



Lee Campus Life



IGNITING OPPORTUNITIES • ACCELERATING CAREERS • CREATING COMMUNITY

WINTER 2008

Growth, dedication and change spring campus forward

The 2009 spring semester roared in like a lion with a record 14% increase in student enrollment on the Lee campus. While the economy is clearly playing a role in the spike as non-traditional students return to the education arena to acquire new skills and enhance their professional portfolio, more traditional students (those 23 and younger) are choosing Edison State as their college of choice.

As the Lee campus population grows, so does the need to continually meet and exceed student expectations in terms of facilities, amenities and activities. The spring semester began with a number of visible changes on campus: an expanded bookstore, a new coffee shop in Rush Library and the consolidation and creation of the *Education Center* on the first floor of Robinson Hall where students pursuing degrees in education now have one point of contact for all education-related programs, from early childhood to the new bachelor degree programs.

In late January, the campus celebrated the grand opening and dedication of the Richard H. Rush Library. The dedication marked the re-opening of the first floor of Rush Library and a new arts & cultural venue for the campus and the community. New, dedicated



Dr. Richard Rush and wife Julia (to his right) were honored at the Rush Library Dedication.

gallery space on the first floor of Rush Library debuted with two unique exhibits: an exquisite collection of 17th to 20th century Asian porcelain, a donation to the College from The George and Mary Jo Sanders Foundation, and a unique tribute to famed 16th century

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January 20, 2009: History marked at Edison State



A jubilant crowd in Taeni Hall cheers as Barack Obama becomes President.

For the hundreds of students, faculty and staff mesmerized in front of television monitors in the Garden Café, Student Life Center and Rush Library, the historical moment of President Barack Obama's inauguration will forever be linked with Edison State College.

At the Garden Café, reverent silence descended upon the standing room only crowd as Barack Obama placed his left hand on the Lincoln Bible, and with his right hand raised, took the oath of office as the 44th President of the United State of America. Moments later, the Garden Café erupted in applause and cheers as he was introduced for the first time as "President Barack Obama."

Edison State student and head of the African American Students Association (AASA) on campus, Shameca Johnson, who witnessed the inauguration first-hand in D.C., summed up the hope of Edison students and millions across our Country when she said, "Once he got elected, it was like, 'I can do all things.'"

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Call of the ocean defines one professor's life journey

If you wanted to sum up Professor Rozalind Jester's life in one word, that word would be "water."

For this California native, water and, specifically, the Earth's oceans have been a defining spot in her life from her youngest days playing at the beach. She is the first to admit she has always loved "the mystery, power and intrigue" of the ocean.

Throughout her youth and into her early college years, it was the recreational aspects of living near the Pacific Ocean that dominated her life and she gave little thought to pursuing a career involving her love of the water. She entered the local community college as an accounting major, but it was when a professor shared his story of his love of the ocean and the career possibilities for students pursuing oceanography degrees, that she had a defining "Ah Ha" moment. She quickly changed majors and started on a new path that embraced her lifelong love of the sea.



Oceanography students head out for a hands-on experience.



Professor Rozalind Jester brings her passion for science to Edison State students.

A Bachelor of Science degree in Marine Biology from the University of California, Santa Cruz, led to a Ph.D. in Ocean Science from the same university a few years later. It was during the early part of her academic journey that her path took an interesting turn and she began to focus her research and studies on harmful algae, toxins produced, and the potential impact on the food web and, ultimately, human safety.

Becoming an expert in harmful algae is not exactly what one aspires to when a young girl, Jester laughingly admits. "It's not like when I was little I thought to myself, I want to study algae when I grow up."

Her interest in studying harmful algae led to a semester in New Zealand where she focused on lab research as part of a National Science Foundation grant, as well as extensive field research off the coast of Iceland and California.

The results of her research over the past few years have just been published in three academic journals. Two papers were published in the journal *Harmful Algae*: "A shift in the dominant toxin-producing algal species in central California alters phycotoxins in food webs" and "Uptake of paralytic shellfish poisoning and spirolide toxins by paddle crabs (*Ovalipes catharus*) via a bivalve vector." A third paper, "Presence of *Alexandrium catenella* and paralytic shellfish toxins in finfish, shellfish and rock crabs in Monterey Bay, California, USA," was published in *Marine Biology*.

Sharing her knowledge and love of the ocean is now Jester's full time job as a science professor teaching oceanography at Edison State. Combining field work with classroom time, Jester hopes her students will come to appreciate the importance of the oceans, and the role they play in our lives; and perhaps also to inspire students to pursue their own dreams of a career in the life sciences.



Southwest Florida's beaches offer the perfect venue for field work. Recently, Professor Jester led oceanography students to Bunche Beach where they put their knowledge to the test.

Lee Campus Life is published six times a year by the Lee Campus President's Office. We welcome feedback, articles and story suggestions. Editor: Pam Nulman, pnulman@edison.edu, or, phone, 489-9207.