



LTC URGING STUDENTS TO  
APPLY BY NEW PRIORITY  
DEADLINE



LTC THEATER PRESENTING TWO  
FALL SHOWS



LTC CELEBRATES ADULT  
EDUCATION WEEK

LINCOLN TRAIL COLLEGE  
*Network*



## THEATER RENAISSANCE PROJECT MOVES FORWARD

A Lincoln Trail College project that has been in the works for the last three years took a major step forward after the Illinois Eastern Community Colleges Board of Trustees approved the bid for the Theater Renaissance Project. The addition to the Zwermann Arts Center will add a new choral room that doubles as a mid-sized lecture hall along with additional practice rooms, and office and storage spaces.

“We’re going to be breaking ground for the first time on brick and mortar construction at the college since 1975,” says IECC Chancellor Dr. Ryan Gower, who was the President at LTC when planning for the project began. “It’s a small project in terms of size. It’s only a 3,600 square-foot addition, but the significance is more than the square footage of that building. The significance is Lincoln Trail College is growing again. We’re thinking for the future. We’re thinking about how we’re going to serve students with our facilities. That’s exciting to me.”

One of the key features of the Theater Renaissance Project is the addition of the new choral room. Music instructor Rebecca Carmack says the choral room that they’re using now is not the best facility for choirs and ensembles. It is also shared with the theater during productions.

“I feel like our department really serves the community in a way that’s very special and unique. And so, if we don’t have the resources that we need we can’t serve the community. We certainly can’t serve our students in the way that we want to. So, the addition of a choral room is very exciting for me. This new space will also serve multiple purposes

but is going to be set up in a way that we can actually use it for all of those purposes. We'll never have to move chairs around between a class and a rehearsal. It is all set up there with tiered seating in the way that we like for our choirs and our instrumental ensembles as well. And it can serve the classroom setting as well."

Barb Shimer has had a long relationship with the LTC Theater and was part of the steering committee for the Theater Renaissance Project. Shimer now serves on the IECC Board of Trustees. She first started in the performing arts at LTC as a student and has continued to participate in various choirs, ensembles, and productions throughout her life. Shimer says the project will benefit the theater side of the performing arts department because they will be able to better use the space for building and storing sets. She says it will also provide a better balance for the department while productions are online. Shimer believes this will also be a great addition to the community.

"Besides having places where the community choir can meet, we can also have a camp in the summer for high school kids. We have so many different ideas. Not only can music groups use it, but community groups can also use it. It allows for a great use of the theater because the theater is a community resource. Different companies have their annual meetings there and training meetings there. We want to make that available, and by having an overflow facility we can now make that available without canceling classes. So, it does become a true community resource."

One of the ways the Zwermann Arts Center Theater has served the community is through the Lincoln Trail College Foundation's Concert Series. Rod Harmon is the Foundation's Executive Director. He says through the course of the series, about 20,000 people have seen the concerts, which help raise money for scholarships for LTC students.

"There are a lot of activities at the theater and it is very important. Dr. Gower always wanted the hub of the community activities to be at the college and the college to be the center of those activities. The hub of the college then runs through the Zwermann Theater. So, the significance of theater and what we're doing is so, so important."

The Theater Renaissance Project is one of several big changes happening at Lincoln Trail College. Work is underway on the soccer fields at Statesmen Park, which was an 11-acre expansion of the campus. It will include two soccer fields and eventually a softball diamond. Earlier this summer, it was announced that LTC is receiving \$8,370,000 from the State of Illinois for the construction of a Technology Center which will house technical programs like Process Technology, Construction Technology, Welding, Broadband Telecommunications, and Computer Security and Forensics as well as LTC's new University Partnership Center that will allow students to earn degrees from select four-year colleges without having to leave home. Another project slated for the campus is the Crawford County Recreation Center, which is being headed by a local not-for-profit group that is raising private funds for the new building. That facility will include a fitness center, multipurpose rooms that can be used for fitness classes, and an indoor walking track. Renovations for the indoor pool at LTC are also planned.

All of the money for the Theater Renaissance Project has been privately raised and the LTC Foundation is a large contributor to the project. "One of the things I like to tell people is that gifts and contributions to Lincoln Trail College are significant," says Gower. "So often when you contribute to a college or a university you feel like it's a drop in the bucket, and people wonder if their donations actually make a difference. When you're working with a smaller college like Lincoln Trail, even small contributions go a long way. This Theater Renaissance Project is funded almost 100 percent through private gifts. As they always do, the leadership of our Foundation stepped up and filled in the gap and donated the final \$308,800 needed to allow us to break ground on this project."

