

connections

CHARTER OAK STATE COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

WINTER/SPRING 2013 VOL. XXXVII NO. 1



ABOVE

(L-R) Panelists Cynthia Pugliese (Hartford HealthCare), Marty Cohen (CT HIMA) and HIM Program Coordinator Dr. Frank M. Valier answer questions from prospective students at Charter Oak's HIM Open House event in November

LEFT

Lori Pendleton (center), Charter Oak's Director of Admissions, speaks with Cynthia Pugliese, Hartford HealthCare Director of Health Information Management, and Marty Cohen, President of CT HIMA at Charter Oak's HIM Open House event in November

Charter Oak State College Launches New Health Information Management Bachelor Degree Program

Charter Oak launched its first major last fall, an online bachelor's degree completion program in Health Information Management (HIM). On September 27, the College received notification that the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) approved Charter Oak to offer a Bachelor of Science degree in HIM. The program received approval from the Connecticut Board of Regents for Higher Education last spring.

"A student who is excited about the future, using new technologies in a

health care setting, and who wants to be part of the health care healing process will enjoy this program," said Dr. Frank M. Valier, the College's new Health Information Management Program Coordinator.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics cites health information management as one of the 20 fastest-growing occupations in the United States. The average annual salary is \$57,370, according to the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA).

Developed by experts in this fast-growing field, Charter Oak's new online bachelor's degree in Health Information Management equips students for the electronic management of sensitive patient health information and health care organization revenue cycles. The program is structured to provide a professional education with a comprehensive curriculum and is guided by the principle of quality health care through quality information. For more information on

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THE PRESIDENT'S TAKE



Here We Go Again

This past holiday season, I thought about the things for which I am grateful. Certainly I included health, family, my job, and our students in my list. But I included something else as well.

I was lucky enough to be part of the Internet revolution in higher education. In the late eighties and early nineties, I was one of the higher education nerds exploring the possibilities associated with this new global network. While playing with new technology toys, I began to understand how this explosive communication revolution would change higher education. Those changes are best illustrated by distance learning, or the idea that learning is an *activity* not a *location*. Betting my career on those changes turned out well for me, and it has also turned out well for the College.

Today, as I look around the higher education landscape, I see another such "change moment" arriving. This time the driver is not technology, but money. For the U.S. to remain the world's dominant economy, we must continually find new ways to increase the percentage of our working population that is educated. The aggressive pursuit to grow the number of people who receive higher education is what has driven our country's economic success. For the first time in generations, that percentage is slipping. And it is slipping because the cost of higher education has outstripped family incomes.

The solution to this problem is lower cost models of education, and as I have written about before, Charter Oak's prior learning programs are being re-discovered

"Today, as I look around the higher education landscape, I see another such 'change moment' arriving."

by the larger educational community. Education that stresses assessment while opening the door to a variety of approaches to learning – from classrooms to work experiences to military training – lowers the cost and increases the speed of degree attainment. I can sense that those institutions that understand learning assessment are gaining leverage and will soon gain market share. Traditional higher education cannot "bend the cost curve;" only a new model can do that. I can't believe that I will be alive for two such disruptive education revolutions in a single lifetime. It feels like 1992 all over again.

Charter Oak was created 40 years ago to disrupt traditional higher education (long before Harvard Business School professor Clayton Christensen did the research that gave "disruptive innovation" its name). We are not designed to create sustaining innovations in the dominant model of higher education. We were created and then placed outside traditional higher education in order to be able to invent new

approaches that serve underserved or unserved markets. Today it looks like we will be called on to figure out how to do those things at scale, for thousands of students instead of for dozens.

So I sent my staff off for the holidays with this wish: Have a wonderful holiday season, and then come back to work invigorated and ready to invent the future.

Ed Klonoski
President

"Charter Oak State College Launches..." continued from pg. 1

this new program, visit www.charteroak.edu/HIM.

The College made the decision to construct its first full major in the field of health information management after considerable market research. "We chose to make this program our highest priority because we believe that there are, and will continue to be, numerous jobs that will require the combination of health care

knowledge and technology expertise as the health care industry moves its patient data into digital systems that permit customers access to their own information," Charter Oak President Ed Klonoski said. "We believe that this work will revolutionize health care and that our graduates will be at the forefront of this important work."

