

# connections

CHARTER OAK STATE COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2011 VOL. XXXV NO.1



## Alumni Ambassadors Spreading the Word

It's a well-known fact at Charter Oak that a vast majority of our students hear about the College through word of mouth from our alumni. One reason is that our graduates are extremely happy with their Charter Oak experience – 97 percent report being satisfied or very satisfied with their Charter Oak State College program. Given this, who would make better spokespersons for the College than our alumni?

Last year we launched the official Alumni Ambassador Program and today have scores of alums who have committed to it. As a volunteer Ambassador, you can invest as much or as little time as your schedule allows. Among the important roles Ambassadors have played that have proven extremely valuable to Charter Oak:

- Serve as an email contact for prospective students who have specific questions about Charter Oak degree programs and the positive effect your own degree has played in advancing your career.
- Attending a college-sponsored event at a location close to your home to welcome and encourage prospective students to investigate Charter Oak degree completion programs.

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## Charter Oak – Advancing the Workforce

*By Nancy Taylor, Assistant Director of Alumni Relations and Corporate Recruitment*

As a college whose mission is focused on advancing the nation's workforce, Charter Oak is interested in working closely with the employer community to assist in meeting employee educational needs. One important means through which the College feels it can best identify businesses whose workforces may benefit from Charter Oak's Corporate Partnership programs is our valued alumni. Our graduates who consistently recommend the College to their fellow employees often approach us asking that we contact

their employers with information about the Corporate Partnership program.

We find that employers are frequently unaware of the many advantages an online institution, like Charter Oak, is able to bring to their employees and, in turn, to their businesses. However, the response of employers is usually very positive when they learn about Charter Oak's affordability and convenience and the College's ability to increase employee contributions to their organizations through advanced education.

Such has been the experience of businesses currently participating in

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# THE PRESIDENT'S TAKE



## *Let's Get Adults their College Degrees! ...a Plan for Scalable Adult Degree Attainment*

President Obama has established a national goal of leading the world with the highest proportion of college graduates by 2020. He has made this a major goal of the United States because new jobs require

new skills which are often obtained through higher education. Between 1999 and 2007, the United States increased its percentage of adults with a bachelor's degree from 27.5% to 30.9% – an increase of only 3.4 percentage points. This is the lowest percentage increase of any of the countries in the top ten using this metric. (Source: *Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2009*).

In response, the Lumina Foundation has challenged the nation to empower 60% of its working population with a bachelor's degree. They believe that this goal can only be accomplished if we bring adults with college credits but no degree back into higher education. Toward that end, they have funded a series of proposals that promise to identify and credential such adults. Lumina's idea is to approach this problem at scale rather than on a student-by-student basis. For example, Minnesota has started a program to assist individuals with partially completed degrees to finish their degrees. Minnesota state colleges and universities will create the RAPID Completion Program that will increase re-enrollment, degree progress and degree completion among former system students who did not earn degrees. The system has identified about 160,000 former students who attended college in the last 10 years and already have 15 or more credits. (Source: *Lumina Foundation*).

Charter Oak State College, Connecticut's public on-line college, can be part of the solution to this challenge. ***We propose that Connecticut ask its public higher education institutions to identify students who have left those institutions during the past five years with 60 or more credits but no degree. Charter Oak will write to each of these adults and offer them a plan to achieve the degree they never finished.***

Charter Oak would work with these adults to develop an academic plan allowing them to complete their bachelor's degrees. This may entail taking courses on ground at their

former institutions and earning a bachelor's degree through our credit aggregator program, or it may entail taking our online courses and/or earning college credits through our prior learning credit assessment process. Charter Oak offers adult students many paths to a college degree.

Since this work is at the core of our mission, this project will not cost the state additional dollars. What it will require is that public higher education work together to identify students with credits but no degree and then help them find ***the most efficient and cost effective***

***means to degree completion.***

Since Charter Oak's approach encourages learners to use a variety of means to gain missing credits – including portfolios, testing, courses/credits from Connecticut institutions and our own distance learning courses –

we are equipped to provide the most efficient, flexible path to degree completion.