Work on the Theater Renaissance Project should begin this fall and the project is expected to be completed within seven months.



## LTC JOINS WITH IECC TO PROMOTE PRIORITY DEADLINE



Illinois Eastern Community Colleges Chancellor Dr. Ryan Gower is encouraging prospective students to apply to Frontier Community College, Lincoln Trail College, Olney Central College, or Wabash Valley College before October 30. Students that apply before the priority deadline will be first in line for scholarships offered by each of the four colleges.

“I believe everyone is aware of the excellent educational opportunities that IECC provides,” says Gower. “One of the things I don’t think many students fully understand is how financially smart it is to start or finish your educational career at one of our four colleges.”

Gower says there’s a consumer debt crisis in the United States right now and aside from mortgages, student loan debt is the largest form of debt carried by Americans today. “I have seen so many young people put an anchor on their future and burden themselves with up to six figures of student loan debt. When you look at one of the biggest drivers of student debt it’s not the tuition; it’s actually the student housing and living expenses that are incurred when you leave home to go to college. There is a smarter way forward through IECC.”

Community colleges like FCC, LTC, OCC, and WVC offer students the chance to stay close to home to receive their education and avoid higher tuition and costs of university housing and meals.

Gower says he wants students to have all of the facts as they make a college decision and that’s why he’s urging them to submit their free application before Oct. 30. Students that fill out the application and finish their FAFSA should have an estimated cost of attendance for IECC before the holidays. “We want students to have a realistic snapshot of what it is going to cost them to attend one of the four Illinois Eastern Community Colleges as compared to a four-year university. Many of our students find that after PELL, SEOG, and MAP assistance, they end up paying very little and the financial support for others actually exceeds their tuition charges. Imagine getting paid to go to college instead of the other way around!”

Gower says the tuition at IECC is a fraction of the cost of other state colleges and universities. For example, the annual tuition at IECC is about a third of the cost of the annual tuition at SIU-Edwardsville and SIU-Carbondale while it is 27-percent of the annual tuition rates at Eastern Illinois and the University of Illinois. “Attending FCC, LTC, OCC, or WVC is a financially smart decision.”



IECC is also going to help students fill out the FAFSA through a series of virtual FAFSA Night events in October. The virtual events will take place on Oct. 8, 15, 22, and 29 from 5-7 PM on each of those nights.

“We are going to do virtual FAFSA Nights through Zoom,” says IECC Director of Financial Aid Andrea Puckett. “We’ll have a big group meeting, but we’ll also have breakout rooms set up for students to go in and receive private one-on-one assistance. There will be a share screen option available so we can look at what the students are doing and what question the students are working on and we can assist them that way.”

Puckett says filling out the FAFSA doesn’t have to be intimidating, especially since IECC’s Financial Aid professionals can give students a helping hand. She says it only takes about 20-25 minutes to fill out the form online.

She says it is very important for people to fill out the FAFSA each year they are in college. “The FAFSA is really the basis for all of the aid you receive when you go to college. There is aid that is based on income, but institutions also use

it to award institutional aid. You could be eligible for something that you might not be with the federal and state governments. It’s a very important tool for students to use.”

Puckett recommends that students create an FSA ID before attending the FAFSA Night of their choice. When creating an FSA ID, students will need their Social Security Number and an email address they have access to. During the event, Puckett says you’ll want to have your driver’s license, federal tax information to include 2019 tax returns and W-2 information, records of untaxed income, and banking and investment information.

There is an extra incentive for students to participate with FAFSA Night this year. Puckett says IECC has partnered with TrustBank for a prize drawing. Each of the four colleges in the District will give away a cash bouquet donated by TrustBank. Students will be entered into the drawing when they register for and attend a virtual FAFSA Night, send their FAFSA information to IECC, and complete an application for admission.

Students can register for the virtual FAFSA Night event by visiting [www.iecc.edu/fafsa](http://www.iecc.edu/fafsa) and they can apply for admission at [www.iecc.edu/apply](http://www.iecc.edu/apply).

Illinois Eastern Community Colleges



30

Deadline!

College Priority Application

Apply

Apply early for exclusive access to scholarship and admission opportunities.

Paying for College

Let us help you get the financial aid you deserve with our FAFSA nights. More info at [iecc.edu/fafsa](http://iecc.edu/fafsa)

Here to Help!

Everyone wants you to succeed, contact us to help you on your journey!

