



JOLIET  
JUNIOR COLLEGE  
1901-

# CONNECTIONS

joliet junior college magazine



## TOGETHER

THREE SISTERS PERSIST  
AND ACHIEVE AT JJC

FALL 2017





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# CONNECTIONS

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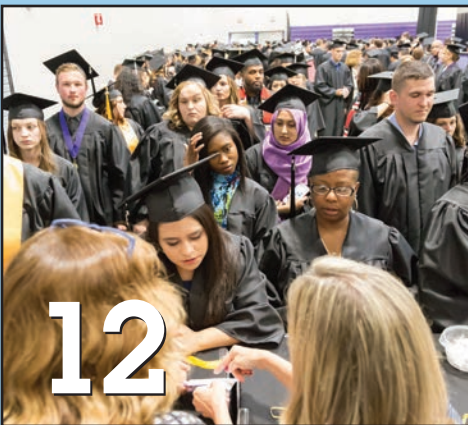
### JJC Board Approves College's 45<sup>th</sup> Balanced Budget

Despite uncertainty regarding state funding, the college balanced its budget with conservative assumptions and responsible spending.



### Herrera Sisters Persist and Achieve at JJC

Sisters Itzamar, Erika and Andrea Herrera are thankful they can rely on each other for support and motivation as they work toward similar educational goals at Joliet Junior College.



### JJC Brings Commencement Back to Main Campus

This year's event brought the ceremony back to campus for the first time since 2011. Around 3,200 people gathered in the Event Center to celebrate the 2017 graduates.



### Alumni Brunch Celebrates 36 Years

More than 130 alumni and friends attended the 36th annual brunch, which honored two distinguished alumni and inducted two professors into the Susan H. Wood Hall of Fame.



### State of the College Address

Dr. Mitchell shared updates with key stakeholders and emphasized that to grow JJC, we must invest in JJC. While most of higher ed is in survival mode, JJC is poised for growth.

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# CONNECTIONS



Dear JJC supporters,

I've spent recent weeks reflecting on the significant events and opportunities that have shaped our year so far: the launch of new academic programs and partnerships, the accreditation of our nursing and sonography programs, and the awarding of nearly \$600,000 in scholarships to support our students, to name a few.

We also held our second annual State of the College event in August, which gathered nearly 100 community and organizational partners to learn how their investment and collaboration with the college has positively impacted our students and programs. JJC's success is dependent on our collaboration with each of you. These types of collaborative initiatives come in many forms, which you'll read about throughout this issue.

But we've encountered critical challenges this year, too. We made the difficult decision this past spring to increase our 2017-2018 tuition rate by \$19 per credit hour to combat state funding issues. Yet when the state of Illinois finally passed a budget in July after two years and allocated unexpected monies to JJC, it was important to the Board of Trustees and to the college administration to rebate a portion of those funds back to our students.

Then in September, President Trump announced the rescission of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, otherwise known as DACA. DACA has provided educational and career opportunities for over 750,000 undocumented young people who were brought to the United States as minors, many of whom have no ties to the countries from which they came.

This action impacted our campus community greatly. It is critical to reiterate that Joliet Junior College is an institution that is accessible to all, regardless of status. We are an institution whose mission is to serve and educate all members of our community. I will continue to support this mission, in addition to working with our federal legislators and other partners, with the hope that together we can find a solution to support these young people. They are truly important contributors to our campus community and to our district.

The programs we have in place to support undocumented students and so many others are comprehensive and help hundreds of students each year reach their educational goals. In fact, the Herrera sisters, featured on the cover of this magazine, have directly benefitted from programs offered by the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs for DACA students and have flourished.

This is, without question, an incredibly challenging time for our students and their families. Supporting inclusion for all will remain an institutional priority. JJC continues to be successful today because of our deeply embedded value system and consistent belief in the spirit of collaboration to meet these challenges.

What remains constant is how our employees, donors, and friends walk the talk of our mission and vision statement each and every day; we are committed to student learning, community prosperity, cultural enrichment, and inclusion; always keeping our community and students at the forefront, and ensuring student success.

