

Olney Central College KNIGHTLINE



DECEMBER 2021

CALENDAR

DECEMBER

8 - Last Day of Fall Semester Classes

9 - Spring Textbook Sales Begin

9 - Fall Textbook Buyback, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. and 5-6:30 p.m., OCC Bookstore

9-10 & 13-14 - Final Exams

10 - Fall Textbook Buyback, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., OCC Bookstore

11 - OCC Music Department *Many Moods of Christmas* Choral Concert, 7 p.m. Richland County High School Auditorium

13-14 - Fall Textbook Buyback, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., OCC Bookstore

15 - Last Day of Fall Semester

20-31 - College Closed for Winter Break

JANUARY

3 - College Opens

5 - Faculty/Staff Workshop

10 - Spring Semester Classes Begin

13 - Last Day to Enroll in Spring Semester 4-Payment Plan

17 - College Closed - Martin Luther King Jr. Day

OCC Accounting Degree ranked among top in nation

The website Best Accredited Colleges has named Olney Central College's Associate Accounting Degree among the top in the nation.

Best Accredited Colleges provides its guide and school rankings to assist students in making the best college decision. Selections are based on U.S. Department of Education data including accessibility, affordability, quality of education and return on investment. OCC's Accounting Program was ranked No. 16 on the list.

"It is very exciting especially to be the only community college in Illinois in the Top 30," said Accounting Professor Kristi Urfer. "It demonstrates the quality of our degree and the dedication of everyone who teaches classes in the program. It shows that we are meeting the college's mission of providing excellence in education to our students."

Fellow Accounting Professor John Kendall agrees, "I think it's an honor and a validation of our program and the support we receive from the administration, the OCC Foundation and our advisory council. It's a testament to the excellence at OCC and our commitment to the community."

Urfer believes the accounting degree's flexibility helps to set it apart. At OCC, accounting students can earn an associate's degree and enter the workforce immediately after graduation, or with a few additional courses, transfer to complete a bachelor's degree. The ability to finish the two-year degree fully online is another big advantage.

"We have many students who choose the online program, especially returning students," Urfer said. "It allows them to work full-time and complete coursework in the evenings and weekends. Accounting was one of the very first online programs at Illinois Eastern Community Colleges and it has been very successful. It has been a great option for working mothers and those working in the banking industry and others who need the degree to advance in their careers. With the online program, students can also work at their own pace. We have a number of students who are taking one or two classes a semester."

OCC's Accounting Program also offers Bookkeeping and QuickBooks certificates, which can add another skillset to the degree.

"They really go hand in hand with the degree," Kendall said. "Taking only a handful of classes, students can earn both. The certificates provide a great opportunity for people to get into mid-level positions. A degree or certificate in these areas opens doors to so many other occupations including banking, purchasing, marketing and insurance. An accounting degree can lead to almost any business position."

Program graduates are currently employed as senior branch officers in the banking industry

See Accounting, Page 2



OCC Music Department presents 'The Many Moods of Christmas' Dec. 11

The Olney Central College Music Department will present The Many Moods of Christmas choral concert at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 11 at the Richland County High School Auditorium.

This special evening of holiday music will feature the OCC Concert and Community choirs along with the RCHS Concert Choir.

"We are excited once again to celebrate this joyous season with Director Warren Weitkamp and the Richland County High School Concert Choir," said OCC Director of Choral Activities Dr. Andrew Pittman. "This year we chose to hold the concert at the high school to showcase the new auditorium. It is a wonderful venue and we're thrilled to share it with the community."

All three choirs will unite to perform *The Many Moods of Christmas Suites I and II*, with orchestral accompaniment by students from the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University in Bloomington.

Suite I includes *Good Christian Men Rejoice*, *Silent Night*, *Patapan* and *O Come All Ye Faithful*. *Suite II* features *O Sanctissima*, *Joy to the World*, *Away in a Manger*, *Fum Fum Fum* and *March of the Kings*.