"The current shortage of qualified professionals in health information

management is a huge challenge," said Cynthia Pugliese, Hartford HealthCare Director of Health Information Management. "We are really looking always for options to fill that shortage. If I have an RHIA entry level candidate approaching me to apply for a job, I would be looking to place them in a team leader type of role – right off the bat." 🌱

Greetings From Your Alumni Association

Happy New Year! We hope this issue of Connections finds you well and on your way to making great things happen in 2013!

At Charter Oak State College, we're coming off a very busy and successful 2012 after the launch of the BS in Health Information Management. The Alumni Association will be working closely with the College this coming year to help spread the word about this new degree and hopefully open some doors at health care facilities around the country where Charter Oak alumni are employed. If you are in the health care field and interested in talking with us about how you might be able to help us with recruiting efforts at your workplace, please contact Nancy Taylor, Assistant Director of Corporate Recruitment and Alumni Relations at nataylor@charteroak.edu or 860-515-3863.

This new year, we are also looking to expand our presence around the country. We recently held a successful event in Jacksonville, FL for our local alumni and current students, and we want to do more of these events in 2013. We hope to plan these events with groups of alumni who would serve as coordinators on the ground and to potentially start small groups in their areas. We are always looking for more Alumni Association Board members. Serving on the Board doesn't require a huge time commitment and you don't have to be local to Connecticut – we meet just 4-5 times a year and conference in those out of state. If you have an interest in serving on the Board, please contact Alumni Association Board president, Lisa Wildman, at lisawildman@sbcglobal.net.

We'd like to welcome the two newest members of the Alumni Association Board. Cecilia Kowlowski of South Windsor, CT, graduated in 2011 with a concentration in Health Care Administration. After spending 16



Members of the 2012-2013 Alumni Association Board: (L-R) Tara Keating, Chris May, Lisa Wildman, Carolyn Brown and Cecilia Kozlowski.

years in community relations at Hartford Hospital, Cecilia is now seeking new opportunities. Cecilia is extremely active in the Greater Hartford community and serves on a number of local boards. In addition, she is the production coordinator for the Spanish television public affairs show called "El Show de Analeh." In 2007 she was awarded the Hartford Business Journal's Health Care Heroes Award for her work with Hartford Hospital's Cancer Awareness program. Cecilia brings energy and lots of ideas to the Alumni Association, and we're so thrilled to have her.

Lamont McEvitt, of Farmington, CT, is a 2012 graduate of Charter Oak. Lamont earned a BS with a concentration in Information Technology and Management. Additionally, in 2009 Lamont earned his Certificate in Project Management from Charter Oak. Lamont is an accomplished project manager, having worked for a number of Fortune 500 companies. He is also a certified antiques and fine art appraiser and a general aviation pilot. Lamont recently started his own business, SL McEvitt Associates, which provides IT and Project Management consulting services. He serves on the Charter Oak

State College Foundation Board. We are very lucky to have Lamont!

We look forward to working with all Charter Oak alumni in 2013. Please send us your ideas and your updates – we always like hearing about the accomplishments of our impressive group! And don't forget – YOU are our best ambassadors for the College! 🌱

connections

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 **CharterOak**SM
STATE COLLEGE

Degrees Without Boundaries

Amanda Savio Guay, Editor

State of Connecticut
Dannel P. Malloy, Governor

Board of Regents
Dr. Philip E. Austin, Interim President

Charter Oak State College
Ed Klonoski, President



Albert Schmid

The people of New Orleans have a great love of life and good food, a fact that was not lost on young Albert Schmid as an elementary school student in the French Quarter of The Big Easy.

This lesson learned as a boy led to a career in the beverage and hospitality industry as a professional speaker, professor, author and consultant. Albert, a 1997 Charter Oak graduate, says his success would not have been possible without his degree from Charter Oak.

He had been taking courses at a university at night and working as a chef during the day when he transferred to Charter Oak, a move that allowed him to finish his degree and maximize his time with his family. His degree resulted in a promotion to the role of Executive Chef of 11 campus restaurants at Northwest Missouri State University, as well as a significant raise. Eventually he left Northwest to take a teaching position at Sullivan University in Kentucky.

"Again, my degree from Charter Oak State College allowed me to be hired for a teaching position at a University," said Albert, who won a full scholarship from the International Association of Culinary Professionals to study at the University of Adelaide, where he earned the Cordon Bleu Master of Arts in Gastronomy. "The degree changed my life and the destiny of my family." Albert also holds 10 professional certifications including certifications as a professional chef, wine specialist and spirit specialist.

