

 **President's Report**

TO: Atlantic Cape Community College Board of Trustees
FROM: Dr. Barbara Gaba
DATE: August 25, 2020
(Zoom Video Conference Call)

Campus Reopening Plan

- The Fall Semester opens on August 31.
- The college submitted our Restart Plan to the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE) for review.
- Most classes are being offered in online, live online, and hybrid formats, with only nursing and culinary labs being held on campus.
- The Laptop Loaner Program is being continued for students with the addition of home internet service through *Comcast Internet Essentials*. This will ensure that students who do not have a computer and/or internet at home will have the technology they need to succeed this semester. This is being funded through CARES Act funds.
- Physical safety measures have been implemented including installation of plexiglass, and signage on our mask requirement and social distancing.
- Employees have been working remotely since March, and are now beginning to return to campus in a phased-in approach. Employees completed a Return to Campus orientation that offered an overview of new processes and best practices for safety. Staff are splitting time between remote and on-campus work in order to allow for a lower population density on campus.
- Before entering campus, employees, students, and visitors are required to self-monitor by filling out a Health Assessment form.
- The website is evolving to meet student needs. Marketing created a new registration page and a “Welcome Back” page that houses all safety requirements for being on campus and how to get the most from learning remotely.

- Dr. Gaba continues to keep employees, students, and the Board informed of updates through weekly messages to the college community.

Legislative Advocacy

Meetings with Senator Michael Testa and Congressman Jeff Van Drew

- Dr. Gaba met with Senator Michael Testa (member, Budget & Appropriations Committee) on June 24 to request his support for the Supplemental Budget for the 5th quarter (July -Sept) for community colleges. As a result, community colleges were funded for the unexpected 5th quarter so that the originally budgeted 12-month allocation was spread over 15-months, representing a total of essentially 80% of state funding in FY2020 operating aid.
- Dr. Gaba also met with Congressman Jeff Van Drew on July 9, to request his assistance in advocating for additional funding from the federal government to assist community colleges in weathering the COVID-19 crisis.

Grants and Contracts

CARES Act Relief Funds

- The college has received **\$3,530,276.00** in relief funds from the state and federal government as a result of the CARES Act:

Funding Source	Amount
Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF)	\$856,855.00
Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Funds	\$500,373.00
Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund - Strengthening Institutions Program (SIP)	\$192,877.00
CARES Act (institutional relief)	\$1,980,171.00
Total (institutional)	\$3,530,276.00

- The college received an **additional \$1,980,171** to issue directly to students. The CARES Act Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students must be used to cover expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to the Coronavirus (including eligible expenses under a student's cost of attendance, such as food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and childcare).
- To date, we have disbursed \$1,449,200 to 1,404 students over the Spring and Summer terms.

- While the SIP funds can be used to offset revenue losses caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the CRF, GEER, and CARES Act-institutional relief funds can only be used to cover allowable expenses related to the college's response to the pandemic. The expenses covered include facilitating costs associated with distance learning, including technological improvements, as well as protective supplies, disinfectant, and other expenses directly related to COVID-19. While the funds cannot cover loss of revenue due to the pandemic, it does allow us to pay for additional expenses for health and safety preparation.

Student Support Services (SSS) Program Grant

- On August 17, 2020, the United States Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education, formally announced that Atlantic Cape's application for the Student Support Services (SSS) Program grant was approved.
- The total amount of the grant is \$1,740,010, with a grant term beginning on September 1, 2020 and ending on August 31, 2025. The program serves 200 students each year.
- The SSS program assists Atlantic Cape students who are first-generation, low income or have disabilities. The program also provides an array of services to enable participants to accomplish their educational goals. Services include counseling, academic advising, individualized tutoring, career planning, training on financial literacy, transfer assistance, cultural activities and four-year college and university campus tours.
- The SSS program has assisted more than 5,000 students since 1994, serving as a catalyst in providing and promoting academic and career success and outlining a pathway of opportunity upon graduation.

Student Support

Academic Orientation

- Academic Orientation sessions on *How to be Successful in a Remote Learning Environment* was offered to registered students via Zoom. The workshop was developed by the *Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence*. First session was held on August 19 and had 80 participants. The sessions will be offered

through the next two weeks. Information is posted on the website for students unable to attend.

