



The Knightline

Olney Central College Students & Employees Monthly Newsletter

MAY 2011

VOLUME 27

NUMBER 10

OCC Commencement Ceremony May 13

Ron J. Keller recipient of 2011 Alumnus Award

Olney Central College's 47th annual commencement exercises will begin at 7 p.m. on Friday, May 13 in the OCC Gymnasium.

OCC will confer approximately 480 degrees and certificates. Friends and relatives of the graduates are invited to attend.

The 2011 Alumnus Award will be presented to Ron J. Keller, assistant professor of history and political science at Lincoln College as well as director-curator of the award-winning and nationally recognized Lincoln Heritage Museum in Lincoln.

"This is quite an honor. I didn't expect this," Keller said. "I really enjoyed my

time at OCC. Of all the colleges I attended, I can't think of any other that I would feel so honored to receive an alumni award from."

Keller earned his associate's degree from OCC in 1989 and transferred to Eastern Illinois University in Charleston. He received both a bachelor's of arts degree in social science and a master's of history degree from EIU. Keller also completed additional coursework beyond a master's degree at the University of Virginia and Virginia Commonwealth University. He has taught at both the elementary and secondary levels, and at several colleges and



Ron J. Keller
universities.

Keller, a Newton High School graduate, credits OCC with fostering his passion for history and teaching.

"It all comes back to OCC," he said. "I received a scholarship to attend OCC and I took advantage of it. It was a wonderful experience. OCC prepared me in every way for EIU. I

had great instructors like Lucille Lance. She inspired me and got me hooked on history.

"I also met many students I still keep in contact with, including my wife," he joked. "I enjoyed the atmosphere at OCC and it led me to pursue a teaching position at a two-year college."

Keller's specialty is in American political history and he has employed that experience in many capacities. He frequently serves as an analyst and commentator for several television news stations.

Keller has co-authored several books, including two 2010 releases: *Abraham Lincoln in Logan County* and *A Respect For the Office: Letters From the Presidents*. He served as a contributor to the

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OCC ranked among top 120 community colleges

In its first step to identify the nation's best community colleges and award \$1 million in prize money, the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program has ranked Olney Central and Lincoln Trail as two of the nation's 120 best community colleges.

OCC, LTC and 118 other community colleges will be winnowed to eight to 10 finalists in September based on how much students learn, how many complete their programs on time and how well students do in

the job market after graduating.

Aspen will conduct site visits to each of the 10 finalists in the fall. And, based on the evidence, the prize jury will select a grand-prize winner and two to three runners-up, to be announced in December.

Citing the urgent need to focus on the value and potential of community colleges, Aspen Institute College Excellence Program Executive Director Josh Wyner said, "We must set the bar much higher than we have in the past. To achieve excellent

student outcomes, we need to highlight our country's success stories and learn from them so that we can keep reaching higher. Recognizing community colleges like Lincoln Trail and Olney Central sends a message to others that aspire to excellence, while encouraging Lincoln Trail and Olney Central to apply for the nation's top community college prize. As a country, now more than ever, we need all community colleges to graduate more students with the

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Massage clinicals will begin June 7

OCC's Massage Therapy Program is now accepting appointments for its summer clinicals.

The clinics, which are open to the public, will be held June 7, 8, 13, 15, 20, 22, 27 and 29. Appointments may be scheduled from 1 to 2 p.m., 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. or 4 to 5 p.m. The cost for a relaxing, Swedish-style massage is just \$25 for a one-hour session.

The massage treatments are for the sole purpose of stress reduction, relief from muscle tension or spasm and to increase circulation and energy flow. A massage therapy instructor will be present at the clinics.

To schedule an appointment, call 392-2430. If you are unable to reach someone, please leave a message and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

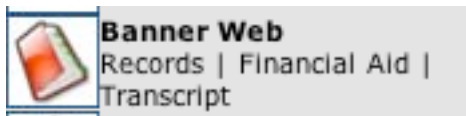


PTK honors Kelly Payne

The Phi Theta Kappa Center for Excellence recently recognized Kelly Payne for her five years of service as an advisor to OCC's PTK chapter. Presenting the award is OCC President Rodney Ranes.

