

Olney Central College KNIGHTLINE



SEPTEMBER 2021

CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

14 - Taylor Red, Southeastern Illinois Concert Association, OCC Theater, 7 p.m.

17 - Constitution Day, Classes in Session

27-28 - OCC Theater Auditions for *Curious George and the Golden Meatball*, 7 p.m.

30 - OCC Foundation & Allied Health Scholarship Deadline

OCTOBER

1 - FAFSA Opens for 2022-2023

2 - Health Fest, OCC Gym

5 - Last Day to Enroll in 2021 Fall Tuition Two-Payment Plan

8 - IECC Faculty/Staff Professional Development Day, No Day or Evening Classes

11 - College Closed, Columbus Day

COLLEGE VISITS

Tables will be located outside Student Services.

Sept. 20 - Eastern Illinois University Representative Sierra Hollenback, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Oct. 7 - Millikin University Representative Mackenzie Larrick, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Oct. 18 - Southern Illinois University Representative Jason Nugent, 1-4 p.m.



Title III Welding Specialist Maverick Fisher shows off the newly renovated Welding Building. Fisher and Welding Instructor Curtis Marshall made numerous improvements to the facility this summer. Pictured with Fisher are Marshall's sons, Jeremiah and Harrison, who pitched in and helped squeegee the floors.

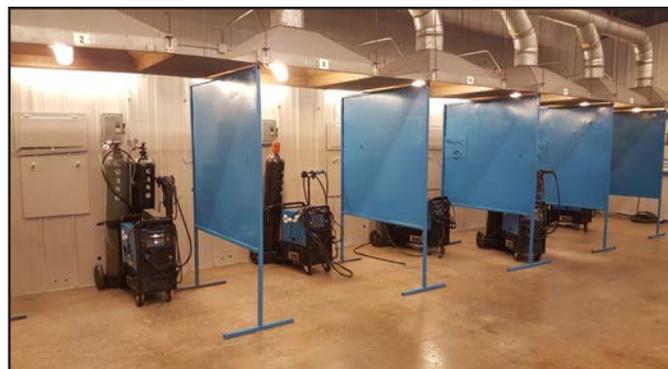
Welding Building renovations enhance student workspace

Olney Central College's Welding Technology Building underwent renovations this summer that not only improved its aesthetics, but created more usable space for the program.

"This project has been a long time coming," said Instructor Curtis Marshall. "Maverick (Fisher) came out over the summer and put a lot of time and effort into this. It has made for a cleaner shop and the logistics are much better."

The building's extensive overhaul included power washing and sealing the original cement floors, painting the walls and reorganizing workspaces.

"In all welding shops, you fight dust from grinding, which is super abrasive and hard on surfaces," said Fisher, who serves as the Title III welding specialist. "It has been some time



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Jerry Booker Retires

Jerry Booker was honored during a reception on Aug. 31. He is retiring after serving 13 years as Groundskeeper at OCC. His last day was Sept. 1.



Welding

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since the shop has undergone a complete cleaning. It's been a two-month process, but the results are worth the effort."

Along with cleaning the facility, Marshall created indoor access points for two storage areas, which run the length of the east and west sides of the lab. Previously, the area could only be entered through an outside door.

"Cutting the new doors created around 576 feet of usable, accessible space," Fisher said. "We will be turning one area into a dedicated grinding room, which will help contain the dust and maintain the cleanliness of the lab."

Marshall said reconfiguration of the lab also will increase student capacity.

"It's going to give the students more room and a better work environment," Marshall said. "Big projects will be easier to build and the facility

will be safer than ever before for the students."

The updates bring the on-campus facility in line with the new Title III Associate Degree Welding lab at the West Richland Center in Noble.

"I've been to several welding schools and I've seen their facilities," Fisher said. "We now have the cleanest setup of any I've seen. With other associate degree programs, the first- and second-year students are all working in the same space. We have two facilities fully-dedicated to both groups."

The new configuration also maximizes students' hands-on experience.

"It's more conducive to the program and means more welding time for the students," Fisher said. "My outlook is students should walk away from our classes feeling every penny they spent was worth it. The meat and potatoes of our classes is the welding time and the changes will make it easier to achieve that goal."

Marshall plans to make additional improvements to the classroom area in

the future.

Later this fall, Shultz Electrical will be performing electrical upgrades, which will include installing new outlets and dropping extension cords from the ceiling for the welders.