"*Many Moods* is a beautiful, fun and exciting arrangement of traditional Christmas carols with a touch of sophistication," Pittman added.

In addition to *Many Moods Suites I & II*, RCHS and OCC will perform a few selections on their own and ultimately combine again for the Finale. Noted popular tunes include: *Christmas Time is Here*, *Santa Baby*, and *You're a Mean One Mr. Grinch*.

"These are all holiday tunes people know and love and we're excited to share with the community," Pittman said. "There is a little something for everyone. We have traditional Christmas tunes along with a few pop tunes. We hope the community will come join us for a fun evening that will get everyone in the holiday mood."



The Olney Central College Concert and Community choirs perform with students from the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University during the Music Department's 2019 Christmas Concert.

Accounting Continued from Page 1

and many are working in finance and marketing. Some have gone on to earn law degrees while others have become entrepreneurs.

"There are a lot of avenues our students can take," Urfer said. "After teaching 20-plus years at the college, it is amazing to see what our graduates have gone on to accomplish. Our students have done very well."

For those looking to enter the field, now is the perfect time to begin the program as accountants are in high demand.

"A lot of accountants are retiring and there is no one to

take their place," Urfer said. "There is a growing need especially in tax preparations. I had a call from someone who recently hired one of our students and was wanting to hire five more. It is a very lucrative field to go into. Our students are highly sought after and have great job placement. If you want to stay in the area, you can always get good-paying jobs in accounting and finance."

To learn more about the OCC Accounting Program or to meet with an advisor, call 618-395-7777.

For the complete list of Best Associate in Accounting Degrees, visit <https://bestaccreditedcolleges.org/degrees/associate-degrees-in-accounting.html#wo>

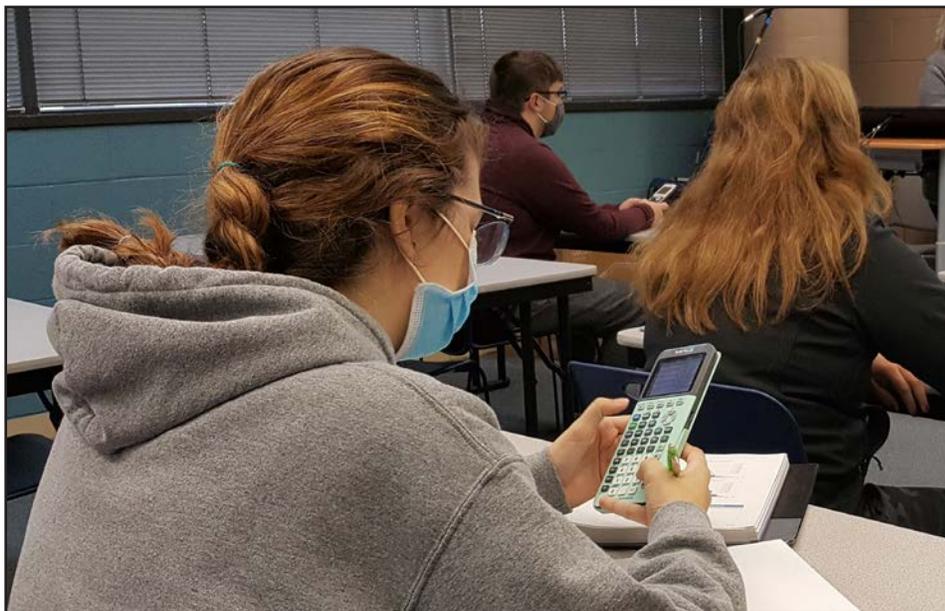
IECC awards nearly \$180,000 in Success Scholarships

Frontier Community, Lincoln Trail, Olney Central and Wabash Valley colleges awarded nearly \$180,000 to area high school students in the first round of Illinois Eastern Community Colleges' Priority Deadline Success Scholarships.