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RELEASE: 7.5

If you encounter problems with making your online payment, please contact the IECC HelpDesk at 618-395-5299 or toll-free 1-866-529-4322, ext. 4357.

Colleges

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knowledge and degrees they need to be successful in the workforce."

Second Lady Dr. Jill Biden and Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education, attended the Aspen Institute's announcement event on April 25. The Aspen Prize was announced at the White House Community College Summit hosted by President Obama and Dr. Biden in October. At that time, the President noted how critical community colleges are to the millions of youth and adult learners who enroll in America's nearly 1,200 community colleges every year.

OCC and LTC are now eligible to submit an application containing detailed data on the award criteria. Each must demonstrate that it delivers exceptional student results, uses data to drive decisions and uses that information to continually improve over time.

OCC President Rodney Ranes noted, "What a wonderful recognition of our faculty and staff and the students that work so hard to get the education provided. And being in a partnership with the four colleges in the system makes it so much easier for college students to get whatever course they need and to graduate on time."

OCC in Olney and LTC in Robinson are part of the four-college Illinois Eastern Community College system, which also includes Frontier Community College in Fairfield and Wabash Valley College in Mt. Carmel. The four colleges serve students in the 12 counties of Southeastern Illinois and are led by a seven-member elected Board of Trustees.

The Aspen Prize is funded by the Joyce Foundation, the Lumina Foundation for Education, the Bank of America Charitable Foundation, and the JPMorgan Chase Foundation.

IECC students attend Political Action Day

More than 1,300 nurses from 31 Illinois nursing colleges marched on the Illinois Capitol in Springfield on March 29 to press for key legislation being considered in the General Assembly.

A group of 17 student nurses and two advisors from the IECC Student Nurses Association learned the importance of the political side of nursing. Legislative bills discussed during the “Hot Topics” included current legislation in the Illinois General Assembly that impacts nursing and client care. Misty Williams, OCC SNA President, stated, “It made me realize how important it is for us to vote, but also the importance for nurses to voice our opinions to our representatives and senators. As nurses, we need to stick together and fight for what we think is best for us and our patients.”

The highlight of the Political Action Day was the March to the State Capitol from the Convention Center. Miranda Mitchell and Misty Williams, members of OCC SNA, were selected from a drawing to carry the “Nurses Change Lives”



Above, Miranda Mitchell (left) and Misty Williams (right) proudly carry the INA banner during the Parade to the Capitol on SNA Political Action Day.

banner and lead the parade.

Following the parade to the Capitol, students were allowed to tour the Capitol and also observe a legislative session. The students attending learned the complexity of the steps it takes before a bill can become a law. They also learned that the nurse is a highly respected profession and nurses play a key role in the legislative process that affects health care.



OCC student nurses attending the Illinois Nurses Association's 14th Annual Student Nurse Political Action Day include Miranda Mitchell, Lora Walls, Loretta Payne, Vicki Wyatt, Amanda Weishaar, Valarie Bare and Misty Williams.

Richland County Recreation Council to hold triathlon

The Richland County Recreation Council will host The White Squirrel Triathlon on Saturday, July 30 at the Musgrove Park and Aquatic Center in Olney.

This is a sprint/beginner event focusing on fun and fitness. All fitness levels are welcome and the event is open to those entering high school in the fall and up.

The triathlon will combine swimming, biking and running activities of varying distances.

Participants may complete all three segments individually or may be part of a two- or three-person mens, womens or co-ed team.

OCC is offering classes to prepare participants for the event. Classes available include: Get You and Your Bike Ready for Your First Triathlon (Part 1), May 17-June 21; Running Training for Triathlon (Part 1), May 19-June 23; Get You and Your Bike Ready for Your First Triathlon (Part II), June 27-Aug. 1 and Running

Training for Triathlon (Part II), June 30-July 28.