Albert chairs three programs at Sullivan University – Associate of Science in Beverage Management, Associate of Science in Hotel-Restaurant Management and Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management – which are all also offered online. His time at Charter Oak influenced the way he guides students.

"One of the strengths I learned at COSC is customer service toward students both on campus and at a distance," he said. "Every time I approach helping a student I remember back to my days as a student. Many of my students are as busy as I was when I earned my degree. I am able to mentor and encourage my students in the same way several people at COSC did with me."

Albert is also a successful author, with two books published and a third on the way. *The Kentucky Bourbon Cookbook* was inspired by Louisville, Kentucky, which is where he lives and works today, and is also the home of many bourbon distilleries. "I noticed that many chefs had at least one recipe that featured bourbon," he said. "So I asked for their recipes and then filled in the gaps with several recipes I developed."

The Beverage Manager's Guide to Wines, Beers and Spirits was inspired by his

students said Albert, who initially used the bulkier *Grossman's Guide to Wines, Beers and Spirits* when teaching. "The class that I teach is only 11 weeks long and most of the students are not going to be beverage professionals, so I set out to present a condensed version of the information that the student would be able to use."

He recently finished writing his latest book, *The Old Fashioned Whiskey Cocktail*, in which he mentions his alma mater. "One of the drink recipes features Old Charter Kentucky Bourbon," he said. "Old Charter is a reference to the Charter Oak. Ever since I found that out I keep Old Charter Kentucky Bourbon in my bourbon collection at home." The book is slated to be published this year.

Helping students is Albert's favorite part of his diverse career. "I love when my students are able to succeed," he said. "Some will take the time to let me know how I may have helped their career. I also like speaking and teaching. It is my favorite part of my day at the University. I like watching the light bulb go on for my students. I enjoy their creativity and I am sure that I learn more from them than they learn from me."

Albert has recommended Charter Oak to several friends who went on to earn their degrees from the College. "There is an old saying – You can judge people by the company that you keep," he said. "I am honored to stand with these friends as alumni of Charter Oak State College."

We would love to hear from you! If you are interested in sharing your success story with your fellow alumni, please contact Charter Oak's Assistant Director of Alumni Relations, Nancy Taylor, and let her know! She can be reached at nataylor@charteroak.edu or 860-515-3863. 🌱

Albert's favorite recipe from *The Kentucky Bourbon Cookbook*:

The English Professor's Marinade – created by Chef Jon Zearfoss, Professor at The Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, NY

1 cup soy sauce

1 cup pineapple juice

1 cup Kentucky bourbon

1 teaspoon Sichuan peppercorns (optional)

Mix these ingredients together and add meat. Allow to marinate for at least one hour for chicken, two hours for pork, and three hours for beef. Grill or pan fry until meat is done. ✨

Charter Oak State College Awarded Military Friendly Schools® Title by Victory Media

We are proud that Victory Media, the premier media entity for military personnel transitioning into civilian life, has named Charter Oak to the coveted Military Friendly Schools® list. The 2013 Military Friendly Schools® list honors the top 15 percent of colleges, universities and trade schools that are doing the most to embrace America's military service members, veterans, and spouses as students and ensure their success on campus.

Charter Oak State College is proud to partner with the U.S. Navy (as a member of the Navy College Program Distance Learning Partnership), the U.S. Coast Guard and the Army National Guard Education Support Center to facilitate degree completion for servicemembers and their spouses. Charter Oak is also a member of the Servicemembers Opportunities Colleges.

"Addressing the special needs of active duty service members, their spouses and the veteran populations is important to Charter Oak," said Bob Frederick, Military Transfer Advisor & Enrollment Counselor for Charter Oak. "We are excited to gain recognition as 'Military Friendly' by *G.I. Jobs Magazine* as it validates our dedication to these students."

"Inclusion on the 2013 list of Military Friendly Schools® shows Charter Oak's commitment to providing a supportive environment for military students," said Sean Collins, Director for *G.I. Jobs* and Vice President at Victory Media. "As interest in education grows, we're thrilled to provide the military community with transparent, world-class resources to assist in their search for schools."

Now in its fourth year, the 2013 list of Military Friendly Schools® was



compiled through extensive research and a data-driven survey of more than 12,000 VA-approved schools nationwide. The survey tabulation process, methodology and weightings that comprise the 2013 list were independently verified by Ernst and Young LLP. Each year schools taking the survey are held to a higher standard than the previous year via improved methodology, criteria and weightings developed with the assistance of an Academic Advisory Board (AAB) consisting of educators from schools across the country. A full list of board members can be found at www.militaryfriendlyschools.com/board. ✨

Charter Oak Celebrates 40th Anniversary

Charter Oak State College will mark its 40th Anniversary in 2013!

