



JOLIET
JUNIOR COLLEGE
— 1901 —

CONNECTIONS

joliet junior college magazine

A LEGACY OF LEARNING



FALL 2018

Why We Give...

“Joliet Junior College gave us a great gift. Our education and the professors were outstanding. JJC was affordable, which was helpful. That’s why we give back – so the college can continue to offer great classes and programs for students at a low cost.”

Dr. Thomas and Susan (Davis) Streitz, class of '52 and '51, are proud alumni that choose to give back because they know their gift matters.



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CONNECTIONS

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Dear JJC supporters,

As the nation's first public community college, JJC holds a significant place in the collective history of higher education. Through our 117 years, I believe the college has survived and thrived because we understood the constant need to evolve and transform to meet the needs of our community.

The educational experience we offer today is very different than the educational world we knew and understood just 10 years ago. Artificial intelligence and virtual reality technology are increasingly driving forces in classrooms and curriculum. Colleges and universities across the country are considering and implementing new operational models—think Purdue University's acquisition of Kaplan University, as an example—while students expect 24/7 access to information and a highly personalized experience whether they are online or on campus. Community colleges are now offering bachelor's degrees in specific, high-demand programs. JJC faculty and students are now using what we call collaborative classrooms,

a large departure from traditional classrooms and learning techniques, and we are embracing it in disciplines across campus.

Envisioning and planning for our future does not come without reflection on our past and gratitude to those who shaped JJC along the way. This issue of Connections is devoted to those themes, with our cover story exploring legacy and the meaningful influence that one individual can have on scores of students, colleagues, and communities. This transfer of knowledge, ideas and values has the power to change lives locally and globally.

We create futures at JJC, and I'm so glad you are a part of our story and our future.

Sincerely,
Judy Mitchell, Ed.D.
 President



Queridos amigos de JJC,

Como la primera escuela universitaria de la nación, JJC mantiene un lugar especial en la historia colectiva de estudios superiores. Durante los 117 años de trayectoria, creo que el colegio ha sobrevivido y sobresalido porque entendemos la necesidad constante de evolucionar y transformarnos para poder solventar las necesidades de nuestra comunidad.

La experiencia educacional que ofrecemos hoy, es muy diferente al mundo educativo que conocíamos hace 10 años. La inteligencia artificial y tecnología de realidad virtual son fuerzas que incrementalmente se utilizan en los salones de clase y al crear currículos. Colegios y universidades a través del país están considerando el implementar nuevos modelos operacionales – por ejemplo la Universidad Perdu ha adquirido la Universidad Kaplan – donde estudiantes esperan tener acceso a información las 24 horas del día 7 días por semana junto con una experiencia altamente personalizada, ya sea mientras estudian en línea o en el campus. Colegios comunitarios ahora están ofreciendo bachilleratos en programas específicos de alta demanda. Profesores y estudiantes de JJC ahora usan lo que llamamos salones colaborativos, una gran diferencia con respecto a los salones de clase y a las técnicas de aprendizaje tradicionales, y lo estamos adoptando en disciplinas a través del campus.

Imaginar y planear para el futuro, es algo que hacemos mientras reflexionamos sobre nuestro pasado y agradecemos a aquellos que moldearon a JJC. Esta edición de Connections está dedicada a esos temas, con nuestro artículo de portada explorando un legado y la influencia significativa que un individuo puede tener en un sin número de estudiantes, colegas y comunidades. Esta transferencia de sabiduría, ideas y valores tiene el poder de cambiar vidas a nivel local y global.

Creemos futuros en JJC, y estoy muy contenta de que ustedes sean parte de nuestra historia y nuestro futuro.

Sinceramente,
Judy Mitchell, Ed.D.
Presidente





Dear friends,

We often recognize **time, talent and treasure** as components of stewardship and philanthropy. During my 20 years of working in the field of non-profit fundraising I have seen thousands of donors who give one or two of these to an organization that they feel connected to and have a desire to help.

In 2001, when I began my tenure here, I met Bill Johnson, a long-time agriculture professor whose time, talents and treasure were totally dedicated to Joliet Junior College. J.D. Ross, the college's president at the time, asked me to raise funds for a future building, the Weitendorf Agricultural Education Center, so the college could build a \$3.2 million facility on land that Mr. John Weitendorf, Sr. donated. Bill Johnson worked alongside me during those years by introducing me to area farmers who might be interested in donating to the facility. Bill and I became friends and he taught me a lot about agriculture. The Weitendorf Center opened its doors in 2007.

In 2010, Bill joined the Foundation as a faculty representative and he continued to give generously to scholarships for agriculture students. Bill's philosophy was that if someone wanted an agriculture education, finances were not going to be a deterrent. Over the 50 years that Bill taught at JJC, he gave over \$450,000 to support agriculture scholarships.

I had the privilege to work with Bill and I know that anyone that met him knew he loved JJC. Bill passed away on May 1, 2018 after finishing his 50th year of teaching. He left a legacy at JJC by giving **his time, talent and treasure** to what he loved.

The JJC Foundation has established the William B. Johnson Memorial Agriculture Scholarship. I invite you to donate to this memorial endowment in celebration of a great man who truly cared about the students at JJC. Donations can be made online at www.jjc.edu/givetojjc or by check made payable to JJC Foundation, 1215 Houbolt Road, Joliet, IL 60431.

As you think about your **time, talents and treasure** please remember that giving is a noble act of kindness that can truly make a difference in someone's life.

With gratitude,

Kristin Mulvey, MSM

Executive Director, JJC Foundation and Institutional Advancement

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**A JOLIET JUNIOR COLLEGE MAGAZINE
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The purpose of *Connections* is to strengthen the relationship between JJC, its alumni and community. By sharing their stories and accomplishments, *Connections* serves as another example of the college's commitment to excellence in teaching and learning. *Connections* is published two times a year by the Offices of Marketing and Creative Services, Communications and External Relations and Institutional Advancement.