Connecticut is fortunate to have **Charter Oak State College**, whose mission for the past 37 years has been adult degree completion. Over the decades, we have successfully credentialed more than 11,000 working adults nationwide. Charter Oak successfully meets the needs of all students it serves. Minority and non-minority students, for example, achieve their college degrees at similar rates. We believe this is because we have reduced the effects of time, cost and logistics for students taking our online courses. Our course completion rate is more than 85%. Ninety-seven percent of our graduates are very satisfied or satisfied with their Charter Oak experience. According to the Connecticut Department of Labor, 82% of Charter Oak graduates living in Connecticut have employment, 96% are retained for six months or longer and earn an average of \$1,057 per week.

Charter Oak is positioned to help adult students earn their college degrees and to help Connecticut expand its economy. As our new vision statement says, we are "A dynamic community of online learners advancing the nation's workforce one graduate at a time." We look forward to working with the Connecticut higher education community to meet the needs of Connecticut.

**Ed Klonoski**  
President

*"...we are equipped to provide the most efficient, flexible path to degree completion."*

## Greetings From Your Alumni Association...

Happy New Year!

The Charter Oak Alumni Association is gearing up for a very exciting year, having come off a tremendous second half of last year. We added 35 alumni to our official "Ambassador" roles, and several have already represented Charter Oak at various events around the country. Two new Board members joined the Alumni Association – Lisa Wildman, of Connecticut, and Mary Jo Betzen, a Texas resident. Both have hit the ground running! (See article, page 10). We were sorry to lose board member Ruth Kenneth Barbieri to other personal commitments, but want to thank her for her stellar service to the Association.

For only \$15 a year you can become an Association member and support your alma mater. Alumni Association membership provides many benefits, including two recently added: the *Charter Oak Career Center at Experience.com* and *Mechanic on Duty*. *Experience.com* is a national job search and career enhancement Web site with hundreds of thousands of current jobs available exclusively to Charter Oak Alumni Association members. *Mechanic On-Duty* is a roadside assistance and car repair information center.

(For membership information and registration, please visit <http://www.charteroak.edu/Alumni>, and click the Membership box at the top of the page. A membership package will be mailed to you.)

"Advancing the Workforce" continued from pg. 1

Charter Oak's rewarding Corporate Partnership program. The College's low tuition, for example, results in greater economy for both the employee-student and those organizations that offer tuition reimbursement programs.

Among entities active in the Corporate Partnership program are hospitals, health care organizations, financial services companies and law enforcement

In addition to these new benefits, the Alumni Association is gearing up for more social and career-enhancing events in 2011. Last year we partnered with the Student Association to bring three experts to the College to talk about making the most of your Charter Oak experience as it relates to the changing job market. This event was webcast to alumni around the country. We're currently formulating plans for a social 'night-out' in Connecticut with dinner and theatre, and are in initial planning stages for a number of career networking events.

We hope you will seriously consider membership in the Alumni Association to help support Charter Oak and the events we're planning which are designed to benefit all alumni. Also, if you would like to join the Alumni Association Board, we are always ready to welcome you from wherever you may be around the globe.

Finally, we recently updated our database with current alumni addresses, emails and phone numbers and have developed a system that allows us to expand our capability to provide updated information about the College

agencies. If you feel your employer would benefit by establishing a learning partnership with Charter Oak, please don't hesitate to contact me at [nataylor@charteroak.edu](mailto:nataylor@charteroak.edu). I will quickly respond to your inquiry!

A Charter Oak corporate partnership is a win-win for all – you, your employer and the College. 🌱



Guiding the Charter Oak State College Alumni Association are its president, Carlo Esidore, and Nancy Taylor, the College's Assistant Director of Alumni Relations and Corporate Recruitment.

via email. If you have not already given us your current contact information and would like us to remain in touch with you, please send it to: <http://www.charteroak.edu/alumni/update.cfm>

Here's to a great 2011!

Cordially,

**Carlo Esidore**

*President, Charter Oak State College  
Alumni Association*

**Nancy Taylor**

*Assistant Director of Alumni Relations  
and Corporate Recruitment 🌱*

## 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  
Dannel P. Malloy, Governor*

*Board for State Academic Awards  
Ed Klonoski, Executive Director*

## President Klonoski Is Blogging Online – Invites Your Comments

Charter Oak President, Ed Klonoski, has taken to blogging. He has addressed a variety of interesting College-related subjects and issues surrounding higher education, in general, in a series of blogs we think you'll find thought provoking. The online blog site gives you



opportunity to respond to and comment about Ed's thoughts and theories. You'll find a portfolio of his blogs at *charteroakpresident.blogspot.com*. Take a look at your leisure, and post your thoughts about what the president has to say.