Among the highlights of the Anniversary will be a celebration on November 14, 2013 at the Mark Twain House & Museum in Hartford, Connecticut. The College will recognize the stories of 40 of our

most influential and/or inspiring alums, faculty and students.

That evening, the Charter Oak State College Foundation will sponsor a Shea Lecture on a health care-related topic and fundraising reception to support students in need.

The Charter Oak State College 40th Anniversary Committee is currently in the planning stages of the event. For information, please contact Angela Chapman, Charter Oak's Assistant to the President, at 860-515-3889. ✨



Dear Friend of Charter Oak State College,

Jenni Mierzejewski, a student of Charter Oak State College, was a part-time waitress and stay-at-home Mom to four little girls. During the course of her studies at Charter Oak, Jenni's old computer had a meltdown. Because Charter Oak State College is an online institution, unlimited access to a working computer is critical for our students. Jenni and her girls were on a very tight budget so purchasing a new computer was out of the question. She was entering her final semester at Charter Oak, less than 5 months away from finally getting her degree after 10 years.

Once again, Jenni was facing a delay of her dream of getting a college degree.

The Charter Oak State College Foundation helps students like Jenni Mierzejewski. The Foundation awarded Jenni a technology grant to purchase a new computer and she graduated with her bachelor's degree in May of 2012.

"By receiving the technology grant, I was not only given the gift of being able to purchase a new computer, but given the greater gift of being able to finish the degree I started so long ago. The Foundation grant allowed me to get what I needed to get done in order to walk on that stage in May." Jenni Mierzejewski

www.coscf.org

Jenni is not the only student faced with choosing between providing for her family or paying for college. In fact, with today's economic realities, a large number of our students are faced with the same circumstance and they need your help. **This past year, the Charter Oak Foundation received a record number of scholarship and grant applications from students with substantial needs.**

Please donate to this Annual Appeal today. Your past generosity changed Jenni's life, and you can change the lives of many more students by donating as little as one dollar a week. Every single gift, regardless of size, will have a significant impact on our students. If this is your first donation to the Charter Oak Foundation, please remember that a gift of just \$50 from 14 alumni can offset the cost of a course for a student. If you give annually, please consider increasing your donation by 10 percent.

Please take a moment to go online at www.coscf.org/ways-to-give to make your charitable tax-deductible gift.

Thank you for supporting the Charter Oak State College Foundation.

With gratitude for your support,

Rebeka Scalia, President

Ed Klonoski, Executive Director

Thank You for Your Continued Support of the Charter Oak State College Foundation

Your donations have helped to change many lives and we greatly appreciate you.

The Charter Oak State College Foundation has historically recognized our donors annually in the June edition of *Connections*. Donors have been recognized in the following giving categories: President's Circle, Acorn Circle, Charter Circle, Sustainer Circle and Supporter Circle. These circles were created to honor the important role that donors play in our success and to inspire new levels of philanthropy.

To better recognize our donors of all levels, we slightly revised our giving categories in the *Connections* newsletter. In addition, we have added recognition for five years of consecutive giving.

Below please find the revised donor recognition categories:

PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE - \$750 AND ABOVE

SUPPORTER CIRCLE - \$500 - \$749

CHARTER CIRCLE - \$250 - \$499

SUSTAINER CIRCLE - \$100 - \$249

ACORN CIRCLE - \$99 AND UNDER

Please be reminded that donor recognition is based on the fiscal year, which runs from July 1 through June 30. If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact Angela Chapman at 860-515-3889.

alumni spotlight

1994

Daniel A. Michaud graduated from Capella University with a Ph.D in Human Services with a major in nonprofit management. His GPA was 3.94, which qualified him for Summa Cum Laude designation. Last year he also passed the Certified Pharmacy Technician exam earning the CPhT designation.

2003

Leonard H. LeBlanc III has published his first two novels, *Air Base* and *Thailand* as Kindle eBooks on amazon.com. The novels are U.S. military detective mysteries set at U-Tapao Royal Thai Naval Air Base.

2006

Since graduating from COSC, **Lincoln Hale** has received a Master of Theological Studies in Ancient Biblical Studies from the Iliff School of Theology in Denver, CO. Currently, he is working on his Ph.D in History of Christianity at Claremont Graduate University in Claremont, CA. Additionally, and most importantly, he and his wife Anna now have three children ages 5, 4, and 1.