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JJC Steelpan Vibration Study Could Lead to New Discoveries

Your Participation is Sought to Help Advance Project

by Sam Ritz

JJC Natural Sciences Professor Dr. Andrew Morrison's steelpan vibration study is making a difference. Not only will the collection of data from this study help scientists better predict the way vibrations occur, but students working on this project are already gaining valuable experience for internships and their future careers.

"This undergrad research experience will build our students' confidence. They may not realize it now, but I think they'll look back on this experience as they go forward and thrive," Morrison said.

Morrison's steelpan vibration study, funded in part by a National Science Foundation STEM grant, has several moving parts. After taking seven high speed videos of the sound waves created by steelpan drum beats, each video was broken down into approximately 2,000 frames. From there, JJC students and volunteers from around the world have been examining them. Once all the photos are analyzed properly, Morrison and his students will create an algorithm that will help predict the way these vibrations travel.

Morrison explained that this study could have a big impact in several fields, especially for industries that rely on machinery. For example, if a machine malfunctions, it is often fixed without understanding the science behind it. Morrison's study could help scientists better understand



Dr. Morrison and students Keanu Vasquez and Matthew Lange analyze sound waves created by steelpan drum beats through the crowd-sourcing platform, Zooniverse.

how, why and when these issues happen. This study could also be used as a foundation for future studies involving sound waves and vibrations.

JJC student Keanu Vasquez said working with Morrison has enhanced his experience as a college student. "Working on this project is making me more aware of how the science we learn in the classroom is conceived," he said.

Once all the frames for this study are analyzed – there are about 14,000 in all that need to be examined multiple times over – Morrison and his students will start creating the algorithm. In the meantime, they are seeking volunteers to analyze these photos through the crowd-sourcing platform, Zooniverse. To participate, all volunteers need is an internet connection and the ability to use their best judgment.

To learn more about Morrison's study, or to help Morrison and his students examine these vibrations, visit <https://www.zooniverse.org/projects/achmorrison/steelpan-vibrations>.

To learn more about JJC's Natural Sciences Department, visit jjc.edu/academics/natural-sciences.

JJC NEEDS YOUR HELP

Public participation is sought to help our faculty and student researchers learn more about how vibrations work. To contribute your time, please visit <https://www.zooniverse.org/projects/achmorrison/steelpan-vibrations>. No experience or background in science is required. Each photo analysis takes less than a minute to complete.

A LEGACY OF LEARNING

AG PROFESSOR'S THREE GENERATION IMPACT

By Scott Harvey



Bill Johnson's Influence on Western Illinois Family Illuminates a Lasting Legacy



Jim Albrecht, his two sons David and Rob, and grandson Dan.

On a 3,000 acre wheat field in Fort Benton, Montana, Dan Albrecht was operating a combine as part of his internship with Schwanke Harvesting when he got a call from his boss. It was the summer of 2014 and Dan was one year away from earning his associate degree in agriculture business management from Joliet Junior College.

“He’s here? He’s in Montana?” Dan asked.

The visitor was Dan’s agriculture instructor, Bill Johnson.

“It was awesome,” said the Gilman, Ill. native, now 23. “Bill spent two or three days out there with us, had dinner with us and did the wheat run with us.”

“Bill was one of those guys that never met a stranger. He would just walk up and talk to everyone.”

– Rob Albrecht

Making those kinds of long-distance trips wasn’t unusual for Bill. Whether he was checking in on current or former students, recruiting new ones, or advocating for agricultural education, Bill’s commitment to the college and those he taught knew no bounds, and left a generational impact. For the Albrecht family, it spanned three generations.

“Bill was one of those guys that never met a stranger,” said Rob Albrecht, 40, Dan’s uncle and a 1998 agriculture business graduate. “He would just walk up and talk to everyone.”

Before Rob completed his degree it was David, Dan’s father. He was recruited by Bill a decade earlier to study agriculture production. But it was in 1968 when the Albrecht tradition officially got its start. Dan’s grandfather Jim began at JJC during the final year the college shared its campus with Joliet Township High School in downtown Joliet. It was also Bill’s first year as an instructor.

“So we grew up that way together,” said Jim, who was just a year younger than Bill.

Bill was in his 50th year teaching at JJC when he died May 1, 2018. He was 73. The unique length of Bill’s tenure enabled him to guide the career paths and shape the values of countless students. This type of longevity is almost never planned, and legacies are earned. It takes a passion that never weakens. Bill’s passion was never lost on his students, as well as fellow faculty and staff, who had a front row seat to witness Bill’s growing impact.



David Albrecht is a machine operator for Canadian National Railway, with a section headquarters in Gilman, Ill.



As track supervisor, Rob Albrecht oversees over 100 miles of CN’s tracks from Monee to Tolono.



Dan Albrecht (center), with grandparents Jim and Carol.

“I was so impressed that multiple generations of a family benefitted from Bill’s agriculture knowledge and dedication to the JJC program,” said Tammy Miller, Bill’s longtime colleague and also one of his former students. “My thought was how tremendous the influence Bill had on students that they would encourage their children to attend JJC.”

While Jim’s children weren’t expected to enroll at JJC, his relationship with Bill certainly helped two of his sons get to know him and learn about the college’s quality agriculture program.

“With all the boys, we’d go to ag events and Bill would be there and we’d introduce them to David, Robbie, and the same with Daniel,” said Jim. “And so you became a big family to begin with before you went to school. That was the way that Bill was.”

After initially spending his post high school years at General Foods, Jim’s pursuit of an agriculture production degree from JJC began at age 23.

“I was the old man at the school at the time,” Jim joked. The two kept in touch after he graduated, when Jim went to work as a research assistant for a company in DeKalb. Three years later, as Jim began to ponder his next professional step, he sought Bill’s advice.