[www.iecc.edu/priority](http://www.iecc.edu/priority)

Frontier | Lincoln Trail | Olney Central | Wabash Valley



## LTC THEATER PRESENTS "A DELIGHTFUL QUARANTINE"



Tara Gallion has announced the cast list for Lincoln Trail College's 2020 Fall production, "A Delightful Quarantine." Mark Dunn's 2006 comedy asks the question of what it would be like to be confined with people you don't really know after strange visitors leave behind a deadly disease that leaves seven separate households unexpectedly quarantined.

Tom Moore serves as Professor Leonard Fuller, who serves as the narrator in the ensemble cast. Summer Agan is Barbara Middlebrook. Playing her daughters are

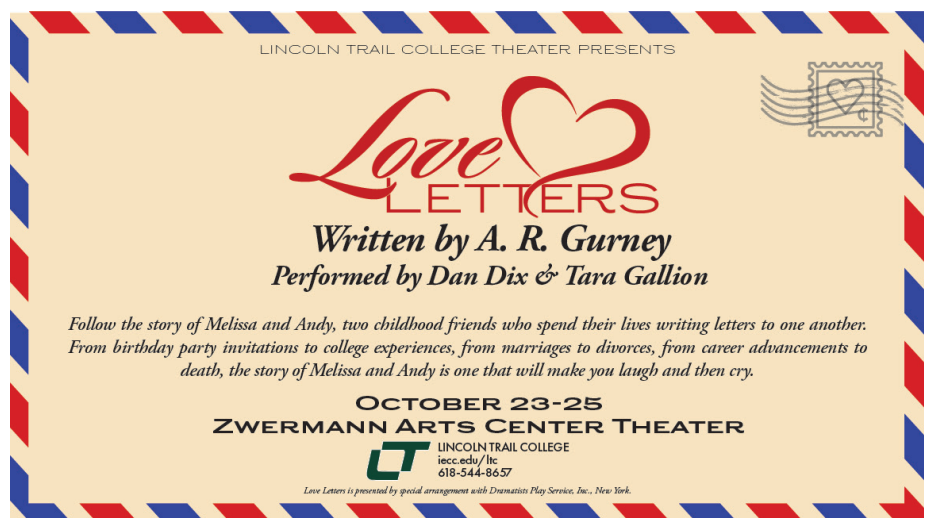
Megan Gallagher as Paula Middlebrook-Clobb and Shelby Branson as Kitty Civette. In House "B," Vickie Becker plays Judeen Dempsey and John Sutfin plays Chester Banderhorn. In House "C," Sabrina Malone plays Bethany Robbins and Cooper Meadows takes on the role of Clark Wigglin. Allison Nichols as Shirley Wigglin and Ricky Shelton as Roy Robbins make up House D. Sicily Rawlings plays Diandra Robbins and Tessa Branson plays Diandra's best friend Jennifer Wigglin. Joining them in House E are Debi Knight as Violet Bassey, Becky Miller as Mavis Jemco, and Gil T. Wilson as Tug Goff. Amy Drake and Xavier Brown play siblings Sue and Dean Stadler in House F.

There are five performances of "A Delightful Quarantine." There are shows at 7 p.m. on November 5 and 6. There are two performances on Nov. 7: a matinee at 2 p.m. and an evening performance at 7 p.m. The production wraps up with a 2 p.m. matinee on Nov. 8. Due to limited seating, LTC will also offer streams of the show.

## LTC THEATER PRESENTS "LOVE LETTERS"

Lincoln Trail College Theater will present the two-person show by A R. Gurney, "Love Letters" October 23-25.

Starring Dan Dix and Tara Gallion, "Love Letters" follows the story of Melissa and Andy, two childhood friends who spend their lives writing letters to one another. From birthday party invitations to college experiences, from marriages to divorces, from career advancements to death, the story of Melissa and Andy is one that will make you laugh and then cry. The actors never interact on stage but are simply reflecting as they look back through the letters they sent one another over their lives.



Performances of "Love Letters" will be at 7:00 on Oct. 23 and 24 and at 2:00 on Oct. 25 in the Zwermann Arts Center Theater. Seating is limited to 42 people per performance and tickets are available through [showtix4u.com](http://showtix4u.com).

## LTC CELEBRATES ADULT LITERACY WEEK



September 20-26 marked the annual Adult Education and Family Literacy Week. The week serves as a reminder that reading, writing, and basic math remain an elusive target for 36 million adults across the country.

According to ProLiteracy, a non-profit organization that supports literacy programs, low literacy costs the United States \$225 billion or more each year in non-productivity in the workforce, crime, and loss of tax revenue due to unemployment. They say that 43 percent of adults with the lowest literacy levels live in poverty.

Lincoln Trail College Academic Success Center Director Rena Gower oversees the College's adult education program. She says LTC works hard to help people that never earned a high school degree.