Sincerely,  
**Judy Mitchell, Ed.D.**  
President



Queridos amigos de JJC,

Eh pasado las últimas semanas reflexionando sobre los eventos significantes y oportunidades que han moldeado nuestro año hasta hoy: el inicio de nuevos programas académicos y alianzas, la acreditación de nuestros programas de enfermería y ecografía, y la adjudicación de casi \$600,000 en becas para apoyo de nuestros estudiantes, solo para nombrar algunos.

También tuvimos el segundo informe anual sobre el estado de nuestra institución en agosto, en el cual se reunieron casi 100 organizaciones y compañeros de la comunidad para aprender como su inversión y colaboración con el colegio ha impactado de forma positiva a nuestros estudiantes y programas. El éxito de JJC depende de la colaboración que tenemos con cada uno de ustedes. Este tipo de iniciativas de colaboración toman varias formas, sobre las cuales usted podrá leer en esta edición.

Pero, también hemos enfrentado retos críticos durante este año. La primavera pasada, tomamos la difícil decisión de aumentar el costo de colegiatura por \$19 por hora de instrucción para combatir los problemas de finanzas del estado. Pero, cuando el estado de Illinois finalmente aprobó un presupuesto en julio, después de dos años y aloco dinero inesperado a JJC, fue importante para la mesa directiva y la administración del colegio el reembolsar a estudiantes na porción de estos fondos.

Después, en septiembre, el presidente Trump anuncio la rescisión del programa de Acción Diferida para los Llegados en la Infancia, también conocido como DACA. DACA ha aportado oportunidades educacionales y laborales a más de 750,000 personas jóvenes indocumentadas quienes fueron traídas a los Estados Unidos siendo menores, muchos de estos no tienen vínculos con los países de los cuales vinieron.

Esta acción fue muy impactante para la comunidad de nuestro plantel. Es crítico el reiterar que Joliet Junior College es una institución que es accesible para todos, independientemente de estatus. Somos una institución que tiene la como misión servir y educar a todos los miembros de nuestra comunidad. Continuare a apoyar esta misión, al igual trabajare con legisladores federales y otros compañeros, con la esperanza de que juntos podamos encontrar una solución para apoyar a estos jóvenes. Ellos son contribuidores importantes de nuestro plantel, nuestra comunidad y nuestro distrito.

Los programas que tenemos establecidos para apoyar a estudiantes indocumentados y a tantos otros estudiantes son comprensivos y ayudan a cienes de estudiantes cada año a lograr sus metas educacionales. En efecto, las hermanas Herrera quienes fueron presentadas en la portada de esta revista, han tenido éxito y se han beneficiado directamente de programas ofrecidos por la Oficina de Asuntos Multiculturales Estudiantil para estudiantes DACA.

Esto es, sin duda, un tiempo de retos increíbles para nuestros estudiantes y sus familias. Apoyando la inclusión de todos seguirá siendo una prioridad institucional. JJC continua siendo exitoso hoy porque tenemos un sistema de valores fuerte y la creencia consistente en un espíritu de colaboración para sobrellevar estos retos.

Lo que se mantiene constante, es como nuestros empleados, donantes y amigos representan nuestra misión y visión cada día; estamos comprometidos al aprendizaje de los estudiantes, prosperidad comunitaria, enriquecimiento cultural e inclusión; siempre manteniendo nuestra comunidad y estudiantes al frente y asegurando el éxitos estudiantil.

Sinceramente,  
**Judy Mitchell, Ed.D.**  
Presidente





**Dear friends and supporters,**

The JJC Foundation exists to ensure that students at JJC have every opportunity to thrive, succeed and create positive change in our communities. I am pleased to report that the Foundation has never been in a stronger position to support this vital mission.

Gifts from our alumni, employees, businesses, organizations and friends of the college along with an outstanding Foundation board of directors and my team of advancement professionals have helped the Foundation achieve unprecedented growth during the last decade. Because of you, the market value of the Foundation assets has reached \$21 million dollars with \$12 million dollars in endowments.