## Alumni Association Sponsors Career, Social Events

As the Charter Oak Alumni Association expands, we are constantly in search of new ways to provide services to our alumni. In November, the Association partnered with the Student Association to bring a distinguished panel to the college to discuss the changing job market. The event, held at the college and webcast nationally, drew on the expertise of Dr. Jay Mulki, Assistant Professor of Marketing at Northeastern University; Patrick Flynn, Human Resource Manager, Career Resource Center, at The Hartford; and Lisa Wildman, a 2010 Charter Oak graduate who is employed by IBM.

Each speaker addressed the challenges of the “new workplace” focusing on the skills required of the many employees who, today, work remotely from their homes. The good news for current and former Charter Oak students, according to the experts, is that skills acquired through a remote (online) education will prove beneficial in the new workplace environment.

The Alumni Association has also scheduled a spring social event that will bring alumni, faculty and staff together. The April 29 gathering will include dinner and a performance of the musical *My One and Only* at the



The Alumni Association's Board of Directors – seated (l-r), Midge Pych, '06; Carolyn Brown, '03; Lisa Wildman, '10; standing (l-r), Karianta McCaw, '07; Marcia Anderson-Esson, '02; Eddie Rodriguez, '04; Assistant Director of Alumni Relations, Nancy Taylor; Association president, Carlo Esidore, '05; Charter Oak president, Ed Klonoski.

legendary Goodspeed Opera House located in East Haddam, CT.

We would very much like your input as we make plans for future alumni events. Please take a moment to share your ideas with us in the online alumni

survey you'll find at [www.charteroak.edu/connections.survey](http://www.charteroak.edu/connections.survey). Your Alumni Association welcomes all suggestions that contribute to strengthening our organization and improving the services we provide you. 🌱

“Alumni Ambassadors” continued from pg. 1

Skip Callahan, a 2010 Charter Oak graduate, recently attended a business expo in Connecticut and spent time at the Charter Oak table talking with prospective students about his experience as a Charter Oak student. Said Skip, “I never realized how my experience of returning to college more than 20 years after I started could help others make the decision to return to college.”

Lisa Wildman, also a 2010 graduate, attended a Women's Expo and had a similar experience. “Many women have fears about balancing family

obligations with going to school,” observed Lisa, “and I was glad to be able to tell them how I managed working full time, my family and my education. The flexibility of the Charter Oak program made it all possible, and if sharing my experiences helps other women make the decision to complete their degrees, then I'm pleased to do it.”

The College is often invited to events across the country, and Ambassadors have attended in many locations. For example, our grads with military backgrounds have visited college fairs

held at U.S. military bases and related the positives of Charter Oak online programs to active duty personnel considering degree completion.

As an Alumni Ambassador, you need not be an expert on the technical aspects of online learning. The need is to share your personal experiences with prospective students. If you are interested in becoming an Alumni Ambassador for your alma mater, please contact Nancy Taylor, Assistant Director of Alumni Relations and Corporate Recruitment at [nataylor@charteroak.edu](mailto:nataylor@charteroak.edu). 🌱

## 'Online Shop' Is Popular Web Destination

It appears that Charter Oak alums... and their families...are enjoying the products offered in the College's new Online Shop. Visits to the year-old shopping spot ([shop.charteroak.edu](http://shop.charteroak.edu)) have far exceeded expectation.

