD) has expanded online learning opportunity for sailors by selecting Charter Oak State College as a member of the Navy College Program Distance Learning Partnership (NCPDLP).

Charter Oak went through a rigorous Navy selection process to earn the designation 'Navy Approved.' Referencing the Navy's expanding efforts to provide voluntary educational opportunity for sailors, Ron Smith, CPPD's program manager for voluntary distance educa-

tion, observed, "There's something here for every sailor." In fiscal 2007, 41% more sailors took online courses than attended classes at traditional campus schools.

"We share the Navy's commitment to ongoing professional development, and we're elated that this partnership has been established," said Charter Oak president, Ed Klonoski. "We feel our relationship with the Navy will benefit sailors everywhere. That's the beauty of online learning. It's accessible to Navy personnel wherever their assignments take them worldwide."



## Alumni Association Scholarship to Mom of Five

Ruth Kenneth-Barbieri, a West Haven, CT resident and owner of a small day care center, has been named recipient of the Charter Oak State College Alumni Association 2008 Scholarship awarded, annually, to an adult student pursuing degree completion at the College.

Kenneth-Barbieri, who interrupted her college career following the birth of the third of her five children, was able to resume her quest for a degree when

she discovered Charter Oak and the on-line programs that have won the college national recognition. She is currently studying for her Bachelor of Science degree with a concentration in Child Studies and is in the process of obtaining the Connecticut Directors' Credential (CDC) for early child care and education which is also awarded by Charter Oak.

"Operating my own small day care center has been a wonderful experience," says Kenneth-Barbieri who has been asked

to assume directorship of the Infant-Toddler Nursery at Cornerstone Christian Center in nearby Milford when construction of the new 100-family center is completed next year. "Each child I've cared for is truly unique, she observed. "I could not imagine myself in a more rewarding career than child care."

Kenneth-Barbieri is on course to complete her Charter Oak degree studies in April 2009.



## Four Receive Foundation Scholarships

The Charter Oak State College Foundation has awarded scholarships to four students requesting financial assistance in order to meet their educational and professional goals.

The *John and Elizabeth Blennerhassett Scholarship*, established by Charter Oak graduate, Susan Sweeney in memory of her parents, was awarded to Anne Petersen-Chung of Castro Valley CA. The \$500 scholarship is awarded to working adults who show academic promise and financial need. Chung is working toward her BA in Literature.

Cynthia McMillian, a Norwalk, CT resident who is pursuing a degree in Child Studies, is the recipient of a \$500 *R. Wayne Clugston Organizational Leadership Scholarship* created to assist individuals preparing for defined leadership roles in service-based organizations.

The *Beverly and Rodney Hawes, Jr. Scholarship*, which awards \$800 in financial assistance, has gone to Sheila Barnes of Waterbury, CT. Barnes currently works as a daycare center receptionist and volunteers in a hospital-based medical office. She is pursuing a concentration in Organizational Leadership at the

College. The scholarship assists students who demonstrate qualities of leadership and a commitment to community.

Another Connecticut resident, Ruth Kenneth-Barbieri of West Haven, has been selected to receive the Vincent Iovino Scholarship, a \$700 award. The mother of five currently operates a state-licensed family daycare center. The scholarship has been established to provide financial assistance to Charter Oak students preparing to enter a career working with young people.



## Charter Oak Alum Receives National Higher Education Award

**M**agdalena Rosales-Alban, a Charter Oak graduate and Assistant Director of the New Haven, (CT) Lu-Lac Head Start program, was presented the National Higher Education Grantee Partnership Achievement Award during ceremonies held in April at the Connecticut State Capitol. The award, which recognizes Rosales-Alban's academic success and commitment to children and families, was presented by State Representative Roberta Willis, Co-chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee for Higher Education.

Rosales-Alban earned both her bachelor's degree and the prestigious Connecticut Director's Credential from Charter Oak and is currently pursuing her master's degree at the University of New Haven. She participated in the Connecticut Charts-A-Course *Higher Education Learning Pathways for Early Head Start* grant program.

In commenting on her award, she noted that children are the state's most important resource and that with motivation and support, anything is possible. "We must have qualified educators to

care for and teach youngsters in Connecticut's child care centers," she said.

Charter Oak and Connecticut Charts-A-Course, a statewide professional development system for early care and education and school-age care, have forged a unique partnership that implements innovative academic programs to assist working, adult students in the acquisition of degrees and credentials in early childhood education.



## New Funding Boosts WIT Program

**F**our donations have been received by Charter Oak in support of the College's Women In Transition (WIT) program. Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, which has shown its generosity and commitment to the WIT initiative since 2001, has voted a grant of \$40,000 to aid program participants who reside in Hartford County cities and towns served by the Foundation. There are currently 19 women in the program. Since its inception in 1999, WIT has accepted 109 individuals, most of whom have earned Charter Oak associate and/or bachelors degrees. Many of the graduates have gone on to master's programs.

A second WIT-associated grant has been received from the Daphne Seybolt Culpeper Memorial Foundation. These funds target the technology component of the WIT program. They will be used to purchase and maintain laptop computers issued, without charge, to WIT students, all of whom are underserved Connecticut women in quest of college degrees. Other new WIT funding has come from Chubb and the Junior League of Greater New Britain.