IECC Director of Financial Aid Andrea Puckett said the tuition awards demonstrate IECC's commitment to seeing area students successfully achieve their higher education goals. The scholarships are renewable for up to four semesters — Fall 2022, Spring 2023, Fall 2023 and Spring 2024, not including summer courses.

Initiated last year, the Success Scholarships are tuition awards made available to Community College District 529 high school graduates who have committed to attend the IECC colleges by completing the admissions application and the Free Application for Federal Student Aid by the Priority Deadline dates. The FAFSA must have school code 001742 – Illinois Eastern Community Colleges listed.

"With the Priority Deadline, we wanted to strengthen our relationships with the area high schools and our communities," said Andrea Loll, IECC Director of Enrollment Management. "We want our area high school students to think of IECC as their first choice. At all four colleges, students can earn an associate's degree, transfer to complete a bachelor's degree or take a CTE program and go back into the community workforce. The



Success Scholarships demonstrate that IECC has the resources to help our area students be successful."

First-round recipients were notified just prior to Thanksgiving, with 254 students from 18 area high schools receiving Success Scholarships. Student awards by county and total dollar amounts were:

- Clay County, 33 — \$24,300
- Crawford County, 49 — \$28,500
- Edwards County, 34 — \$23,550
- Jasper County, 12 — \$9,450
- Lawrence County, 18 — \$12,150
- Richland County, 72 — \$51,750
- Wabash County, 20 — \$12,900
- Wayne County, 9 — \$9,450
- White County, 7 — \$6,900

"We are seeing good numbers and we're excited about that," Puckett said. "As students begin receiving

financial aid packets from various institutions, we want to show before the holidays how affordable the IECC colleges can be for families. The Priority Deadline gives us the opportunity to show them just how much money they can save by attending FCC, LTC, OCC or WVC. These are scholarship dollars going to students in our communities and we are hoping to award more aid in the second round."

The next Priority Deadline is February 25. Students can go to www.iecc.edu/priority to begin the application process. Awards will be announced in mid-March.

Students or parents with questions regarding the Success Scholarships or the FAFSA, should contact FCC, LTC, OCC and WVC Financial Aid, or visit www.iecc.edu/financial.

Register now! Spring classes start January 10

Spring semester registration is ongoing at Olney Central College.

To schedule an advisement appointment, call 618-395-7777 or stop by Student Services.

New students can apply for free at

www.iecc.edu/apply.

The Spring 2022 schedule is available at www.iecc.edu/schedules.

OCC will offer several community education courses this spring including basic computer skills, quilting and

woodworking.

For a complete listing of spring community education courses visit www.iecc.edu/comed.

Spring classes start Monday, Jan. 10.

OCC Baseball hosts Winter Camp Jan. 15

Olney Central College Baseball will host a Winter Camp on Saturday, Jan. 15 at the OCC Gymnasium and Britton's Bullpen in Olney.

Players ages 6 through 9 will meet from 9 to 11 a.m. while 10- to 12-year-olds will meet from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Instructors will include the OCC coaching staff and players, along with Phil Britton, a two-time NJCAA All-American who played minor league baseball for seven years.

The cost is \$60 and those attending will need to bring a bat, glove, helmet and shoes.

To pre-register or for more information, call Coach Dennis Conley at 618-395-7777, ext. 2131, or 618-843-0333. You also may contact him by email at conleyd@iecc.edu. Registration forms are available online at www.iecc.edu/occ.

Cosmetology Program now accepting students for Spring

OCC's School of Cosmetology is accepting new students for Spring 2022.

More than 60 different career opportunities are available to licensed cosmetologists. Start classes in January and earn your cosmetology certificate in less than 12 months.

Students learn the latest hair, nail, makeup and skin care trends while training for a fast-paced career in the ever-evolving beauty industry.

For more information or to meet with an advisor, call 618-395-7777. Classes start Jan. 10.

Learn more at www.iecc.edu/occ/cosmo.