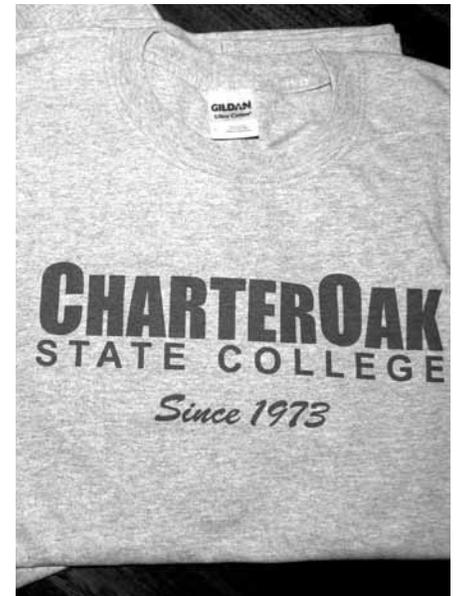
Winter oriented shop items (for those attempting to survive this season's onslaught of white stuff and sub-normal temperatures) include long-sleeve fleece jackets and vests; hooded and non-hooded sweat shirts (see accompanying photo); scarves, hats and blankets – all bearing the Charter Oak name and/or logo.

Looking ahead to warmer weather, the shop features such clothing as men's and women's micro-fiber and soft-shell jackets, golf and T-shirts and

twill shirts. All clothing is available in a variety of colors and sizes. Other appealing Shop items include carrying bags, mugs, coasters and window decals, each sporting the Charter Oak logo.

The Shop now inventories a much-in-demand item – a handsomely-designed, richly-appointed diploma frame that allows you to proudly display your Charter Oak diploma at home or at work.

If there's a specialty item you'd like inventoried, let us know by e-mailing [chebert@charteroak.edu](mailto:chebert@charteroak.edu). We will make an effort to add it to our exciting product lines. Check it all out at [shop.charteroak.edu](http://shop.charteroak.edu). 🌱



## WIT Program Bolstered By New Grants

Several generous new grants, targeted for Charter Oak's successful Women In Transition (WIT) program, were recently received by the College. The WIT initiative, which provides single mothers in low-paying jobs the opportunity to complete their college degrees online, has received new support from the Women & Girls' Fund at the Main Street Community Foundation, headquartered in Bristol, Connecticut. The grant will be used to further assist women who reside in specified Connecticut cities and who currently participate in the WIT program.

Additional grants have been received from Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, the Leipold Foundation, and the Daphne Seybolt Culpeper Memorial Foundation, Inc. Each has provided funding in the past. Grant dollars will be used to purchase new laptop computers for WIT students, for computer maintenance and for student access to the Internet. The



WIT program provides cost-free use of laptops and Internet access to all participating students. More than 100 women have taken part in the program since its inception in 1999.

Grants additionally provide financial support for tuition, fees and textbooks. To qualify for the WIT program, participants must be single mothers who have earned a minimum of 21 college credits prior to matriculation at Charter Oak. They must additionally meet federal student financial requirements and be prepared to take a minimum of two courses during the fall and spring semesters and one summer course.

The College and its WIT program students are most appreciative for the interest organizations and individuals have shown through their grants and donations. If you would like to make a personal contribution to the Charter Oak State College Foundation's WIT-Endowed Fund, please visit [www.coscf.org](http://www.coscf.org). 🌱

## Charter Oak Hosts Jenzabar User Group Meeting

Your alma mater served as host for a recent Jenzabar New England Regional User Group gathering at Wheelock College in Brookline, Massachusetts. 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 meeting's theme was 'Connect-Collaborate-Commiserate.' One hundred twenty-five attendees,

representing 25 institutions of higher education, spent a productive day of information sharing, learning and networking. A Charter Oak contingent of 13 attended. Three of the College's IT professionals led informative break-out sessions.

Michelle Way, Charter Oak's Assistant Director of Student Information Systems, served on the committee responsible for organizing the meeting. She is a member of the Jenzabar Advisory Board that manages the organization's business affairs. ✨



Michelle Way, Charter Oak Assistant Director of Student Information Systems

## Call For D'Amato Graduate Studies Award Applications

Charter Oak State College is currently accepting applications for the 2011 D'Amato Graduate Studies Award, a \$600 cash award presented annually at the College's June commencement exercises. To be eligible for award consideration, you must hold a Charter Oak bachelor's degree, must be a Connecticut resident and have been accepted into an accredited graduate program at the time you apply. For detailed information about

how to apply and to request an award application, e-mail [mwoodman@charteroak.edu](mailto:mwoodman@charteroak.edu) or call 860-832-3876 or send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to:

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

*The application submittal deadline is March 31, 2011.*

## Get Your Charter Oak Class Ring

**Alumni interested in purchasing a class ring should contact Josten's representative, Steve Fitzgerald. He can be reached directly by e-mail – [stephenfitzgerald@jostens.com](mailto:stephenfitzgerald@jostens.com) or by phone at 401-683-5675.**