## E-mail Helps Us Stay In Touch With You



**Your email address allows us to share Charter Oak news with you wherever you are.**

**C**harter Oak currently maintains e-mail addresses for a vast majority of its nearly 10,000 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](mailto:calbert@charteroak.edu).

We would also like to update new postal addresses and phone numbers if they have recently changed. We eagerly look forward to receiving your new information.



# Alumni spotlight

## 1980

**Claude Rankin** informs us that he departed, on July 3, for Shanghai, China where he will join the teaching staff at Cambridge (University's) International Centre, Shanghai Normal University. He'll be teaching college-level geography and English language speaking and listening to 14 to 16-year-olds who attend the college preparatory academy.

## 1987

**Rev. Lin McGee**, who currently serves as Pastor and music director of the Eagle Rock Church in Thomaston, CT, has founded the state's first chapter of the Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc. an organization that cares for the families of fallen military personnel.

## 1988

**Matthew Newgarden**, of New London, CT has been awarded the professional insurance designation Chartered Property Casualty Underwriter (CPCU). He is employed as a claims analyst by the Hartford Financial Services Group.

## 1990

**Blaise Falbo** informs us that he has earned his Master of Science degree in Community Counseling from Southern Connecticut State University.

## 1991

**Deborah (Clark) Ebel**, who has worked as a child and adolescent psychiatric nurse in Connecticut, Alaska and Virginia since her graduation, recently published her first book, *The Forgotten Future: Adolescents in Crisis*. The book, she explains, provides important information about how, when and where to seek help for troubled children and focuses on specific questions to ask of providers and mental health facilities. More about the book is available at [www.debebel.com](http://www.debebel.com).

## 1994

**Kevin McKeon** has enjoyed the unique experience of traveling throughout Connecticut to visit every firehouse in the state and to photograph every fire vehicle. He has published three books featuring his photos. Kevin is a career Fire Lieutenant in the West Shore Fire District of the city of West Haven, CT.

## 1996

**Kathleen Simmons**, a Palm Harbor, FL resident, has earned her Ph..D. in Applied Management and Decision Sciences from Walden University.

## 1999

**John G. Brenner** has retired from the Bridgeport, CT Police Department and has launched a private investigations company in that city.

## 2005

**Patricia Zielinski** has been accepted into the University of Denver's graduate program in Applied Communications.

**Lt. Commander Bruce C. Brown** has authored six books during his 24 years of U.S. Coast Guard service. He is the recipient of a 2007 Independent Publisher Award and an American Library Association Book of the Year Award.

## 2006

**William F. Pilon, Jr.** has been accepted to Georgia State University's MBA program and will begin studies for his master's degree this fall.

**Kathy Barra** maintained a GPA of 4.0 while earning her Master of Science degree in Elementary Education from the University of New Haven. She recently completed a student teaching assignment in the West Haven (CT) school system.

## 2007

**Furman Blue**, a Pleasantville, NJ resident, tells us he is spending the summer on a national tour promoting a recently-published book he authored. He is also completing his MBA online with the University of Phoenix.

**Daniel Klein** has enrolled in New York University's College of Dentistry.

**Deborah Markel** has enrolled in the Health Education/Health Promotion master's program at the University of Alabama-Tuscaloosa. In her correspondence, she notes that "Charter Oak helped me realize you can teach an old dog new tricks."

**Jeanne Cavanaugh** recently entered the Master of Arts in Art Therapy program at Connecticut's Albertus Magnus College.

## 2008

**Tracy Green** is pursuing her master's degree in Organizational Leadership at Southern New Hampshire University.



## GET YOUR CHARTER OAK CLASS RING

Alumni wishing to purchase a class ring should contact Josten's representative Steve Fitzgerald.

He can be contacted directly at [stephenfitzgerald@jostens.com](mailto:stephenfitzgerald@jostens.com) or at 401-683-5675

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

## D'Amato Award To John Ritchie, '07

**J**ohn Ritchie, a member of Charter Oak's class of 2007, has been named recipient of the 2008 D'Amato Award. The award was established in 1992 by a Charter Oak alumna for the dual purpose of supporting alumni committed to pursuing graduate degrees and to foster

strong links between the College and its graduates. Award consideration is given to candidates who reside in the state of Connecticut and are enrolled in an accredited graduate program.

Ritchie, who earned his B.S. in Criminal Justice from Charter Oak, is currently

pursuing a Master of Justice Administration degree at Norwich University.

He is a member of Fairfield University's Department of Public Safety and serves on the University's Safety Committee.



## Legislature Recognizes Students' Academic Achievement

**C**harter Oak students John M. Whelchel, of Danbury, and Theresa Stieber, a Prospect resident, were among several Connecticut college students recently recognized by the state legislature for "possessing outstanding academic qualities." Both were awarded certificates of recognition during ceremonies held April 9 at the State Capitol.

Whelchel, who graduated in June, maintained a perfect 4.0 grade point

average while pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree with a concentration in Individualized Studies. He is Principle Technology Consultant with New York City-based Ready-IT, a technology consulting firm.

In recognizing Stieber's academic achievement, State Senator Joan Hartley said, "Theresa's pursuit of a professional degree in the field of nursing is a testament to her recognition of the serious

shortage of nursing professionals in our state. Her outstanding accomplishment will serve as an inspiration to many others that continuation of their nursing professions can be achieved and is accessible to them...through quality, flexible programming like that offered by Charter Oak State College."

Also a member of Charter Oak's class of 2008, Stieber earned honors in general scholarship.