"Lincoln Trail College has had a long-standing involvement within the community for offering free courses to help prepare individuals to pass the High School Equivalency, also known as the GED Exam. This exam consists of four areas: English and reading, math, social studies, and science. Students also must have passed or pass a Constitution exam to receive their certification."

Gower says LTC's HSE classes are free, including books and supplies. Classes are available days and evenings. "All we ask is for the commitment from the student."

Low literacy levels can affect families and health. ProLiteracy says children whose parents have low literacy levels have a 72 percent chance of being at the lowest reading levels themselves. These children are more likely to get poor grades, display behavioral problems, have high absentee rates, repeat school years, or drop out of school. Meanwhile, \$232 billion a year in health care costs is linked to low adult literacy skills.

"We know many adults are living in Crawford County that do not have a high school diploma for a variety of reasons," says Gower. "We're here to help them take that next step."

She says through the HSE program, LTC is also able to support students with transition classes to help them enroll in secondary education. The HSE program can also help students gain skills to obtain a higher paying job once they earn their GED certificate.

One way the College is doing that is through a new initiative that pairs the HSE program with LTC's welding program. The initiative is awaiting final approval from the state, but once active, it will allow students to earn a welding certificate at the same time as they earn their GED.



Gower says people can make advising and registration appointments now for the Spring Semester of HSE classes. Students can make an appointment by calling Gower at 618-546-2306. Meanwhile, she says groups and organizations that want to learn more about LTC's HSE program can also call her to set up a speaking engagement.

## LTC HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY PROGRAM VISITS LOCAL LIBRARIES

Lincoln Trail College Academic Success Center Director Rena Gower will be visiting local libraries to talk about the College's High School Equivalency Program, which is known as the GED Program.

Gower will be answering questions people may have about the program and to evaluate if there is enough interest to start classes away from Lincoln Trail College. "I'm also inviting people to share any obstacles they may have that are keeping them from taking the HSE class," says Gower. "We want to try to meet the needs of our community and this type of information will be helpful."

Gower will also have registration forms for LTC's spring HSE classes. People that sign up for the program will need to have a valid Illinois photo ID and will need to know their Social Security Number.

Lincoln Trail College offers free classes to help people earn their High School Equivalency. Day and evening classes are available. Books and supplies for the classes are also free.

Gower will be at the Robinson Public Library on October 14 from 2:30-5:30 PM. She'll be at the Palestine Library from 3-6 PM on Oct. 15 and at the Oblong Library from 2-5 PM on Oct. 16. She'll visit the Hutsonville Library from 9-noon on Oct. 17.



Members of Student Senate decorate the LT statue in the Triangle for Fall.



Crawford County Clerk Fayrene Wright talks to Cyndi Boyce's class about the election process. The Clerk's Office also registered students to vote.



Student Senate makes care packages for students in quarantine. The packages were handed out with contactless delivery.



A worker transports sod for Statesmen Park.

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

It has been a terrific first few weeks for me here at Lincoln Trail College. I have had the opportunity to meet many of the faculty and staff at LTC as well as many students. Of course, I knew about the stellar reputation that LTC has earned locally, statewide and nationally. After having the pleasure of meeting the people that make it happen, I am even more convinced that the reputation has been earned by a fantastic faculty, staff and leadership. I truly appreciate the warm reception and all the positive comments thus far.

An area of continued concern and vigilance regards COVID. As I toured campus during my first few days, I was struck by the care that has been taken to keep our faculty, staff, students and visitors as safe as possible. The sheer amount of time and energy it has taken to prepare the campus for the return of students and staff is evident. I am impressed with the ownership many individuals have taken to ensure that students are protected, and even fed. It is clear to me that going the extra mile is just part of the journey for this campus. Thank you all for the outstanding job you have done. As this journey continues, we will remain focused on safety. We are witnessing difficult time in our history, both in terms of turmoil and the challenges we face related to COVID. During this time, I am reminded of how great it is to live here. A caring and compassionate community filled with people who care about each other solves many problems.

Even with the various challenges we face, it is also a very exciting time here at LTC. One of the first things I noticed when I entered my office at LTC was a set of blueprints for the addition to the Performing Arts Center. This project represents the first brick and mortar project here at LTC in decades. It also represents a sense of anticipation and enthusiasm for the future. Of course, with any building project, there will be messes and some inconvenience. The visual reminder that this is just the beginning of many great things to come helps make any inconvenience tolerable.

I look forward to meeting more students and staff members in the coming weeks. The highlight of the first few weeks has been meeting people. Please don't hesitate to stop in and say hello, I look forward to that!

Roger Eddy  
Interim President