## Leave A Legacy

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 commitment to our mission and to our students. Your generosity is also a way of expressing your appreciation to the institution that has made a positive impact upon 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 additional information about the Foundation and its scholarship programs, please visit the new Foundation Web site – [www.coscf.org](http://www.coscf.org). ✨

# alumni spotlight

## 1983

**Dr. Bradford Howard, Jr.**, who received his doctorate in Ministry from the North Carolina College of Theology, has embarked on a career as a writer and performer of gospel music. He recently received a Gospel Media Music Achievement Award in recognition of his first CD. He has since completed seven additional CD projects and has established his own record label.

## 1990

**Lawrence Gilpatric** currently serves as a professor of Hospitality Management and as Chair of the Department of Business Technology at Summit College at the University of Akron (Ohio). He had previously been an assistant professor at Connecticut's Gateway Community College.

## 1997

**Ann Bidou** has co-published the book *Career Match*. The book, which has been translated into Chinese and is about to be translated into Vietnamese, has won a Shomaker Award for Best Research in the Sharp Writ Book Awards competition.

**Albert Schmid** was granted the title 'Professor' by the Academic Rank Committee of Louisville, Kentucky's Sullivan University. He serves as Chair of that college's Beverage Management, Hotel-Restaurant Management and Hospitality Management departments. "I won a Gourmand World Cookbook Award for Best Book on Cooking with Wines, Beers and Spirits in the USA," Albert tells us. "This means I am up for the Gourmand World Cookbook Award for Best Book on Cooking with Wines, Beers and Spirits in the World."

## 1999

**Colleen Kruger**, who earned a master's degree in Education from Endicott College in 2008, has been named Director of Continuing Education and Community Engagement at Central Connecticut State University.

## 2000

**Peggi Camosci** has fulfilled a dream fifteen years in the making. After working for a local school systems for several years, she has opened a tea room – *Tea Roses* – in the town of Cromwell, CT.

**Bob Wilson** received a promotion to Service Manager of an information technology company two months after earning his Charter Oak degree. He currently oversees a department of 32 employees.

## 2001

**John Hiller** has entered the master's degree program in Liberal Studies at Albertus Magnus College.

## 2002

**Robin Smith** teaches Radiology at two Connecticut hospitals – Danbury Hospital and St. Vincent Hospital in Bridgeport. She is currently pursuing a master's degree in Human Services with a certificate in Forensic Science. Robin has referred a number of her colleagues to Charter Oak and serves as an enthusiastic member of the College's Alumni Ambassador program.

**Donna Marie Waranowicz-Foss** has earned her second graduate degree, an MS in Science for Human Services (Clinical) from Post University. She had previously received a master's in Organizational Management from the University of Phoenix.

## 2003

**John Griese** reports that he received his master's in Astronomy in 2006 from James Cook University in Australia and that he is currently working on his Ph.D. thesis at the same institution.

## 2004

**Stephanie Galindo** has been awarded a master's degree in Education by American Intercontinental University and, to date, has earned 18 units of subject area credit in Management at Aspen University. She currently co-teaches a writing course for Ph.D. students and serves as Dean of Students at a college in California. Earlier this year, she was accepted into a doctorate program in Educational Leadership and Learning. "If it wasn't for... Charter Oak... I may not have even begun this journey," she tells us.

## 2005

**Forrest Adams**, who resides in Chanhassen, Minnesota, gave birth to her second daughter, Anika, in August. She is a community journalist and serves as a teaching assistant at St. Paul's Metropolitan State University where she is also seeking her master's degree in Technical Communications.

**Daniel Maver** has graduated from the Ross University School of Medicine.

## 2006

**Robert Eads** has been appointed City Manager of Del Rio, Texas. He supervises the activities of all city departments that include more than 450 employees and oversees an annual budget of more than \$80-million. He had previously served as Del Rio's Acting City Manager and as Vice President of Operations/ Chief Operations Officer for the Laredo, Texas Chamber of Commerce.