To register for the classes, contact the OCC Student Services Office at 395-7777.

You can register for the triathlon at www.rcrcwhitesquirreltri.com.

Early bird registration continues through June 30. The cost is \$60 for individuals and \$120 for teams.

The RCRC has waived the registration fee for Richland County youth ages 18 and younger.

OCC students named to All-Illinois Academic Team

PTK co-advisors Carmen Jones and Kelly Payne attended the annual All-Illinois Academic Team Banquet, held April 13 at the Abraham Lincoln Hotel and Convention Center in Springfield.

They were joined by the college's nominees to the All-Illinois Academic Team, Faith Edgington and Cody Mitchell. Family members of both students were also in attendance for the special dinner and award ceremony.

For their commitment to academic excellence, Edgington and Mitchell were presented with a special certificate and medallion. A framed picture featuring both recipients was also presented to the college and can be viewed on the wall outside Room 102, where photographs of past OCC recipients also reside.

Edgington and Mitchell had previously been recognized for their academic team selection at the OCC Student Awards ceremony on April 11.

"As always, Carmen and I were excited to join Faith, Cody, and their families in Springfield for this special event," Payne said. "The evening's celebration represents the culmination of a year-long process which begins in early October with the selection of the two recipients and continues



OCC Phi Theta Kappa members Faith Edgington and Cody Mitchell were honored during the annual All-Illinois Academic Team Banquet on April 13.

through the application process to finally seeing each student have his or her medallion placed around his or her neck."

Payne added, "In past years, the selection process has been one of the most arduous tasks Carmen and I face as PTK advisors; with so many talented students to choose from, selecting just two sometimes feels impossible. However, as in past years, this year's recipients truly reflect the core hallmarks of Phi Theta Kappa: scholarship, leadership, and service. Faith and Cody are excellent students and both have been active PTK members since they became members; they each currently serve as officers also — Faith as

Publicity officer and Cody as Vice President.

Carmen and I are confident that both will continue to succeed in all that they do. We wish both Faith and Cody the very best as they continue with their educational and career goals."

Each community college in the state is permitted to nominate two students to the All-Illinois Academic Team. The students must complete a lengthy application process to even be considered for the honor. The banquet serves as the final recognition of their success.

This year, more than 1,600 community college students competed for recognition, scholarships and a coveted spot on the

national team. Of those 1,600 hopefuls, a small handful, based on their academic achievements and community service and involvement, are selected to the All-USA Academic First, Second, or Third Teams.

"However, whether one is selected to the national teams or not, all of the students recognized at the All-Illinois awards ceremony reflect a commitment to higher education and how one person can truly make an impact on his or her community and on the world at large," Payne said. "The list of accomplishments already achieved by these students is both humbling and inspiring, and leads many to consider these special PTK Scholars as 'first among equals.'"

Ultimately, the evening was a wonderful time to celebrate the accomplishments of these talented students and to spotlight the high caliber of education being delivered at community colleges around the state, and the country overall."

Payne added, "These individuals truly represent some of the best and brightest students higher education has to offer, and as they make their way to various colleges and universities around the country they are reminded to 'never forget from whence they came: Illinois Community Colleges!'"

Knightline available on website and OCC on FB

Current and past issues of the Knightline newsletter may be downloaded by visiting the OCC website at www.iecc.edu/occ.

The Knightline also is posted on

Olney Central College on Facebook at facebook.com/olneycentralcollege.

Also check both the website and OCC on Facebook for the latest happenings on campus.

College closed

Olney Central College will be closed on Monday, May 30 in observance of Memorial Day.

PTK Officers

OCC's Phi Theta Kappa chapter recently elected officers for 2011-2012. Pictured from left, are Patricia Pearce of Louisville, President and Student Senate Representative; Chandra Daugherty of Claremont, Publicity; and Kelsey Cutright of Greenup, Vice President.



Free tutoring

Taking classes this summer? The Learning Skills Center offers free tutoring in any subject taught at OCC. Biology study guides are available, as well as videos for Basic Math, Beginning Algebra and Intermediate Algebra.