“I was so impressed that multiple generations of a family benefitted from Bill’s agriculture knowledge and dedication to the JJC program.”

– Tammy Miller

“Bill said, ‘You always go home and call square dances on the weekends, and you go home and you help farm, so why don’t you just go home?’ And so that’s what I did,” Jim said.

Home for Jim was Gilman, a community of 1,800 residents located along Interstate 57 an hour and a half south of Chicago. It’s where he and his wife, Carol, met and the area they returned to after Jim’s stint in

northern Illinois. Gilman was a frequent stop for Bill, who hunted pheasants regularly with Jim, and recruited students from the local high school.

“I was very strong in FFA [Future Farmers of America], and Bill was always down at Iroquois West and pushing the Joliet Junior College ag program,” said David, 48.

In 1998, David began commuting to JJC three days a week. Eight years later, Jim’s other son Rob would move to Joliet to earn his degree.

“He was a very fatherly figure. No matter what was going on in his class or anywhere else at the college, Bill would always find out about it somehow. So if you were late to your first class Bill would be that guy in the hallway saying, ‘Hey I heard you were a little late this morning. Is there anything we need to discuss about that?’” Rob recalled. “And you gave the same answer, ‘nope, it won’t happen again, sir. And kept on moving.’”

“He had contacts everywhere. You could name what town you kind of wanted to be in or geographical area and he found it.”

– Rob Albrecht

Bill’s influence went beyond the classroom through his ability to place students in the right professional setting after graduation.

“He had contacts everywhere. You could name what town you kind of wanted to be in or geographical area and he found it,” said Rob.

For David, his professional career started on a farm south of his hometown, while Rob was placed with food processing and commodities trading company Archer Daniels Midland.

These days, they’re both living near their parents and working in Gilman for Canadian National Railway, Rob as the track supervisor and David as a machine operator.

But their mother Carol is quick to point out that her sons are still farmers at heart. David tends to a small garden on his property, while Rob raises cows, has alpacas and chickens.

“The area we live in here – to say you ever get out of agriculture I don’t know if that’s necessarily a true statement,” Rob said.



Johnson appearing in JJC’s 1969 yearbook.



A faculty portrait of Johnson in 1986.



Former JJC President J.D. Ross presenting Johnson with the Susan H. Wood Hall of Fame Award for exceptional service in 2017.

That agricultural state of mind is still present for Dan. A year after getting that surprise visit from Bill in Montana, Dan earned his degree in agriculture business management. That career path was put on hold to join the Air Force, where he serves as a jet mechanic and is based in Washington State. But Dan is still eyeing an agriculture career after the military, and credited Bill's encouragement three years ago as the driving force behind his current work and future aspirations.

"Going on that wheat run was the first time I had ever left home," said Dan, who like his father David lived in Gilman and commuted to JJC three times a week. "I left home for the internship for three and a half months – it was 102 days that I was gone. Bill said, 'You will never regret doing this wheat run.'"

He hasn't. The things Dan learned, people he met and overall experience have helped him grow. "Experience is everything. It's the connection," he said.

Bill Johnson spent most of his life connecting students to successful careers in an industry he loved. For 50 years, it was a love that never wavered, enabling him to teach thousands of students, and in some cases multiple generations of a single family.

People that knew Bill thought of JJC and agriculture as one in the same, which his students like Dan are quick to point out.

"JJC was his life. It really was," said Dan. "Anybody that knew Bill Johnson knew he had always been at JJC and he was all for it."

"He leaves a legacy that will never be duplicated. But yet he's laid a strong foundation for us and I'm confident that we will continue the JJC ag programs in his honor."

– Tammy Miller

On May 24, less than a month after Bill's death, the college held a memorial for him at Weitendorf Agricultural Education Center, which included the dedication of the William B. Johnson Arena.

"He leaves a legacy that will never be duplicated," said Tammy Miller. "But yet he's laid a strong foundation for us and I'm confident that we will continue the JJC ag programs in his honor."

WILLIAM B. JOHNSON MEMORIAL AGRICULTURE SCHOLARSHIP



**The JJC Foundation has established the William B. Johnson
Memorial Agriculture Scholarship.**



Donations can be made online at www.jjc.edu/givetojjc
or by check made payable to:

JJC Foundation
1215 Houbolt Road
Joliet, IL 60431

How JJC is Solving the Asian Carp Problem

New undergraduate research initiative opening doors for students

by Scott Harvey





From left: JJC Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Randall Fletcher, Dean of Arts and Sciences Dr. Sonya Williams, USGS Research Biologist Robin Calfee, Nicholas Fernandez, John Rigoni, Syuzanna Darbinyan, Carlos Bravo, Emilio Rodriguez, Sean O'Dell, Joseph Badalamenti, Dr. Patrick Mills and Bradley Czerniak. Not pictured: Professor Clinton Garwood and student Cadarius Banks.

Over several weeks in May, beneath the surface of the Illinois River, some 200 candy-like blocks were placed inside commercial hoop nets to lure Asian carp. Flavored with either pineapple, garlic or aniseed, these 5-pound blocks of sugar scattered in and around Starved Rock Marina were a test case for controlling the invasive Asian carp, one in a series of projects spearheaded by Natural Sciences Professor Dr. Patrick Mills and a group of JJC students.

By partnering with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Mills has placed JJC at the center of an effort to curb the species' immediate and continuing threat to aquatic ecosystems across and beyond the Midwest.

"Informal research I had conducted suggested flavor-based attractants may provide the most efficient, cost-effective route to the large scale removal of Asian carp, principally from rivers, through the use of commercial hoop netting methods," Mills said.

The college worked with Alsip-based Taylors Candy to create the candy blocks, and coordinated the study with the DNR to coincide with its hoop net deployment in May.