This fall, the Foundation awarded over \$600,000 in scholarships to 589 students and increased endowment payouts to 4.8 percent (which is approximately \$60,000 additional dollars) to better align with the recent tuition increase. We also saw an important opportunity with the high school merit scholarships that are awarded to all 29 of our district's high schools each year. The Foundation supported an increase in these awards from \$2,750 to \$3,200. We also awarded \$40,000 to JJC Career Services for the internship program and \$50,000 in Awards for Innovation and Excellence grants. Awards for Innovation and Excellence grants are internal grants that are awarded by the Foundation as a way to support innovative projects across the campus.

At JJC, our focus is on students. Whether preparing them for a transfer to a four-year institution or training them for jobs within the local community, we help them achieve their goals and realize their dreams. Your donation to the JJC Foundation directly supports the mission of Joliet Junior College. We ask that you make a financial commitment to our students and the college. There is nothing more inspiring than making a difference in someone's educational journey.

Thank you for your interest and support.

Gratefully,  
**Kristin Mulvey, MSM**  
 Executive Director, JJC Foundation

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Information is subject to change.

**A JOLIET JUNIOR COLLEGE MAGAZINE  
 VOLUME 2, ISSUE 10**

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 Resource Development.

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**Please send your letters to the editor to the Editorial Office address.**



# JJC Board Approves College's 45<sup>th</sup> Balanced Budget

by Rachel Rose

JJC officials presented a balanced college budget for the 45th year in a row, which was approved by the Board of Trustees at their June 13 meeting.

The total operating budget for FY18 is \$ 91.49 million, representing a 2.8 percent increase over the FY17 budget.

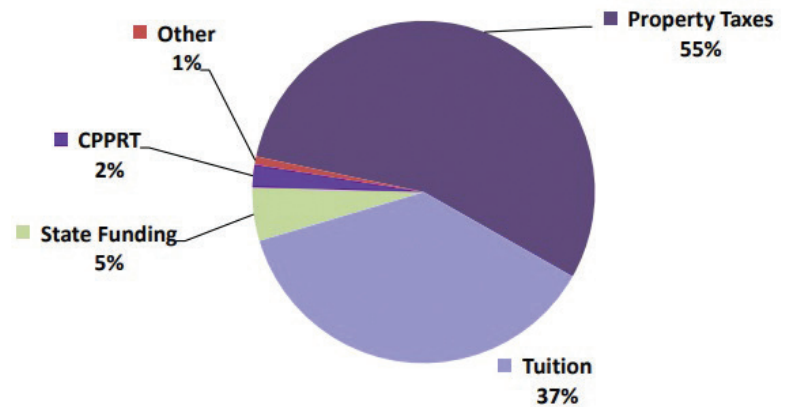
“As the state budget crisis continues to negatively impact the people of Illinois and our college district, JJC has been forced to make some difficult decisions throughout our budgeting process, including the increase of tuition for the upcoming academic year,” JJC President Dr. Judy Mitchell said. “I am truly appreciative of the collaborative and respectful conversations we’ve had across our campus and with our community regarding these incredibly difficult

Despite the recent tuition increase, JJC remains cost competitive with other community colleges and is significantly less expensive than public and private universities. JJC’s FY18 tuition currently ranks 15th of 38 community colleges across the state, and JJC’s cost per credit hour of \$144 is near the state average of \$141.

In July, the state of Illinois passed a budget that allowed for community colleges to receive 90 percent of the funding they received in FY15, which means that JJC could receive a little over \$7 million for FY18. Additionally, the state budget included \$10 million for the City Center Campus, which is part of the \$25.5 million total originally allocated by the state of Illinois to support that project. JJC officials are working to determine how the passage of the state budget will affect the college’s budget.

Additionally, this past fall, the college’s financial team was awarded the Government Finance Officers Association’s (GFOA) Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the FY2017 budget. This marks the 12th year in a row JJC has received the award for its budget, which is only given to government bodies that meet the highest principles of governmental budgeting and achieve standards of excellence in financial reporting.