**Dee Marvin Emeigh** writes that she has completed dual MEds in Reading and TESOL Literacy at Delaware's Wilmington University. She taught English for three years in a Delaware school system before taking a position as a high school reading intervention teacher. She also serves as an adjunct instructor in Wilmington University's Graduate Reading Education program.

**Matthew Friedman** is pursuing his Ph.D. in Intercultural Studies at Asbury Theological Seminary.

**Alexandra Zisimos Lopez** earned her MA in Educational Studies from Western Governors University and has begun pursuit of a second master's degree at that institution.

### 2007

**Daniel Klein** is enrolled in New York University's School of Dentistry and will graduate in May, this year. His intent is to work in the area of pediatric dentistry. Daniel says he would gladly respond to inquiries from other Charter Oak graduates and current students considering careers in medicine.

**Audrey Schoenfeld** has furthered her education with additional graduate studies in the field of psychology and expects to soon become a certified life coach with iPec, the Institute for Professional Excellence in Coaching.

**Michael Savage** tells us that he has earned his master's in Education, with distinction, from National University and has received his California teaching credential. He intends to teach in the Los Angeles Unified School District. While awaiting an opportunity to do so, he serves as an associate producer for a local television station.

### 2008

**Jason Coon** has e-mailed us from Littleton, Colorado that his experience with Charter Oak was unforgettable; that he promotes online education and Charter Oak State College every time he has the opportunity.

### 2009

**Joseph Herrmann** has been accepted to England's University of Leeds where he will pursue his master's degree online. His focus is on Asia Pacific Studies. He cites Charter Oak and its faculty as the catalysts for his educational achievements.

### 2010

**Jason Shearer** writes that he has received a job promotion as a result of his having completed his degree at Charter Oak. He has also been admitted to the Professional MBA program at the University of Utah.

## CORRECTION

In a previous issue of 'Connections' we incorrectly noted that **Marcia Anderson-Esson, Class of 1993, had been elected president of the Lions Club of Windsor, CT. The organization should have been identified as the Greater Hartford West Indian Lions Club.** 🌿

## IN MEMORIAM

### LOGAN CLARKE, JR.

Board Member, 1998-2009,  
and Honorary Trustee,  
Charter Oak State College  
Foundation

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

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 submit your information at [www.charteroak.edu/alumni/update.cfm](http://www.charteroak.edu/alumni/update.cfm). 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.

## 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 \_\_\_\_\_

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## Foundation, Alumni Association Name New Board Members



Patrick Martin



Lisa Wildman



Mary Jo Betzen

Two prominent business figures have been newly-elected to the Charter Oak State College Foundation Board of Directors.

For the past four years, Patrick Martin ('09) has served as Director of Information Technology at the Village for Families and Children in Hartford, CT. He has worked in the IT field for 15 years and possesses strong project management skills that will prove valuable during his tenure as a member of the Foundation Board.

Charter Oak Alumni Association president, Carlo Esidore ('05), will serve as the Association's new representative to the Foundation Board. After receiving his Charter Oak degree, Carlo went on to earn an MBA, online, at Plymouth State University and received a Certificate in Teaching and Learning from Norwich University (VT). He serves as an IT Operations Demand Manger with the Hartford Life Insurance Company and is an adjunct professor at Charter Oak teaching courses in Training and Development.

The College's Alumni Association, meanwhile, has welcomed a pair of

staunch supporters to its Board. Lisa Wildman ('10) is a Senior Contracts and Negotiations Specialist in the Legal Department of IBM where she has been employed for the past 14 years. She had previously owned a fitness business that specialized in programs for seniors. While matriculating at Charter Oak, she was the student representative to the Board for State Academic Awards and is currently alumni representative to that Board.

Texas resident, Mary Jo Betzen ('05), has also joined the Board of the Alumni Association. Following her graduation from Charter Oak, she maintained a 4.0 GPA while earning her master's degree in Administrative Leadership from the University of Oklahoma. She has committed to serve on the Board as her way of giving back to her alma mater. She cites Charter Oak for the contribution it made to furthering her education. "The College," she observed, "offered the online flexibility that allowed me, as an on-the-move military spouse, to earn my degree." 🌱

## Plans for New Master's Program Taking Shape

A brief reference was made in a previous issue of *Connections* of plans to introduce a new master's program at Charter Oak with a tentative start date of Fall, 2011. The College has submitted the graduate program proposal to the Connecticut Department of Higher Education and is awaiting its review. Once DHE approval is received, the proposal will go to the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Charter Oak's regional accrediting agency, for its approval. The College will be in a position to offer the master's program once approvals are received.