SNA Collects items for SWAN

OCC's Student Nurses Association recently collected toiletry items for SWAN - Stop Woman Abuse Now. Pictured, are SNA officers Lisa Mason, Kate Herdes and Timia Butler.

Food for Thought Food Drive

Phi Theta Kappa and the Anderson Library/Academic Success Center held a Food Drive to benefit the Food for Thought Pantry in Student Services. Students, faculty and staff who donated were entered into a drawing for a prize basket. Kelly Payne was the winner. Presenting the basket is Library Assistant Kaitlyn Weger (left).



Dorothy Ochate serving as OCC Peer Coach

Olney Central College is excited to add a second Peer Coach. Dorothy Ochate joins Philip Henderson in assisting and reaching out to fellow students.

Initiated earlier this year, the Peer Coach Program connects incoming freshmen with current students through OCC text messaging. Peer Coaches can convey information and answer questions from fellow students.

As a Peer Coach, Ochate also is involved in OCC's Active Minds chapter, a student-led group dedicated to opening conversations about mental health and creating lasting change in the way mental health is talked about, cared for and valued in the United States. Ochate's first text to students was a mental health check.

"We got a lot of responses," she said. "I asked students how they were feeling and to respond with a corresponding emoji. A lot of people responding said they were struggling. It was nice to be able to give them a word of encouragement. Many thanked me because they really needed someone to reach out to them."

Ochate is excited about working with Active Minds.

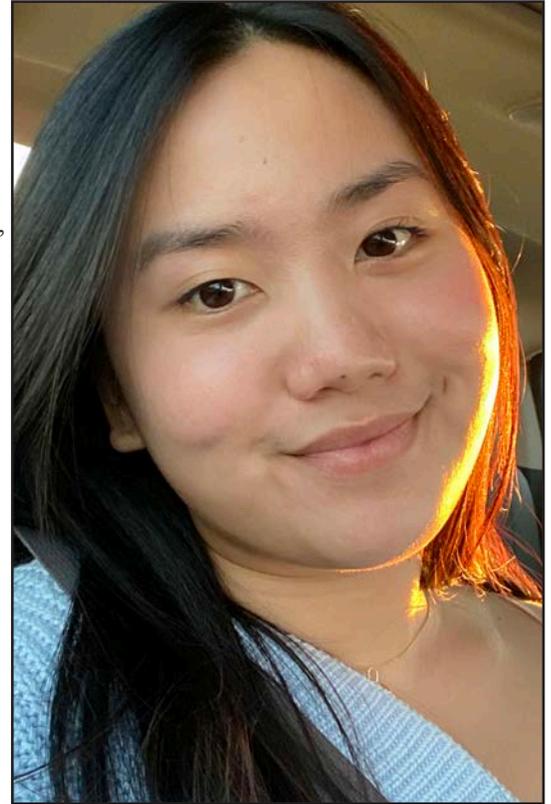
"It is very timely," she added. "A lot of people struggle with mental health. I want to help others and hope I can do something to make their day better. I was feeling really isolated during the pandemic and I want others to know someone is here for them, and I am only a text away."

Ochate says she became curious about the Peer Coach Program after seeing a flier posted on an OCC bulletin board.

"I thought it would be interesting and once I knew it involved helping other students transition to college life, I thought it was a good opportunity," she added.

Ochate is from the Philippines and relocated to Mt. Carmel three years ago. She currently resides in Albion.

Ochate is pursuing an Associate in Science and Arts degree at OCC.



SNA project

Student Nurses Association members Skylar Councillor, Lisa Mason and Timia Butler made a care basket for nursing staff at Sarah Bush Health Care Center.

Men's Basketball to host three fan nights starting with December 11 game

Join the Olney Central College Men's Basketball team on December 11 for its White Squirrel — White Out Night as the Blue Knights face Lake Land College in a 3 p.m. tipoff. The first 100 fans in attendance will receive a free White Squirrel T-shirt.