Marshall and Fisher said the project would not have been possible without college and community help.

O&M Department's Jerry Booker ensured needed tools were available for the job while work study student Dylan Jones painted all welding booths and assisted with other jobs.

Student Ken Hake, who had previous experience sealing floors, aided Fisher with the process in the lab. Even Marshall's sons, Jeremiah and Harrison, pitched in helping to squeegee the floors as needed.

Others involved included Wease Equipment, which provided the pressure washer, and Dirk Washburn of Color Your World, who painted the walls.

Peer coach helps students adjust to college life

Students face many challenges as they begin their college careers. Olney Central College hopes to ease the transition with its new Peer Coach Program.

Created by Title III Advising Specialist Ashley Bigard, the initiative connects incoming freshmen with a current student through OCC's text platform, SignalVine.

Sometimes students have a question, but they may be reluctant to contact their professor or even an advisor, Bigard explained. With a peer coach, the situation is less intimidating because they are asking a fellow student.

The program provides a new means of conveying information and ensuring students' needs are being met, she added. The initiative also aligns with the Title III Grant objective of reaching out to at-risk students.

"It's something we talked about years ago and has been in the works," Bigard said. "I researched what other colleges were doing. Many of the ideas for our peer coach came from Eastern Illinois University, which has a successful program. We are starting out small and hoping to expand in the future."

Peer coaches support the academic transition of students to OCC through individualized coaching to assist them in adjusting to college life, Bigard said.

Peer coaches help students by making personalized recommendations regarding campus resources; by encouraging engagement on campus and in the community; by facilitating study, time management, and other academic success skills; and, by modeling responsible and healthy decision-making. Coaches continuously check in with new students on their experiences at OCC.

Philip Henderson, of Flora, is looking forward to serving as the first



Philip Henderson helped welcome new students to campus during Orientation Days. Henderson is serving as OCC's first peer coach.

peer coach as he begins his second semester at OCC. A member of TRIO Student Support Services, Henderson plans to pursue a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering after completing his studies at OCC.

"When I first started here, I had so many questions, so I know what it's like," Henderson said. "I want to be a resource students can reach out to and receive help. This is a great opportunity. I get to work really close with the advisors and professors while meeting other students and learning more about the college myself."

Since joining the program, Henderson has been familiarizing himself with the college website to better direct students to available resources. He also assisted with Orientation Days where he had an opportunity to introduce himself to new students while

offering advice and suggestions for getting involved on campus.

During the first week of the semester, he reached out to 173 students via text to ask how their classes were going and if they had any questions. He received 32 responses.

"I'm looking forward to being utilized and I'm ready to help," Henderson said. "Students can reach out to me with any questions they may have. If I have the answer, I can let them know immediately, but if it's a question I don't know the answer to, I will find the answer and get back with them."

Bigard is excited about the response so far and hopes to add a second peer coach later in the academic year. Students interested in the position can contact Bigard at bigarda@iecc.edu or call 618-395-7777, ext. 2005.

Chad Groves named new Director of Instructional Support Services

Chad Groves has been named Olney Central College's Director of Instructional Support Services, overseeing both the Academic Success Center and the Anderson Library.

"I'm thankful for this opportunity, and I feel like this is where I want to be at this point in my career," Groves added. "I'm excited about the job and excited to begin the next chapter here at OCC. We have a great staff with Kaitlyn (Weger) and Brianna (Simpson). They are vital to the success of the Library and the Academic Success Center. I look forward to being part of a great team."

Groves, who joined OCC in 2013, brings a wealth of experience to the position. He previously served as the ASC's Developmental Support Specialist and as an adult education instructor. He taught both Composition and Composition and Analysis as an adjunct faculty member, and for the last four years, Groves was a speech instructor for the TRIO Upward Bound Summer Program.

"I think the number of roles I've previously held provided a base of experience to lay the groundwork for me to move into this position," Groves said. "I'm looking forward to working with students and faculty alike. I have been on both sides. Over the years, I have developed relationships with students and that is important to me. I enjoy that I can serve faculty more and be available to their needs and satisfy them."

A native of Olney, Groves earned a bachelor's degree in marketing and management from Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tenn., and holds a master's degree in communications from Southern New Hampshire University.

Groves assumed his new position Aug. 23 and is already looking at ways to enhance the ASC and the Anderson



Library.

"We are trying to implement library services and streamline tutoring and remediation," he said. "They are important services we offer, but they often get bogged down. We want to make those services more efficient for the students."