Operating Fund Revenues FY18



issues. It is crucial that we not let the quality of our education or services suffer during this turbulent time.”

During the planning process, with so much uncertainty regarding state funding, the college balanced its budget with conservative assumptions and responsible spending. The annual budget was developed with comprehensive planning and input from the college community and is based on the 2018-2020 Financial Plan and annual priorities established by the Board of Trustees.

## Highlights of the new budget

**A \$19 per credit hour increase in tuition to cover funding deficits created by the state budget crisis;**

**New personnel funds to support student success initiatives and facility maintenance for the opening of the new Event Center and Romeoville expansion;**

**A required grant fund match for the U.S. Department of Education Title III Grant to support student engagement, persistence and completion programs.**





# TOGETHER

THREE SISTERS PERSIST  
AND ACHIEVE AT JJC

by Sam Ritz





(Left to right) Erika, Andrea and Itzamar Herrera are driven by their parents' encouragement and are recognized as student leaders among their peers.

Itzamar, Erika and Andrea Herrera are sisters of different ages, but look so much alike that they often get mistaken for triplets. They share each other's clothes, try out different sports together (right now it's tennis), and volunteer at the Spanish Community Center. They argue over chores, take turns mentoring their youngest sister, Denise, and work at an outdoor flea market through their family's small business, Modas y creations Erika, on the weekends.

But most importantly, the Herrera sisters support and motivate each other, especially when it comes to their future. The sisters, ages 23, 19 and 18 respectively, all attend Joliet Junior College as DACA students (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) – and were told from their parents at a young age that education was essential if they wanted to be successful.

“My parents taught us that it's important to have a good work ethic. They have always been very encouraging when it comes to our education and have told us that education should be our number one priority,” Itzamar said.

Their parents, Juan Herrera and Matilde Herrera-Ojeda, chose to immigrate their family to the United States

from Oaxaca, Mexico 15 years ago in pursuit of a better life. Having worked hard at minimum wage jobs in the U.S., they wanted more for their daughters. They instilled a drive in them, so that after they graduated from Plainfield Central High School, they would want to continue their education.

**“My parents taught us that it's important to have a good work ethic. They have always been very encouraging when it comes to our education and have told us that education should be our number one priority.”**

– Itzamar Herrera

As the oldest sibling, Itzamar had to learn about college as a blank slate. She gravitated toward JJC not only because it was affordable, but also because she'd heard others talk positively about the community college – especially in regards to its nursing program. Nursing was a natural choice for her because she has always felt inspired by her great-grandmother's profession as a midwife.





*Itzamar, Erika and Andrea Herrera with JJC's Latino Student Support Specialist Martha Villegas Miranda.*

To prepare for college, Itzamar first met with Latino Student Support Specialist Martha Villegas Miranda, who made the process easy and introduced her to the Latinos Unidos club, a JJC student group that promotes social and cultural awareness, helps Latino students become more involved on campus and encourages its members to become leaders and get involved in their community.

Latinos Unidos is one of the most active and popular clubs on JJC's campus, and is open to all students interested in Latino culture. In 2015, JJC earned the status as a Hispanic Serving Institution, meaning that 25 percent of its student population is Latino.

Although the three sisters are very involved with school, they agreed that out of them all, Erika has embraced JJC student activities the most. From attending leadership seminars on campus to becoming vice president of the International Students Club, Erika said one of the best parts about JJC is that it's inclusive of all students, including those in the LGBTQA community.

JJC was the perfect choice all around for Erika. As an undecided student, she was able to freely explore her interests before choosing a major. First, she experimented with psychology, then she tried phlebotomy, quickly earning a certificate to become a phlebotomy technician.

"I was excited and scared about phlebotomy," Erika admitted. "I have always hated needles. But after I drew blood for the first time, it got easier. I learned a lot during my clinical over the summer at St. Joe's. My family has always been very supportive."

But even though Erika loved working in the hospital, she felt something was missing. When she met with Career Pathway Coach Jill Geers and discussed her interests and strengths, she discovered radiation therapy. After a visit to Roosevelt University, it was confirmed: she finally knew what she wanted to do.