- Plans are underway to offer assistance for students in remote science courses 7 days a week. Sciencehelp@atlantic.edu has been setup to offer students an additional method for seeking assistance.

Virtual Student Orientation

- The College has partnered with Innovator Educators to develop our first virtual, interactive orientation, "Go2Orientation". The new platform provides students with an ADA accessible program that fosters engagement and connection that they can explore at their pace. Students also have access to over 50 student success workshops, Title IX content and videos. Videos and workshops are available with captioning in English and Spanish.
- Our goal is to use student feedback to increase our personalized video content and grow the use of the program.

Technology Upgrades

Enhancements for Remote Operations

- The Zoom Enterprise Site License has been implemented for all staff and faculty to increase efficiency in remote operations and to enable large meetings to take place virtually.
- VoiceMail to Email integration has been implemented for all staff and faculty to ensure all voice messages are attended to during remote distance learning operations.

IT Upgrades through CARES Act Funding

- As part of the Cares Act funding, the IT department is working on plans to enhance the following technology areas:
 - The upgrade of 35 Apple laptops (replacing equipment over 5 years old) for faculty and staff.
 - The upgrade of 20 laptops (replacing equipment over 5 years old) for remote staff in student services, financial aid, bursar and finance.

Community Relations

Atlantic City Restart and Recovery Working Group

- Dr. Gaba was appointed by Sheila Oliver, Lieutenant Governor and Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs, to the Atlantic City Restart and Recovery Working Group. The inaugural kickoff meeting was held on July 14. The goal of the group is to utilize the members' collective resources to share ideas and formulate objectives to move Atlantic City forward post COVID-19.

Midtown Neighborhood Community Advisory Committee

- Victor Moreno, Manager of Community Outreach, will serve on the Midtown Neighborhood Community Advisory Committee through the AtlanticCare Foundation. This was a highly competitive process, with more than five times as many applicants as available seats on the committee. As a member of this committee, Mr. Moreno will specifically be leading efforts to create an inclusive, resident-driven revitalization plan for Midtown, entailing assisting with community outreach efforts (including a residential survey and focus groups), and helping to package community feedback into a plan that truly reflects the aspirations of the neighborhood.

Volunteers of America Food Drive

- Atlantic Cape Community College partnered with *Volunteers of America Delaware Valley* in Atlantic City to host a food distribution on Wednesday, July 15 at the Worthington Atlantic City Campus in order to continue assisting the surrounding community with food insecurity.

Atlantic and Cape May Drug Court Program

- Victor Moreno, Manager of Community Outreach, conducted two virtual information sessions with Atlantic and Cape May Drug Court participants. This was an opportunity to inform participants of the services Atlantic Cape has been providing free to the community during the pandemic. Information on our Workforce Complimentary Webinar Series workshops, academic and career training programs, as well as services provided at Atlantic Cape was shared with all program participants.

- We are in the process of establishing a more meaningful relationship with the Drug Court Program, and creating a bridge for those participants that are interested in long term educational and career training opportunities.

AtlantiCare Health Center Week Celebration

- On Friday, August 14, Atlantic Cape participated in the 14th Annual *AtlantiCare Health Center Week Celebration* event. The theme for this year's celebration was "Lighting the Way for Healthier Communities Today and in the Future!" Event attendees received information regarding community services and resources.

Atlantic City's Police Department Neighborhood Coordination Unit

- On August 17, 2020, Atlantic Cape supported Atlantic City's Police Department Neighborhood Coordination Unit by donating 10 cases of water towards their Community BBQ for wards 1, 2, and 3 of Atlantic City. This Community BBQ was hosted right across from our Worthington Atlantic City Campus at Brown Park.

Ed2Go Self-Paced Tutorials

- As part of our commitment to workforce development in Atlantic and Cape May Counties, Atlantic Cape in conjunction with Ed2Go is offering ten free Self-Paced Tutorials (SPT) online. Successful completion of each tutorial will provide participants with a certificate of completion. Tutorials include Creating Web Pages and Websites, Effective Communication, Managing Customer Service and Personal Finance. There are over 1,400 registrations.