"Who would have thought pineapple or aniseed would serve as an attractant for fish?"

– Robin Calfee

Preliminary results revealed the fish were attracted to the pineapple-flavored blocks over other flavors. Robin Calfee, a research biologist with the USGS who has been working with Mills, said she was pleasantly surprised by the findings.

"Who would have thought pineapple or aniseed would serve as an attractant for fish?" said Calfee, who is based at the USGS Columbia Environmental Research Center in Missouri.

Calfee added that a second round of studies, to take place this fall, is necessary to produce an accurate statistical analysis, after which the results will be published.

Over the summer, Mills' research group, which includes professors Bradley Czerniak, Clinton Garwood, and a multidisciplinary group of seven JJC students, researched ways to boost the blocks' potency inside a campus laboratory. Their work was ultimately to



Students examined how goldfish responded to amino acids that were introduced in 55-gallon tanks. The goldfish served as a good model, according to Mills, because they're part of the same family of fish as Asian carp.

enhance the effectiveness of the flavored blocks by combining amino acids to the formula, all the while sustaining an environmentally conscious approach.

“Everything is edible to humans,” said Mills. “So there’s no danger whatsoever to the environment because it’s all food-grade ingredients.”

The lab work started inside two, 55-gallon tanks containing goldfish, where amino acids were introduced and the fishes’ responses analyzed.

“[The acid] forms some sort of a stimulus with them and makes them search for food and bite a lot,” said Emilio Rodriguez, 19, a biochemistry major from Plainfield.

The goal was to determine the optimal concentration of amino acids required to initiate a strong feeding response. The goldfish served as a good model, according to Mills, because they’re part of the same family of fish as Asian carp.

Nearby, Sean O’Dell used a hydraulic press to create compact, amino acid tablets coated in salt. The 21-year-old nursing student from Peotone then broke the tablet into pieces, layered each with vegetable oil, and cooked them into the flavored block.

“You take the active ingredient that we’re focusing our research on, this amino acid, and you’re trying to protect it in a way with the salt and oil,” O’Dell said. The resulting mixture, which resembles Rocky Road ice cream, would be placed into the water to slowly

dissolve, emit the ingredients and attract fish. To slow the rate of diffusion, John Rigoni, 20, and Carlos Bravo, 21, prepared a dosing container prototype using a 3D printer housed in JJC’s Maker Lab.

“During the May study, the sugar by itself would disintegrate in a couple of hours. So we wanted to slow the pace of the water flow so it lasts around 48 hours,” said Bravo, a civil engineering major from Plainfield. Mills said that with every research project, there are barriers to making the experiment work.

“There’s always the initial phase where you’re trying to make it work and it doesn’t,” he said. “It’s just grinding through and making sure you just keep going. And the students, to their credit...they didn’t give up and actually solved the problem. So I’m very proud of them.”

Mills and Calfee look forward to retesting the Asian carp response this fall using the revised candy blocks.

“I’m so excited to collaborate with Patrick and the college,” said Calfee. “If we can link up his amino acid complex to some flavors and figure out the behavioral response I think we might be on to something.”

JJC and the USGS are working to expand their research collaboration through resources for faculty and internships for JJC students, who would have the opportunity to work at both the college and the agency’s research center in Missouri.



Dr. Mills displays a hardened mixture of amino acid tablets and salt, layered in vegetable oil which he said resembles Rocky Road ice cream.



Emilio Rodriguez adds amino acids into a fish tank to analyze the fishes' response.

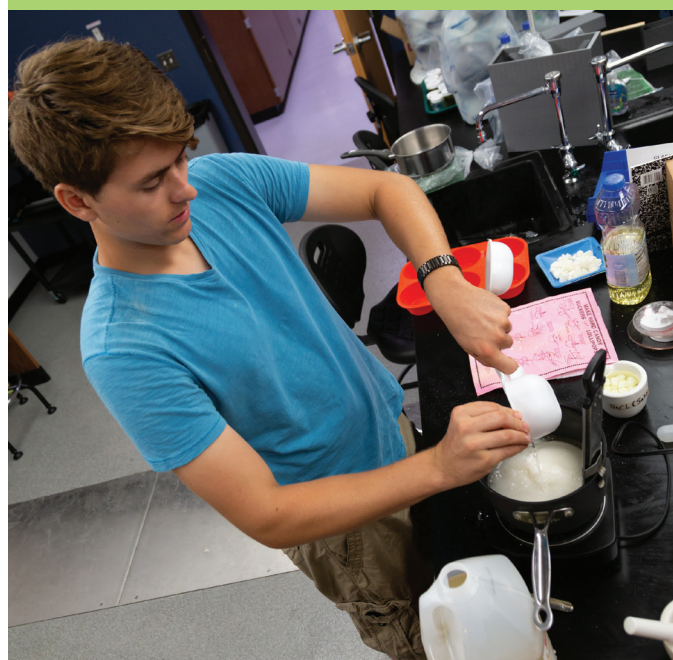
“It’s a benefit to both our center and to the students because the students are gaining experience while they’re still attending school and we’re getting help from them,” Calfee said. “So it’s a win-win situation.”

Dr. Randall Fletcher, JJC vice president of academic affairs, said that the college is committed to student-led research, and the Asian carp project is an excellent example of student learning that carries weight beyond the classroom.

“JJC students now have more opportunities than ever before in our history to be immersed in both empirical and applied research,” he said. “Cross-pollination of ideas, research and discovery is at the core of our undergraduate research initiative.”

The group also recently received a \$25,000 grant through the JJC Foundation’s Awards for Innovation and Excellence program. The funds are being used to involve other JJC departments in the project, including Computer Information and Office Systems, Technical, and Agriculture and Horticulture Science, as well as the college’s Maker Lab. Mills said this adds valuable support in creating analysis software and designing equipment to support research activity.