Kathryn Dawn O'Brien spent most of 2012 promoting her paranormal mystery novel, *Murder Has a Memory*. This book marks her debut as a mystery novelist, and is the first installment in her Roberta Law Mystery series. It is published by King Pelley Publishing, and is available through online retailers in both trade paperback and eBook formats.

Leigh H. Shapiro earned his master's degree in Executive Fire Service Leadership from Grand Canyon University in 2009. A career firefighter in Hartford, CT, he was promoted to Deputy Fire Chief of Emergency Services - Tour D in March 2011. In February 2012, he was promoted to Tour Commander- Tour A, where he is serving in present capacity.

2007

2007 Charter Oak grad **Veronika Froehlich** went on to complete her master's degree in Language Testing at Lancaster University in the U.K. in December, 2009. She is currently teaching future English teachers at a teacher's college in Heidelberg, Germany - University of Education, Heidelberg.

2008

Ruth Garby Torres was recently appointed by Connecticut House Minority Leader Lawrence F. Cafero, Jr. to the state's Native American Heritage Advisory Council.

2009

Since receiving her BS at Charter Oak, **Karen Lococo** has been promoted to Recovery Services Manager at Chrysalis Center Inc. She also received an award from National Alliance for Mental Illness/Keep the Promise Connecticut for Leadership in Advocacy. Karen is currently working on her MSW at Fordham University and anticipates finishing in May 2014.

Since graduating from Charter Oak, **Antoinette Parker** has gone on to receive her master's degree in social work from Springfield College School of Social Work. She is in the process of starting her own company called I Matter, Inc., located in Connecticut. The company will be based on social work fundamentals: connecting people to services within their communities, helping individual and families assess situations of concern, and access medical, mental and/or substance abuse assistance. I Matter will also educate through seminars on health-related topics.

2009 Charter Oak graduate **Jacques Wolf** earned his LNHA (Licensed Nursing Home Administrator) license and became an Administrator in a New Jersey nursing home in 2011.

2010

Michael Wheeler recently completed his MA in World Music Studies from the University of Sheffield UK. He owns a small business teaching music lessons as well as teaching at the local community college. He says life is busy, but very good!

Lisa G. Wildman recently graduated from the Greater Valley Chamber of Commerce Leadership Program which exposes individuals to added leadership skills specific to community service. Lisa, who currently serves as President of the COSC Alumni Association, encourages fellow graduates with an Organizational Leadership focus to seek out this program through their local Chamber of Commerce to continue adding to their skill set and to give back to their communities.

2011


Bill DeLong recently graduated from Webster University with a MA in Business and Organizational Security Management and took a job as the Security Manager for the Network Enterprise Center on Ft. Campbell, Kentucky. 🌱

Charter Oak Develops Online Cyber Security Course

Charter Oak, in partnership with leading corporate cyber security experts, has created a first-of-its-kind online cyber security course. The course, called "Security Foundations," is delivered anywhere anytime using Charter Oak's Blackboard software, and helps faculty and staff learn about how to better protect current student and alumni information, increase their awareness of Internet threats such as spyware and malware, and provides advice on password policies.

This cyber security course has been taken by nearly all of Charter Oak's faculty and staff and is the only higher education-specific cyber security

course in existence. The course has been so successful that other higher ed institutions across the country have now executed licensing agreements to bring it to their campus.

"This is an example of how Charter Oak's leading edge pedagogical and instructional design talent brought a complex subject matter effectively to the end user community," said Charter Oak President, Ed Klonoski. "Protecting information is paramount in today's information age. Charter Oak is proud to set the standard for its faculty and staff but also set an example across all higher education institutions." 

Save the Date for the Alumni Spring Social!

To celebrate the 40th Anniversary of Charter Oak State College, we are planning another fun evening on April 26, with dinner and theater at the Goodspeed Opera House in East Haddam, CT! This year, we will be seeing the comedy *Good News*, a musical set in the roaring '20s. *Good News* debuted on Broadway in 1927, and was a huge hit.

Our Alumni Spring Social is a guaranteed fun night for all, and we anticipate tickets going quickly for this special event. Please contact Nancy Taylor, Charter Oak's Assistant Director of Alumni Relations, at nataylor@charteroak.edu to reserve your seats now. Tickets are being subsidized by the Alumni Association to keep them at last year's price of \$70 per person, which includes both the dinner and show. 