Saturday's game is the first of three fan nights this season. The Blue Knights will host a Navy Out Night during the Jan. 22 game against Kaskaskia College, followed by a Gray Out Night on Feb. 5 as OCC faces John A. Logan College. Start time for both games is 3 p.m. and the first 100 fans at the door will receive a free T-shirt in the game-day colors.

Fans are asked to show their support for the Knights by dressing in the corresponding colors for the White Out, Navy Out and Gray Out Nights.

"Now that we have opened back up, we are able to get the communi-



ty involved again," said Head Coach Casey Wyllie. "We want to get new people coming and excited. Our guys love having and seeing the fans in the stands. They feed off of that."

In addition, each home game will have a Player of the Night. The first 50,

age 15 and younger, in the door will receive an autographed photo of the featured Blue Knight.

"This is the first time we have done this since I've been here," Wyllie said. "We hope to get new people coming out and supporting the team."

Sports Schedule

Men's Basketball

Dec. 11 — OCC vs. Lake Land, 3 p.m. at home

Dec. 15 — OCC at Wabash Valley, 7 p.m.

Dec. 18 — OCC vs. Rend Lake, 3 p.m. at home

Jan. 7 — OCC vs. Brescia JV, 6 p.m. at home

Jan. 8 — OCC vs. Indiana Elite Prep, 3 p.m. at home

Jan. 12 — OCC vs. Vincennes, 7 p.m. at home

Women's Basketball

Dec. 11 — OCC vs. Lake Land, 1 p.m. at home

Dec. 15 — OCC at Wabash Valley, 5 p.m.

Dec. 18 — OCC vs. Rend Lake, 1 p.m. at home

Jan. 6 — OCC at Greenville JV, 6:30 p.m.

Jan. 8 — OCC at Lincoln Land, 1 p.m.

Survey helping Active Minds plan for future activities

Active Minds at OCC recently conducted a mental health survey of students on campus to guide the newly formed organization's future activities.

Through education, research and advocacy, the student-led group works to raise awareness of mental health issues and remove the stigma surrounding mental health disorders. The goal is to make students feel more comfortable openly discussing mental health-related issues and seeking help when it is needed.

"Statistics everywhere tell us mental health issues are prevalent among young adults and that suicide is the second leading cause of death among young adults," said Active Minds Advisor Ashley Bigard. "Knowing that half of mental health issues begin by age 14 and 75 percent begin by age 24, it was important to gather data on our own population of students."

Bigard said the survey results have already been helpful and the group is using the data to reach out to fellow students.

"Learning that 98 of our students experienced depression and anxiety throughout the semester only fueled the desire to do more on our campus," Bigard said. "I hope these results allow us all to be more aware of our own mental health and the mental health of our students."

In their survey responses, 49 students reported experiencing more

Survey, Page 8

Exhibition features artwork by OCC Instructor and former student

An exhibition featuring the artwork of Olney Central College Art Instructor Heather Sandy and former OCC student Sarah Marjanovic opened Dec. 2 at the Illini Union Art Gallery at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

The exhibit, “Living Hosts: Culturing Collaboration,” offers an interesting and entertaining juxtaposition of the two artists’ styles and methodologies.



The exhibit runs through Jan. 31 and features work Sandy and Marjanovic, who became friends when they were masters’ students at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, created during the pandemic. Both say the pandemic offered a new perspective on their artwork and a new way to find comfort in it.

During the pandemic, Sandy found her inspiration shifting from landscapes and nature to drawing scenes that look much more real than her typical work. For Marjanovic, comfort came in the form of stitching masks and producing work that resembles microscopic organisms, an interest that goes back to her days growing up in a family of conservationists.

Sandy commented that she spent her childhood in an urban setting yet grew up around gardens.

“It was not until I relocated to a rural landscape that I began to see the artificial influences upon nature,” she said. “I am intoxicated by the beauty of nature. While creating representational paintings, landscapes and still-lives, I study color, shape and form; however, I also study how the human hand has shaped the natural.”