“A cross-campus effort such as this is essential,” Mills said. “The design and implementation of inventions like the attractant blocks rely on collaboration between entities with a diverse range of skills. This is a situation ideally suited to the community college environment.”



Sean O'Dell prepares to cook the amino acid, salt and oil mixture to create a block.



Dr. Mills introduces USGS Research Biologist Robin Calfee at a press conference on the JJC campus in July 2018.

A photograph of the Michigan State Capitol building. In the foreground, a woman and a man are standing on the wide stone steps. The woman is on the left, wearing a black blazer over a black and white striped shirt, black pants, and brown boots. The man is on the right, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and tie. Behind them is the grand facade of the Michigan State Capitol, featuring a large white dome and classical columns. A black ornate lamp post with multiple globes stands to the right of the couple. An American flag is visible on a pole in the background under a clear blue sky.

JJC STUDENT LEADER INVITED TO STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS, EARNS DREAM U.S. SCHOLARSHIP

By Katie Nork

In January, one of Joliet Junior College's top students was invited to the State of the Union address in Washington D.C.

Ana Campa Castillo, a 26-year-old Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipient and first generation college student, was asked by 11th District Congressman Bill Foster to attend the address as his guest. She arrived in the United States 20 years ago from Mexico City.

Castillo was asked to be Congressman Foster's guest because of her involvement in immigration rights with the Southwest Suburban Project in Bolingbrook and the Spanish Community Center in Joliet.

"The work that Ana has done is just one of the examples of the great contributions these young people make to our society," said Congressman Foster.

In her time advocating for immigration rights, she met a lot of people that were in need of a voice in the community.

"I found JJC very comforting and I found not only academic support from my professors but within the staff."

– Ana Campa Castillo

"I saw the hundreds of thousands of people there gathered and noticed there is a lot to work on, a lot of work needed still to move forward. After that I started joining not only to benefit my family but many more families out there," said Castillo.

On top of juggling school and community activism, Castillo is married and has two children, ages 9 and 1.

Just prior to graduating with her associate degree in psychology in May 2018, Castillo found out she had won the highly competitive Dream U.S. Scholarship and was awarded \$29,000 to complete her bachelor's degree. "My goal was just getting an associate and becoming a case worker and that was it," she said.

Now she plans on earning her bachelor's degree so she can become an advocate for mental health. Her goal is to educate people about mental health services that are available, especially within the Latino population.

"There's a lot of need for that intermediate person to help bring the services that are available to the families that need them. Since the language is a big barrier, I feel I can help build a bridge between the community and the services," she said.



Congressman Foster and Castillo with House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (center) prior to the State of the Union Address.

Photo credit: Office of Congressman Bill Foster

Castillo was also the recipient of the Outstanding Leadership Award by the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs (OMSA). This award is given to JJC students who excel academically, evolve as a student leader and has served the JJC and external community.

Becoming a member of OMSA played a big role in Castillo's success. She credits the office with helping her feel welcome and connecting her to resources at the college.

"I found JJC very comforting and I found not only academic support from my professors but within our staff."

Castillo will go on to pursue her bachelor's degree at National Louis University.

JJC's Social Spaces: The Smoker, Lounge, D Mall and the Bridge

by Amy Chellino

The most memorable and meaningful aspects of our lives are the social connections we make. In college, these relationships open up discussions that ignite debates, leading to hours-long conversations, encouraging students to try out new viewpoints and test their beliefs. The social spaces that harbor these friendships are hallowed ground on campus where the bonds of acceptance and support are formed.

In the 1940s, '50s and '60s, when JJC was housed at Joliet Central High School, the Smoker and Lounge were the places to be. Between classes, these hangouts gave students a sense of identity and meaning and began to shape the individual within the community. When JJC moved to its current campus in the early 1970s, the D Mall and Bridge were areas dedicated to students for

unwinding and meeting with friends. Today, these popular spots are still filled with discussion, studying, and student activities.

In the 1960 yearbook, Assistant Dean Susan H. Wood celebrated the spirit of JJC with these words: "While there is a great deal of evidence to prove that college graduates earn more money during their lifetimes than those without a college education, their greatest dividends are the many intangibles which make their lives meaningful and purposeful." Compassion, kindness, company and generosity are a handful of traits Wood was referring to as we learn by communicating and connecting with our peers. Our legacies, which unfold within us and are nurtured by our friendships, begin in these social spaces.



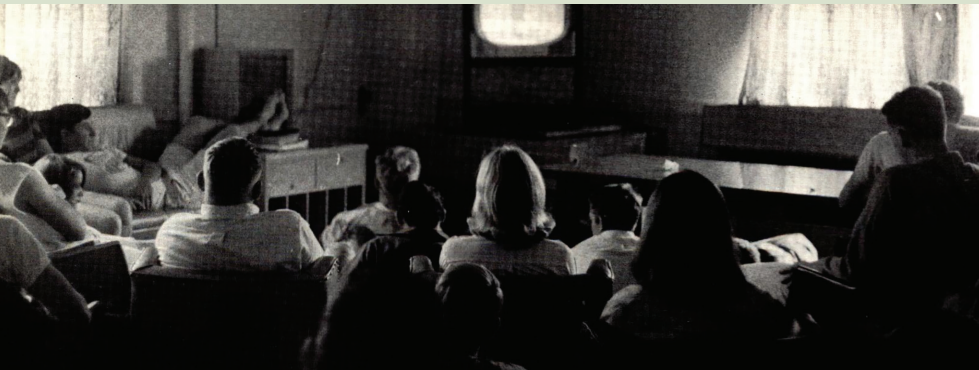
The Smoker: 1940s-1960s

Opened in 1947, one of the most popular spots on JJC's campus was the smoker. Initially, it was only for men and described in a 1948 Blazer as "the masculine sanctuary of nicotine neurotics" and a "cough chamber." Historian Robert Sterling noted, "[Opening the smoker] was due largely to the number of returned servicemen on campus to whom smoking had become a near necessity." Alumnus Dorian Rigger '61 recalled, "The smoke was so thick that even though I smoked at the time, I hardly went in there."