As the semester gets underway, Groves wants to strengthen the ASC's tutoring services including establishing a "Tutor Power Hour," where tutors would be available on the same day, at the same time and location each week. The new service would allow students with a question to pop in and chat with a tutor.

Groves is currently working on the logistics with Phi Theta Kappa Advisor Amie Mayhall and Director of Instructional Services Sheri Gray.

"Once we get it set up, it will be a great service," he said. "Other campuses have instituted something like this and folks have gotten excited about it. I hope to get something start-

ed soon."

Groves is eyeing changes for the Anderson Library as well, making it a focal point on campus.

"I'd like to see more activity in the library," he said. "We have some fun ideas to get more people here to enjoy and utilize this wonderful space we have. We want it to serve as not only a resource for students and faculty, but we have talked about doing things that will make it more appealing and inviting. I am excited about what the future holds."

Groves envisions creating an atmosphere similar to the modern bookstore, a welcoming gathering spot where students can take a break or find a cozy place to study.

"We're in the early stages, but we are looking at potentially getting a coffee cart here and having some community-style events in the library," Groves added. "We do want to enhance the library's profile. We want to see more students here and want to do all we can to encourage them to be here."

File your FAFSA starting Oct. 1

OCC Financial Aid Coordinator Taryn Bunting is encouraging students to complete their 2022-2023 FAFSA as soon as possible.

Students can fill out their Free Application for Federal Student Aid starting Oct. 1 at www.fafsa.gov.

Remember, you must complete the FAFSA every year you are attending college.

The FAFSA form is free, so if a website or mobile app asks you to pay to fill it out, you're not dealing with the official FAFSA site or the official myStudentAid app.

For more information, stop by the Financial Aid Office.

Sports Schedule

Baseball

Sept. 14 — OCC at Danville, 3 p.m.

Sept. 19 — OCC at Busch Stadium vs. Lincoln Trail, TBA

Sept. 21 — OCC vs. Danville, 2 p.m. at home

Sept. 24 — OCC at Southern Illinois University, TBA

Sept. 25 — OCC at Kentucky Wesleyan, noon

Sept. 29 — OCC at University of Southern Indiana, 5 p.m.

Oct. 1 — OCC at Brescia, 4 p.m.

Oct. 5 — OCC vs. Vincennes, 2 p.m. at home

Oct. 9 — OCC at Vincennes, noon

Softball

Sept. 19 — OCC at Indiana State, TBA

Sept. 24 — OCC at University of Evansville, 4 p.m.

Sept. 25 — OCC at McKendree, noon

Oct. 3 — OCC at Lindenwood, TBA

Oct. 10 — OCC at Kentucky Wesleyan, 1 p.m.

Oct. 16 — OCC at Southeast Missouri State, TBA

Oct. 22 — OCC at Murray State, 4 p.m.



Food for Thought Drawing

OCC's Food for Thought Pantry provides free meals and snacks for students at OCC. Student Services recently held a food drive to restock items for the new school year. Students, faculty and staff, who donated items were eligible to have their names in a drawing for a gift bag. OCC student Kaylie Land, of Edwards County, was the winner.

Check email for invitation to join Phi Theta Kappa

OCC students, check your email for an invitation to join Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society for two-year colleges.

In order to qualify for membership, students must have completed at least 12 credit hours, have a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher, and be seeking a degree.

Once in PTK, students can take part in various service projects and fund-raisers.

Each year members have an opportunity to attend the annual PTK conference. If you need help accepting the invitation, contact Amie Mayhall or Kaitlyn Weger. If you have questions about PTK, contact President Stephanie Blake.

PTK is looking for officers for the 2021-2022 school year. If you were invited to PTK, please attend the next meeting at 12:15 p.m. on Sept. 21 in Room 206.



PHI THETA KAPPA
HONOR SOCIETY

Local author donates novel to Anderson Library

Olney native David Spitz recently donated a copy of his novel, *Lincoln's Agent: On the Trail of a Killer*, to the Olney Central College Anderson Library.

Set amid the rising tensions of mid-18th century America, Spitz's work of historical fiction follows the struggles of U.S. Marshal Arnett McCann who is called to Washington, D.C. as the nation teeters on the verge of civil war.

Area readers will find familiar locations and names, as portions of this action-packed thriller take place amid the rolling hills and bluffs of Southern Illinois. Throughout the novel, McCann tries to keep his life together as the world around him spins out of control and he sidesteps the U.S. Civil War.