Marjanovic grew up in a rural setting, participating in agriculture and wildlands restoration as co-owner of Gillespie Farms.

“My artistic research stems from experiences in the outdoors. Growing up with a family of naturalists has instilled in me a love of nature and a strong sense of place,” she said. “I create intriguing interplays. By choreographing vivid aggregations of color and texture, I create dynamic landscapes that reflect both degradation and adaptation and that represent the delicate and vulnerable as well as the strong and resilient.”

Marjanovic, a Champaign resident formerly from Newton, works as a graphic designer and illustrator for Living with Wildlife Illinois and an exhibition coordinator at Giertz Gallery at Parkland College. She has served as an instructor at OCC, Eastern Illinois University and Parkland College.

Artworks by both Sandy and Marjanovic were recently displayed at the 29th Cedarhurst Biennial Competition Exhibit, held from August through October at Cedarhurst Center for the Arts in Mt. Vernon, Ill. Over the years each have exhibited at the Giertz Art Gallery of Parkland College in Champaign, Ill., the St. Louis Artists’ Guild’s gallery in Clayton, Mo.; and many others.

Sandy’s art piece “Protect and Respect” was awarded first place in the 2021 Art for Health and Unity Competition sponsored by Unity in Action Magazine and will be used in marketing public health safety in the Champaign community.

OCC to host 8-week Computer Skills Class starting Jan. 11

OCC will offer a free basic computer class this spring focusing on how to access and utilize Google Workspace.

CIS 1601 Computer Skills 1 will meet in the Anderson Library computer lab from 6 to 8:50 p.m. on Tuesdays, beginning Jan. 11. The

8-week class will be taught by Jane McCormick, the Instructor for OCC’s Information Systems Technology Program.

The class is ideal for people who want to learn more about the computer and would like to understand more

about the Google products they can use for free.

Students will learn how to use Google Docs, Google Sheets and Google Slides.

For more information or to register for the class, call 618-395-7777.

General Zoology Class visits Mesker Park Zoo



Assistant Professor of Life Science Sarah Bergbower's LSC 1104 General Zoology class took a field trip to the Mesker Park Zoo in Evansville, Ind. last month.

Participating students not only enjoyed exploring the zoological park's animal exhibits, but they also had the opportunity to meet with a Docent of the Education Program and a Keeper.

During the visit, they received an up-close encounter with the Solomon Island Skink, which is the largest skink in the world and possesses a prehensile tail.

The Keeper spoke about educational and career paths within zoology and concluded with a feeding demonstration of a giant centipede.

Students who participated include Madison Fulk, Lanae Greifzu, Charmaine Murray, Chelsea Smithenry, Robert Wray and Katey Zuber.

LSC 1104 General Zoology is a non-majors course emphasizing inquiry through selected topics in animal biology. Surveys of the protist and animal kingdoms based on evolution, ecology, morphology, histology, physiology, taxonomy, parasitology, and embryology are included. Economic, environmental and medical relationships between protists, animals, and humans are emphasized.

No college pre-requisite is required for the course, but students are expected to have a basic understanding of high school general biology. General Zoology is a lecture and lab course currently being offered as a hybrid format.



Survey Continued from Page 6

than one mental health issues this semester.

Many students surveyed responded that "mental health" check-ins were important to them.

OCC Peer Coach Dorothy Ochate recently contacted fellow students through text message asking how they were feeling. Many noted they were struggling, but glad someone had taken the time to reach out to them.

Following the survey, the Active Minds team also creat-

ed and posted fliers around campus encouraging students and acknowledging their worth.

Bigard said most surprising in the survey was the large number of students who responded to a question asking them how they would define "mental health."

Going forward, Bigard said Active Minds would like to speak to individual classes about mental health and to set up booths with fun activities around high stress times such as mid-terms and finals. The group also is looking to partner with Life Links to provide group sessions at the college.