The Lounge: 1950s-1960s

The lounge offered a place for students to visit with friends, work on assignments, have club meetings and watch TV. Alumnus Harry Reiss '65 recounted, "Everyone hung out in the lounge between classes... It was where gossip took place and dates were made." Sterling noted, "The lounge was described as the heart of the college socially, one of the first places that students looked when trying to locate their friends." In 1955, the lounge received a \$3,000 remodel including a 21-inch television set and 45-speed record player.



D Mall: 1970s

Known as a center for culture and entertainment on campus according to a 1973 Blazer article, The D Mall was the place for ID photos, college recruitment, club meetings, concerts, comedians and socializing...truly a little bit of everything. Thousands of students passed through the concourse making their way to class each day. The carpeted stairs offered a perfect gathering place between classes. Alumna and retired faculty member Catherine Suchy '83 explained that Seal Island was the nickname for the stair area. "Lots of folks gathered there and there was also a lot of smoking!" Suchy recalled.

While the stairs have been converted to the Office of Student Activities, there are still plenty of tables and chairs where students meet. The Office of Students Activities keeps everyone busy and happy with free popcorn days, grab 'n go breakfast, numerous Welcome Week activities, and much more.



Bridge: 1970s-Present

The Bridge, which links the J-Building to the Main Campus concourse, opened on Sept. 25, 1974 and gave students their own space for socializing while taking in the beauty of nature. Suchy recalled, "The Bridge was an area of student gathering, especially on cold days when there would be a blazing fire in the fireplace...You could smell the wood smoke and it was rather charming."

The Bridge remains a favored area for meeting with friends, entertainment and special events. The floor to ceiling picture windows provide views of the lake, trees and wildlife. Students mark their time at JJC by spending time on the Bridge amidst the autumn colors, peaceful snowflakes, spring buds and summer sun which brings a seasonal rhythm to the academic year.



To view additional photos from the college's past, including digital copies of the yearbooks and Blazer, visit the JJC Library Archives webpage at <https://library.jjc.edu/collections/archives>.

Looking for a safe, secure place to donate your JJC memorabilia?

The JJC Library Archives is always looking for ephemera from our college's past. If you have materials you would like to donate, or have any questions about materials in the library archive, please contact:

Joliet Junior College Library
1215 Houbolt Road
Joliet, IL 60431
(815) 280-2344

People

Then and Now

Mike & Cristina Hill

by Carrie Anderson



THEN

Mike and Cristina Hill were spotlighted in our Fall 2016 issue as a married couple who were attending the college's nursing program together. Not only were they balancing their work and student life, but they had four kids at home, too.

They were two of more than 450 veterans attending classes at JJC that year. Taking advantage of the financial benefits from the GI Bill, they wanted to pursue their education at JJC in the nursing program.

NOW

After taking every class together and volunteering at the Will-Grundy Medical Clinic together, Mike and Cristina Hill walked across the stage at the May 2018 Commencement Ceremony with associate degrees in nursing, both with high honors.

Taking classes together since the beginning was always a driving force for the Hills.

"Being able to stay together helped keep us motivated, we liked to compete to see who could get the better grades!" Cristina Hill said. "It was also great to have the built-in support system and study partner."

Earning their nursing degrees turned into a family affair.

"Before a big test, we would sit down with our kids and they would ask us questions from notecards," Mike Hill said. "We made a game of it—if I won, we would go for Dairy Queen."

So when it was time for graduation, naturally, all four of their children attended both the pinning ceremony with the Nursing Department and subsequent commencement ceremony.

"Our son is set to graduate next year and our daughter in four years, we have been encouraging them both to attend JJC," both shared.

Cristina currently works as an RN at Alden Estates Rehab in Naperville, though both plan to continue their education. Mike's long-term goal is CNRA and Cristina hopes to work in pediatric oncology.

"Later on in my career, I hope to become a nurse educator. I want to share with others what our instructors at JJC shared with Mike and I," Cristina said. "The JJC nursing staff was great, not only did they teach us so much and prepare us to be future nurses, they were also very supportive and great mentors. They really care about the success of the student."



News Briefs



Balancing the Budget 46 Years and Counting

By Scott Harvey

In passing the FY2019 budget on June 13, 2018, the Joliet Junior College Board of Trustees approved a structurally balanced operating budget for the 46th consecutive year.

At \$95.7 million, the total operating budget for FY19 is 4.6 percent more than the year before.

“I believe Joliet Junior College has thrived over its 117-year history because we adapt to environmental stressors, we champion innovation, and we work to understand the unique educational needs of our district,” Dr. Judy Mitchell, JJC president, said. “And most importantly, we evolve to meet those needs through judicious planning.”

Mitchell said it was important throughout the planning process to keep the college’s operational budget conservative while supporting the goals and objectives outlined in the college’s strategic plan.

These goals address potential impact from the state of Illinois, establish realistic projections in property tax revenues, maintain emphasis on student success, and accommodate staff and resource needs to drive enrollment. Additionally, JJC aimed to maintain responsible reserves, and protectively planned and budgeted for new academic programming.

Among the budget highlights are a \$2 technology fee increase to support the implementation of a new Enterprise Resource Planning system, plus new personnel costs related to state and federal compliance and support services. Also included in the budget is a required grant fund match from the U.S. Department of Education Title III Grant to support student engagement, persistence and completion programs. JJC also added more than \$1 million to its budget contingency, which is being held for new initiatives currently being evaluated.