The LSC also can provide tape recorders, large screen monitors, readers and note takers.

The LSC is located in the back of the Anderson Library in Conference Room 4. Stop by to learn more.

Ceremony

Continued from Page 1
publications *Lincoln and Freedom*, the *Oxford Encyclopedia of African-American History* and *The Essential Lincoln*. Keller is the chief editor of the *Lincoln Newsletter*, which is distributed nationally to Lincoln scholars. He has traveled statewide and nationally presenting topics on the scholarship of Abraham Lincoln.

"I've always been interested in history, but I don't think I fully appreciated Lincoln until I came to Lincoln College," he said. "That is when I began to read and research Lincoln. The more I learn about his life, the more fascinated I am by it."

The Lincoln Heritage Museum houses one of the largest collections of Lincoln and Civil War materials anywhere, and Keller enjoys meeting those who visit and use the vast historical collection.

"People from all over the world come to the U.S. to learn about Lincoln," Keller said. "He looms large in history. Being the curator has provided me with a lot of opportunities. A lot of the things I've

done are because of the museum and Lincoln connection and it all started at OCC."

Keller serves on the board of the prestigious Abraham Lincoln Association and is an advisor to the Lincoln Forum. In 2005, Gov. Rod Blagojevich appointed him to the Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission. That same year, President George W. Bush and First Lady Laura Bush invited Keller to join them at the White House for an Abraham Lincoln commemoration ceremony.

"For a kid from Jasper County, it was quite a thrill. I've been to D.C., but never to the White House. I was meeting people that I talk to my students about every day and it was a little surreal," Keller said. "The First Lady and President were great hosts and he is hilarious off camera. President Bush has a great appreciation for Lincoln, as all of the presidents do, including the current president."

In 2009, Gov. Pat Quinn and the Lincoln Academy bestowed Keller with the

Order of Lincoln – the highest honor given to a citizen by the state of Illinois. In January, Keller was awarded a grant from the White House to undertake research on its history.

"I will be doing research on the public use of the White House during Lincoln's presidency," Keller said. "I'm looking forward to conducting research at the Library of Congress and the White House. The White House isn't just a residence – it is living history. Some of the most crucial decisions in the nation's history have been made there."

While occupying the White House, Keller said Lincoln received numerous guests, including the great orator and abolitionist Frederick Douglass who visited while the Emancipation Proclamation was being debated.

"Visitors came and decisions were made within the White House walls. It was an amazing time period," Keller said. "This is during the Civil War when threats were being made against his life and still Lincoln refuses to close the door. The public had

more accessibility to the White House than at any time in its history.

"Lincoln was one of the most accessible presidents in our history. He associated with the public and wanted to know their opinions. It is one of the things that made him so great."

While Keller enjoys researching the 16th president's life, the classroom remains his primary focus.

"To me, teaching is always front and center," he said. "It is my first love and I can relate it back to my time at OCC. I had great role models who inspired me. They instilled that desire in me."

For his teaching, Keller has been included in the prestigious Who's Who Among America's Teachers for 2004, 2005 and 2006, and was inducted into Who's Who in America in 2009 and 2010.

Keller resides in Lincoln with his wife, Cindy, and children, Josiah, Ethan and Annagrace.

He is the son of Clarence and Freda Keller, of West Liberty.