"There is a lot happening at one time," Spitz says of the novel. "It is complex with three or four issues going on at one time and more than one thing that leads to the book's conclusion."

Spitz began his writing career publishing song lyrics in 2016. He then chose to pursue a bachelor's degree in creative writing. A university, where he applied, required a writing sample and Spitz's submission became the basis for *Lincoln's Agent*.

Spitz completed a certificate program at Wabash Valley College and attended classes at OCC. He is currently working on a followup to his first novel.

Spitz's book is available on Amazon at https://www.amazon.com/David-Spitz/e/B09BW48YSP/ref=ntt_dp_epwbk_0.

You can also visit [Amazon/author/davidspitz54.com](https://www.amazon.com/author/davidspitz54.com).



David Spitz donated a copy of his novel, *Lincoln's Agent: On the Trail of a Killer*, to OCC's Anderson Library. Accepting the book is Library Assistant Kaitlyn Weger.

Bulletin Board

Nursing Faculty member Becky Coleman created this new bulletin board for the Nursing Department hallway.



Jane McCormick serving as IST Instructor

Jane McCormick is serving as Olney Central College's new Information Systems Technology (IST) Instructor.

An Olney native, McCormick possesses both technical and educational experience in the field. After graduating from college, she began her career with AT&T and later moved to its subsidiary Lucent Technologies in Naperville. McCormick served as a software engineer working at the telecommunications equipment firm before transitioning into technical management.

During her career at AT&T / Lucent Technologies, McCormick completed both Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Computer Science from North Central College in Naperville.

"After I left the corporate world, I felt like I wanted to take the experience and knowledge I had gained over the years and use it to help others," she said. "I went to an open house at Aurora University in Aurora, Ill., and the presentation on the educational program they offered really excited me. I immediately started working on my education degree and earned a Master's degree in Education from Aurora University."

After receiving her degree, McCormick taught multiple computer related classes in the Naperville School District for several years, and now is looking forward to working with students at a higher, collegiate level.

"I enjoy being able to apply what I learned for so many years and knowing that I can help prepare students for the future," she said. "I hope to show them how great an opportunity exists in the computer related field. After finishing the IST program, the students can get a job in the field or continue to a university and complete a four-year degree in several different computer related fields. There is a huge demand for graduates in the computer related field including IST as well as many others at all levels. It doesn't matter whether you're in medicine, art, or any of the hundreds of different areas, you can take the things you've learned while obtaining your IST degree and apply them to multiple areas because IST is everywhere."

As an additional goal, McCormick hopes to attract more female students as women continue to be underrepresented in the computer field.

"The shortage of females in the computer industry is getting worse, instead of better," McCormick said. "We need to do more to engage them. Computer related careers are for everyone and should not be seen as gender based."

In her previous teaching career, McCormick established a Girls Who Code Club for students in Naperville to address the lack of females in the field. The national organization aims to support and increase the number of women in computer science by equipping them with the necessary computing skills to pursue 21st century opportunities. McCormick is currently working with the Richland County Middle School to create a chapter here.

"I'm excited to market the program showing the huge need for IST to future students in the community by attending career fairs or any other opportunities available for marketing," she said. "The Information Systems Technology program is already drawing students from surrounding communities — including Fairfield, Lawrenceville and Louisville — with a goal of expanding. This is a great program, and I am excited to watch it grow. Former instructor PJ (Zeilstra) did a wonderful job setting it up. There is a huge growth potential for computer programs such as IST at OCC. This is a great beginning. My job is to carry it to the next level."

McCormick resides in Olney with her husband, Mark, a local attorney. They have two grown sons residing in the area.



OCC Theater to hold auditions for fall production Sept. 27-28

The Olney Central College Theater will hold auditions for *Curious George and the Golden Meatball* at 7 p.m. on Sept. 27-28 in the Dr. John D. Stull Performing Arts Center. Call backs, if necessary, will be at 7 p.m. on Sept. 30.

Roles are available for high school freshmen through adults. Dialogue cuts, better known as sides, are available at www.iecc.edu/occtheater for the prepared readings. Adult and high school actors should also be prepared to sing 60 seconds from any song with sheet music for the accompanist.

There will also be a basic dance routine that is available on the OCC Theater website. Rehearsals begin on Oct. 7. *Curious George and the Golden Meatball* performances will be Nov. 19-21. For questions, email wrightj@iecc.edu.