“We must invest in JJC to grow JJC,” Dr. Mitchell said. “I will continue to focus on innovative solutions to support those investments. It is our students who serve as constant reminders of why we are here: to provide a high quality education and prepare them for a successful future.”

In addition to another balanced budget year, JJC’s financial team was awarded the Government Finance Officers Association’s (GFOA) Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the 12th consecutive year. The recognition is for its FY2017 budget, and is only given to government bodies that meet the highest principles of governmental budgeting and achieve standards of excellence in financial reporting.

Alumni Association Partners with Northern Illinois Food Bank to Support Students

By Carrie Anderson

More than 130 students received food and supplies when the JJC Alumni Association partnered with the Northern Illinois Food Bank in May 2018 to support students in need.

The partnership with the food bank is a first for the Alumni Association, which works to promote the welfare of students, alumni, faculty and the community. According to Ericka Williams, alumni board president, the idea of fulfilling basic student needs via a mobile food pantry was the perfect partnership opportunity.

“This activity was so rewarding to the board and we hope to provide more opportunities to our student population and future JJC Alumni,” she said.

One student confirmed that he was a new dad and the food would come in handy, while he balanced the work, student, and new parent role. Another student said she was taking the food to her homebound grandparent whom she assists while also balancing the demands of being a student and working.

A variety of volunteers were on hand that day, including Alumni Board member Luann DiMonte.

“I appreciated the feedback we received from students on that day and the stories they shared,” DiMonte, said.

“We heard so many comments, like, ‘this is so wonderful, my dad is injured and lost his job, this will help out so much,’ and ‘I was embarrassed to come over here, but you guys told me that you were there to help out, I needed this, thanks.’ It really confirmed why this was an important partnership to pursue.”

If you are interested inspired by this story and want to get involved with the next alumni event, please contact Alumni Relations Manager Carrie Anderson at caanders@jic.edu or (815) 280-2218.





JJC Faculty, Staff Recognized by Illinois Community College Trustee Association

By Katie Nork

Three members of the JJC community were recognized by the Illinois Community College Trustee Association (ICCTA) this past June.

Joan Tierney, JJC Board of Trustees administrative assistant, was the recipient of the 2018 Professional Board Staff Member Award. The award recognizes exemplary professional service to an Illinois community college board.

“I am very honored and humbled to receive the 2018 Professional Board Staff Member Award and to join the past recipients who I have long admired and respected,” she said.

Two other JJC faculty members were recognized as nominees in other categories by the ICCTA, which

provides legislative advocacy and educational opportunities to community college boards.

Wayne Gawlik, business professor, was recognized as a nominee for the 2018 Outstanding Full-Time Faculty Member Award and Joe Limon, an adjunct instructor in the Technical Department, was recognized as a nominee for the 2018 ICCTA Outstanding Part-Time Faculty Member Award.

The Outstanding Full-Time Faculty Member Award recognizes the high achievement of Illinois’ full-time community college instructors and The Outstanding Part-Time Faculty Member Award recognizes the high achievement of Illinois’ part-time community college instructors.



Susan H. Wood Hall of Fame Award recipient Trustee Bob Wunderlich and his family at this year's Night of Stars.

2018 Foundation Sponsorship Campaign by Amanda Quinn

Thank you to our business and community partners who have invested in the 2018 JJC Foundation Sponsorship Campaign. These donors committed to sponsoring one, two, or even all three of our signature events at the gold, silver, or bronze level.

This year's special events included Night of Stars, JJC Athletic Golf Outing, and the JJC Haunted 5K Run/Walk.

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Baseball alumni enjoying the afternoon at the JJC Athletic Golf Outing.



Dr. Judy Mitchell and Board of Trustee members at the JJC Athletic Golf Outing.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS, ALUMNI HONORED AT INAUGURAL NIGHT OF STARS

By Katie Nork



At the inaugural Night of Stars event on May 10, five members of the community were recognized for their humanitarian service to the community and to Joliet Junior College.

Night of Stars was hosted by the JJC Foundation and Alumni Association and combined several past events into one evening of celebration at the Renaissance Center in Joliet.

“All of you are connected to JJC in different ways,” JJC President Dr. Judy Mitchell told the audience. “And it is through these diverse relationships, partnerships, and networks that we are able to make a difference. The people we are honoring this evening have impacted their communities in transformational ways and we are proud to call them members of our JJC family.”

Jeff Eberhard was honored with the J.D. Ross Extraordinary Service Award for his dedication to helping the homeless population in Will and Grundy counties. Eberhard is the creator of the Emergency Homeless Pack and Micro Food Pantries. Micro Food Pantries are small pantries placed outside of a business and stocked with food items that can be taken at any time of the day.

“It’s the little things you can do for others,” Eberhard said in his acceptance speech. “I can’t say that it was always this way but life has a certain way of seasoning you.”



Left to right: Dr. Judy Mitchell, Jay D. Bergman, Ericka Williams



Left to right: Dr. Judy Mitchell, Bob Wunderlich, Luann DiMonte

Also a recipient of the J.D. Ross Extraordinary Service Award was Terry Kunze, member of the Kiwanis Club and founder of the Aktion and Transition Clubs in Joliet. The Aktion and Transition Clubs are organizations for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities to connect with one another and help make a difference in the community.

Her daughter Missy, who has Rett syndrome, is Kunze's drive to help those with disabilities.

"Missy does not speak. She uses a wheelchair to get around. She cannot use her hands. But it's her smile that is the impetus and the motivation for the person that I am today," said Kunze.

Robert Wunderlich, Chairman of the JJC Board of Trustees, received the Susan H. Wood Hall of Fame Award for his 42 years of service to the Board.

"I'm very humbled to get this award," he said. "Susan Wood was the executive administrator for Elmer Rowley, the first president of the JJC. He was the first president when I was a student here. And I've been here through every president since...JJC will be the first choice for all students. It's the best choice."