The program targets individuals who work in management and supervisory positions and will integrate management theory and practice as they apply to complex organizations. The master's degree coursework will help students develop proficiencies in assessment, leadership and research and is designed to build interpersonal and team skills.

"We have worked with our academic team and faculty to shape the content of the master's program that we feel will meet the needs of the adult market and eagerly look forward to establishing a new milestone in the

history of Charter Oak State College," said College Provost, Dr. Shirley Adams. "We believe the program will prove of value to many of those who have earned Charter Oak bachelor's degrees."

Charter Oak alumni and others interested in learning more about the graduate program should contact Dr. Adams via e-mail – [sadams@charteroak.edu](mailto:sadams@charteroak.edu) – or by phone: 860-832-3836. 🌱

 **CharterOak**<sup>SM</sup>  
**STATE COLLEGE**  

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**Degrees Without Boundaries**

# Matriculated Student Count Continues to Climb

Charter Oak's matriculated student population continues to grow. The number of students enrolled in Fall, 2010 classes reached 2278. The College's administration attributes the increase in adult learners to several factors including expansion of the number of online courses offered, the development of innovative outreach programs, increased marketing and public relations activity, ongoing Web site content addition and refinement, and the superb job alumni, nationwide, are doing to promote the institution.

Charter Oak, to date, has awarded 11,014 degrees to students in all 50 states and 10 foreign countries. The results of graduate surveys indicated that nearly 50% of those earning

## SOME INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT CHARTER OAK STUDENTS:\*

- > 65% are female; 35% are male.
- > The average student age is 39 – the youngest matriculated student was 17; the eldest, 72.
- > 69% of students resided in Connecticut; 31% were out-of-staters.
- > Individual Studies, Liberal Studies, Business, Child Studies, Psychology and Health Care Administration represented 74% of student areas of study.
- > 97% of the members of the class of '09 were Very Satisfied or Satisfied with their Charter Oak experience. (Compilation of similar information had not been completed for the class of 2010 at *Connections* publication time).

\* Based on information available through November, 2010.

Charter Oak bachelor's degrees have gone on to master's programs in more than 250 U.S. and foreign colleges and universities. 🌱

## Alumni Recruit On Behalf of the College

### CHAT ROOMS, NEW VIDEO, FEATURE CHARTER OAK GRADS

Alumni have become an integral part of Charter Oak's successful student recruiting efforts. A recent online 'live chat' invited current and prospective students to present questions about the College, its programs, the current workforce environment and related subjects to a panel made up of Charter Oak graduates who have established themselves in their fields of endeavor and have been recognized for their professional achievement. The hour-long session entertained a variety of queries to which the panelists responded in detail. According to comments from live chat visitors, the information gathered was most valuable. Additional live chats are scheduled. (You can view the recent chat session by going to [www.charteroak.edu/alumchat](http://www.charteroak.edu/alumchat).)

The volunteer panel members, all Charter Oak alumni, included information technology professional, Donna Anastasio: Police Lieutenant,

Richard Riggs; Charter Oak Alumni Association president, Carlo Esidore; businessman Jeff Sorrell; IBM contracts and negotiations specialist, Lisa Wildman; Texas resident and graduate of the University of Oklahoma MBA program, Mary Jo Betzen; accountant/attorney, Kathie Sumrow; and Steve Foerster, a writer and consultant on distance learning and higher education issues.

A new student recruitment initiative, also featuring Charter Oak grads, will soon roll out in the form of a video that focuses on the College, the advantages it provides adults learners seeking to complete their degrees and graduate 'proof of performance.'

The latter is personified by six alumni who have reached the pinnacle of success in their respective professional fields. The video, with a Spring 2011 target release date, will appear on the Charter Oak Web site,



Charter Oak's recent live Web chat provided opportunity for visitors to communicate directly with the alumni panel.

will accompany admissions personnel attending recruitment and business fairs and will be reproduced in CD format for distribution to prospective students and corporate partners. 🌱



Board for State Academic Awards

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