New accounting certificates available

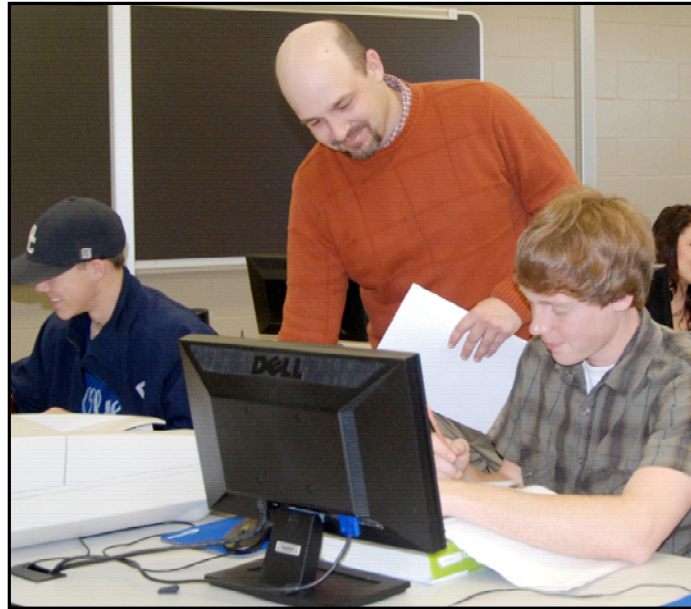
Olney Central College's Accounting Program is now offering both Professional Bookkeeper and QuickBooks certificates.

Summer classes will begin June 7 and interested students are encouraged to enroll in the programs as soon as possible.

The Professional Bookkeeper Certificate prepares individuals for high-demand accounting and bookkeeping jobs. Students can complete the certificate in just two semesters and then take the American Institute of Professional Bookkeepers' certification exam.

The certification can enhance employment opportunities and earning potential for graduates. According to the AIPB, 41 percent of certified bookkeepers have been promoted and or gotten a new job as a result of becoming certified.

The QuickBooks Certificate classes familiarize individuals with the QuickBooks software while preparing them for accounting positions. The



Accounting instructor John Kendall works with students in class. OCC's Accounting Program has added Professional Bookkeeper and QuickBooks certificates.

certificate can assist small business owners or prospective small business owners in setting up accounting and bookkeeping records through this software package and related coursework. Students can finish the QuickBooks Certificate by successfully completing just six accounting and computer courses.

John Kendall recently

joined OCC as a full-time accounting instructor and will be working closely with students pursuing both certificates. Kendall has served as an instructor with the Illinois Eastern Community Colleges since 2002. He taught at OCC for two years and then transferred to Wabash Valley College where he taught computer and general business classes. He

has taught accounting courses at OCC for the past two semesters.

Kendall received both a bachelor's degree in business with an emphasis in accounting and a master's degree in management from Oakland City University. He also earned a master's certificate in online teaching from the University of Illinois at Springfield.

"I'm excited about the opportunity to continue teaching for Olney Central College in the Accounting Department," he said. "My new position will allow me the chance to develop internships for our accounting students. This will provide them with the experience to go along with their education, which should help them in their job search after graduation."

In addition to offering new career opportunities, Kendall said the new certificates can be beneficial to business owners.

"I'm really excited to be offering QuickBooks and
See Accounting, Page 7

ETS receives mini-grant from Walmart Foundation

IECC's Educational Talent Search Program recently received a mini-grant award from the Walmart Foundation.

The mini-grant will help fund dorm packs for 2011 graduates of the ETS Program who have applied for financial aid and for college admission.

ETS is a TRIO Program funded by the U.S. Department of Education to encourage and to help young participants enroll in post-secondary pro-

grams following high school.

IECC has been awarded the Educational Talent Search grants since 1998 and has helped hundreds of area young people to think about college early in their teen years.

The Educational Talent Search Program is funded to serve 650 students attending target middle schools and high schools in the IECC District. ETS is located at Olney Central College.



Sandy Dean, Walmart Community Involvement Officer, (right) presents Educational Talent Search Advisor Leslie Slankard and Office Assistant Elaine Brainard with a check from the Walmart Foundation.

Interession summer, fall registration underway

Olney Central College is now registering students for interession, summer and fall semester classes.

Three-week interession classes begin Monday, May 16 and eight-week summer semester classes start Tuesday, June 7.

Fall semester classes begin Monday, Aug. 22.

Summer and fall schedules may be obtained from the Student Services Office or visit the Illinois Eastern Community Colleges web site at www.iecc.edu.

Register now to ensure you get the classes you want.