Jay D. Bergman, president and CEO of Petco Petroleum Corporation and member of the Illinois Board of Higher Education, was given the Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award for his service to higher education. Bergman was also a past president of the JJC Alumni Board.

"I've received some awards from some other educational institutions over the years but this one is pretty special because it's the school where I started my college career," Bergman said.

Also a recipient of the Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award was Ed Czerkies, who graduated from JJC in 1957. He had a passion for construction - building homes and industrial facilities around the Joliet area for 47 years.

He turned his successful construction business into a way of giving back.

Czerkies donates in memory of his late wife, Carolyn - including an endowed scholarship for nursing students at JJC.

Visit Joliet Junior College's YouTube channel to learn more about the award recipients, www.youtube.com/user/JolietJrCollege.



Left to right: Dr. Judy Mitchell, Ed Czerkies, Ericka Williams



Left to right: Dr. Judy Mitchell, Jeff Eberhard, J.D. Ross



Left to right: Dr. Judy Mitchell, Terry Kunze, J.D. Ross



Planetarium Shows

Tuesday Shows – 7:30 p.m.

Oct. 23	Sunstruck
Nov. 6	Out There (Dark Matter)
Nov. 20	Two Small Pieces of Glass
Dec. 4	Story of the Christmas Star
Dec. 18	No show. See show on 12/16.
Jan. 8	Black Holes
Jan. 22	The Solar System
Feb. 5	From Earth to the Universe
Feb. 19	Asteroids and Comets
March 5	Sunstruck
March 19	Seasonal Skies
April 2	Mars
April 16	Orbits
April 30	Humans and Robots in Space
May 14	Galileo
May 28	From Earth to the Universe
June 11	Seasonal Skies

Sunday Holiday Show – 2:00 p.m.

Dec. 16	Story of the Christmas Star
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Thursday Shows – 6:30 p.m.

Oct. 18	We Go To The Moon*
Nov. 1	Mars
Nov. 15	The Little Star that Could*
Nov. 29	Two Small Pieces of Glass
Dec. 13	Story of the Christmas Star
Dec. 27	No Show – School Closed
Jan. 3	The Solar System
Jan. 17	From Earth to the Universe
Jan. 31	Sunstruck
Feb. 14	Humans and Robots in Space
Feb. 28	Trip Through Space*
March 14	Seasonal Skies
March 28	Sunstruck
April 11	The Little Star that Could*
April 25	Galileo
May 9	From Earth to the Universe
May 23	Larry Cat in Space*
June 6	Seasonal Skies
June 20	Larry Cat in Space*

All planetarium shows are free.
 For more information, contact
 the JJC Herbert Trackman
 Planetarium at (815) 280-6682
 or visit www.jjc.edu/info/planetarium.

**Shows put on for the very young astronomer*



Fine Arts Events

MUSIC

- Oct. 28 Metropolitan Youth Symphony Orchestra 4:00 p.m. (Admission \$10)
Oct. 31 Student Recitals, Noon
Nov. 28 Student Recitals, Noon
Nov. 30 Jingle and Jazz Concert, 7:30 p.m.
Dec. 2 Community Band Concert, 3:00 p.m.
Dec. 7 Jazz Band Concert, 7:30 p.m.
Dec. 9 Carols and Chocolate Concert, 3:00 p.m.
Dec. 11 Guitar and Percussion Concert, 7:30 p.m.

MUSICA VIVA

- Oct. 14 Faculty/Alumnus Concert: JJC Faculty Jazz Quintet, 3:00 p.m.
Nov. 4 Faculty/Guest Artists Concert: Magnificent Metal VI, 3:00 p.m.
(The historic St. Joseph Catholic Church, 416 N. Chicago Street, Joliet)

THEATRE

- Oct. 4-6 Angels in America, Part One: Millennium Approaches, 7:30 p.m.
Oct. 7 Angels in America, Part One: Millennium Approaches, 2:00 p.m.
(Fine Arts Theater)

Nov. 15-17 Unnecessary Farce, 7:30 p.m.
Nov. 18 Unnecessary Farce, 2:30 p.m.
(Fine Arts Theater)

Feb. 20-23 Jesus Christ Superstar, 7:30 p.m.
Feb. 23-24 Jesus Christ Superstar, 2:00 p.m.
(Fine Arts Theater)

March 7-9 Angels in America, Part Two: Perestroika, 7:30 p.m.
March 10 Angels in America, Part Two: Perestroika, 2:00 p.m.
(Fine Arts Theater)

April 9-13 All My Sons, 7:30 p.m.
April 14 All My Sons, 2:00 p.m.
(Black Box Theatre)

ART

- Sept. 4 - Oct. 12 Recent Acquisitions and Selected Work from the JJC Student Collection

Nov. 16 - Dec. 9 Joliet Junior College Area High School Art Exhibition



For more information, contact the Fine Arts Department at (815) 280-2200 or visit www.jjc.edu/fine-arts. All events are held at the Joliet Junior College Main Campus unless otherwise stated.



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For more information on JJC's sustainability efforts, visit www.jjc.edu/sustainability

Matt Dunne, MD, a 1995 graduate and former JJC baseball player, is the system medical director of utilization review and case management and physician advisor of clinical documentation for Edwards Hospital.

His time on the JJC baseball fields and the talents shared by Coach Wayne King led to a full athletic scholarship at Northeastern Illinois University. Matt credits his JJC economics and science classes to his current profession.

"I have so many memories at the college, and friendships formed on the baseball field that are still ones that I maintain more than 20 years later."

- Matt Dunne, MD



WHAT IS YOUR JJC STORY?

We want to hear how JJC helped you start your career, realize your dreams or begin a new path in life.

Visit www.jjc.edu/alumni-stay-connected to submit your story and reconnect with your college.