Poetry Reading

- Rich Russell, Assistant Professor of English, read with a group of local poets at two recent outdoor events in Somers Point: Poetry in the Park, Sunday 8/2, in Kennedy Park; and at the opening reception for Great Bay Gallery's "Summer Wind" exhibit, Saturday 8/8 outside the gallery, on view through 9/5.

Affiliations

AACC Commission on Institutional Infrastructure and Transformation

- Dr. Gaba was appointed to the American Association of Community College's (AACC) *Commission on Institutional Infrastructure and Transformation*, with a term that began on July 1, 2020 and will end on June 30, 2023.
- The Commission is charged with focusing on the institutional transformation to improve student success, which includes administrative processes, infrastructure, technology and building human resource capacity.

Ocean Wind Pro NJ Grantor Trust

- Dr. Gaba was appointed to serve as an Advisory Committee Member for the Ocean Wind Pro NJ Grantor Trust.
- The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities awarded Ocean Wind with a project to increase offshore wind capacity to 1,100 MW, in order to begin the work of meeting the goal of 3,500 MW of offshore wind capacity by 2030.
- The Trust will provide grants during the first phase of offshore wind development in order to allow businesses to make early investments that will enable them to benefit from New Jersey's offshore wind industry, as well as projects developed elsewhere along the East Coast. A prime objective of the Trust is to ensure that the offshore wind industry is developed in New Jersey in a sustainable and inclusive way.
- The Advisory Committee was established to advise the Trustees on grant decisions and ensure that the grants promote the Trust objectives.

Public Relations

- Dr. Gaba was interviewed by Mayor Marty Small for his weekly radio program and was able to inform listeners that we are ready for the fall semester. The focus was on affordability noting that with our free tuition program (CCOG) and numerous scholarships, lack of finances should not be an obstacle to attending the college.
- Dr. Gaba's Op-Ed appeared in the local press ([article here](#)). The article informed readers that the college is ready for the fall semester with loaner computers available as we continue with online/remote instruction. The message

emphasized affordability and suggested that parents and students consider attending college closer to home during the pandemic.

Marketing

- Marketing began aggressively advertising since May, focusing on TV, social media, and digital. The latest campaign that started at the end of July also included radio. This campaign will run through September 3. The next campaign will target late start classes.
- This week, 60,000 residents of Atlantic, Cape May, and Cumberland counties have received a direct mail piece that provides compelling reasons to enroll at Atlantic Cape. The mailing list was developed with demographics for Tuition-Free College and a list through the College Board, which provides students who live in the three counties who have taken the SAT but have not moved forward with college in the past three years.
- We launched our new app, *Atlantic Cape Connect*, during the summer and have 877 downloads to date with over 3,000 impressions (people visiting the app multiple times).
- We continue to reach out to students with multiple texts and emails. Additionally, over the summer, we launched three geofencing campaigns: two to drive traffic for admissions virtual information sessions and one to attract high school students with over 330,000 impressions over five weeks.

New Jersey Council of County Colleges (NJCCC)

- NJCCC submitted a state budget request on behalf of NJ's 18 community colleges which includes five priorities:
 - Level funding in state operating aid to ensure that our colleges can deliver high quality and affordable educational opportunities to citizens of NJ.
 - Continued funding for Community College Opportunity Grants (CCOG) in Spring 2021.
 - \$5 million for CCOG student success efforts
 - Restoration of the Chapter 12 program to its full capacity.
 - Continued funding of \$1 million for the College Readiness Now Program.
- NJCCC and NJCVTS (NJ County Vocational-Technical Schools) Partnership was launched on August 19. A pledge was made to work together to respond to

rapid technological change and upheaval by collaborating to expand high-quality educational opportunities to better prepare students for success in high-demand careers.

Foundation

- The Atlantic Cape Scramble 'Fore' Scholarships Golf Tournament will take place on Friday, October 16 at Cape May National Golf Club. This annual event has raised over \$300,000 in scholarship funds for our students. All Trustees are invited to participate by playing golf or becoming a sponsor. For more information about the event and opportunities to support our efforts, visit our web page at atlantic.edu/golf.