For registration information and appointments, contact the OCC Student Services Office at 395-7777.



OCC Music Department Jazz Festival

Guest Artist Tony DiPasquale directs the Southeastern Illinois Honors Jazz Ensemble during the OCC Music Department's 2011 Jazz Festival on April 21. The event also featured performances by the East Richland High School Jazz Ensemble, the Robinson High School Jazz Ensemble and the OCC Jazz Ensemble.

PTK collecting textbooks

If you can't sell your textbooks back to the OCC Bookstore, don't throw them away! Donate them to Books for Africa.

OCC's Phi Theta Kappa chapter is collecting textbooks from any subject.

The textbooks will be packed up and shipped to college students in Africa who do not have access to the quality of books that are available in America.

Textbooks may be placed in the collection boxes May 9-12. Boxes are located around campus and can be found outside the Bookstore and the Anderson Library.



PTK members Patricia Pearce, Cody Mitchell and Faith Edgington stand next to the PTK textbook collection box located outside the OCC Bookstore.

Accounting

Continued from Page 6

the opportunity for individuals to become certified," he said. "You can now be an expert at the software that is most widely used in small businesses. One way to reduce the cost for a small business is to do your own books and track sales. Both of these certificates meet a need in our area."

Kendall noted students can complete both certificates online. Students wishing to increase their employment opportunities are encouraged to enroll in OCC's two-year associate's degree in accounting. Individuals can complete the associate's degree entirely online. After graduating from the program, students can easily transfer to a four-year university and earn a bachelor's degree.

To register for classes or for more information, contact the Student Services Office at 395-7777.



OCC hosted a CNA workshop on May 2 featuring several breakout sessions including this one which gave students a better understanding of what life is like for patients with disabilities.

OCC hosts CNA workshop

OCC hosted a CNA Spring Workshop on May 2. The event brought together 80 CNAs and health occupation students.

“There are a lot of educational opportunities for nurses, but not that many for CNAs after they graduate,” said Allied Health Support and Development Coordinator Mary Corry. “This is something specifically designed for them. Every two years they have to have 30 contact hours of education and we were able to give them 6.5 hours.”

The event’s keynote speakers were Sharon Lancaster of Burgin Manor, who discussed Alzheimer’s and the different behaviors associated with the disease, and Patty Keortge, a certified wound care specialist, who discussed the importance of preventa-

tive care.

Students also attended afternoon breakout sessions. Corry presented a program on passive range motion exercises while Joyce Steber of Southern Illinois University at Carbondale’s Nurse Aide Testing offered an exercise designed to improve communication skills.

Lakeland Community College nursing instructors Teresa Dodson and Mary Stewart presented an activity that gave students an idea of what difficulties patients with disabilities face.

Keortge also offered a session focusing on wound care and identification.

The SIU-C Nurse Aide Testing partnered with the college to provide giveaways as did area businesses.

Get tips for saving energy

Dennis Stevens, Weatherization Director for ERBA Weatherization, will offer energy-saving tips during a presentation at 6:30 p.m. May 19 in the OCC Banquet Room.

“There are a lot of simple things people can do to save energy,” he said. “Most hot water heaters have the water too hot. If you have to add cold water to the hot, the temperature is set too high and energy is being wasted. Also, people leave phone chargers plugged in when they are not using them. Even if you are not charging the phone, it’s still using energy.”

Stevens also will discuss the benefits of purchasing Energy Star appliances.

Funding for the program is provided through an Illinois Green Economy Network grant, which is designed to foster green initiatives. The program is free, but those planning to attend are asked to register by calling Kathy Slichenmyer at 395-7777, ext. 2003.

Happy Birthday To:

May

- 5 Tina Mattes
- 8 Judith Hudson-FCC
- 12 Holly Farley
- 17 Shasta Bennett
- 25 Russ Jausel
- 26 Cheryl Dill

Knightline Information

Please submit information for the Summer Knightline to Deanna Ratts by 5 p.m. on June 17.

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