Erika plans to transfer to Roosevelt in 2018. But as an already certified phlebotomy technician, she will also have the opportunity to work in a hospital setting (meaning she'll get to make a technician's salary) as she earns her bachelor's degree.

Andrea, who graduated from high school in May 2017, said choosing JJC was a no-brainer. Not only did she already know the campus pretty well thanks to her older sisters, but she also took dual credit classes through her high school. Those classes transferred in as JJC general education credits this fall, which means she's going to begin classes for her major – computer science – much sooner.

“I feel like I've transitioned well thanks to my dual credit classes,” Andrea said. “JJC is just a very comfortable place. I feel at home here.”

Since all three are DACA students, the sisters have never been able to apply for financial aid and have had to rely on scholarships. Thanks to the

**“JJC is just a very comfortable place. I feel at home here.”**

– Andrea Herrera

drive their parents instilled in them, they have all received scholarships from JJC, including Andrea, who got a free ride this year thanks to the JJC Foundation Scholarship and the ILACHE 2017 scholarship.

**“The resources make it easy for you to achieve your goals at JJC.”**

– Erika Herrera

The sisters have made it a ritual to attend a scholarship workshop hosted by Villegas Miranda and other staff each spring. These workshops guide students through the process of applying for scholarships, and many walk out having completed a number of applications in only 30 minutes.

“The resources make it so easy for you to achieve your goals here,” Erika said.

Each year, JJC receives around \$600,000 in donations just for JJC student scholarships. About 30 percent of JJC students receive at least some type of financial aid each year.

“I've had friends that think applying for college is too much work,” Andrea added. “Think of it as really investing in your future. If you work hard right now and go to JJC where they make the process easy and smooth, it will definitely be worth it in the end because you'll find other people who are interested in the same things as you, and you'll get to pursue a career you're passionate about.”

## The JJC Legacy Scholarship



### JJC is helping the next generation of students!

Students whose parents, step-parents or legal guardians went to JJC and earned an associate degree are eligible to apply for the Legacy Scholarship. Recipients will be awarded \$400 per semester for up to three consecutive semesters. Students applying must be a District 525 resident, have at least a 2.5 GPA and must be attending JJC full-time.

For more information, or to fill out an application, visit [www.jjc.edu/financial-aid/Pages/grants-awards.aspx](http://www.jjc.edu/financial-aid/Pages/grants-awards.aspx).



# JJC Brings Commencement Back to Main Campus

by Jasmine Cooper



Joliet Junior College celebrated its 101st commencement ceremony on May 12 inside the new Event Center on the Main Campus. Approximately 3,200 family, friends, faculty, and staff, gathered to witness graduates receive their associate degrees and certificates. The ceremony was held at the Lewis University Fieldhouse over the last seven years due to space constraints on campus. The May ceremony was the first major event in the new Event Center. More than 530 graduates were recognized.



*Dr. Mitchell addresses graduates at the 101st Commencement ceremony.*





#JJCora *Class of 2017*





#JJCgrad *Class of 2017*









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## ALUMNI BRUNCH CELEBRATES 36 YEARS, honors four remarkable alumni and faculty

by Kelly Larson



Left to right: JJC Alumni Board President Ericka Williams '08, DAA awardee Dave Westphal '66; SHW awardee William Johnson; JJC President Dr. Judy Mitchell '98; DAA awardee Rev. Dr. Lester Brown '98; SHW awardee Joe Milosevich; and JJC Alumni Relations and Annual Fund Manager Kelly Larson.

More than 130 alumni and friends from all over the country returned to JJC for the 36th annual alumni brunch on June 4. This year's celebration honored two distinguished alumni and inducted two professors into the Susan H. Wood Hall of Fame.

"The brunch is an opportunity to honor a group of remarkable individuals and build community," said JJC Alumni Board President Ericka Williams '08.

The 50-year reunion class of 1967 celebrated as did the classes of 1957, 1977, 1987, 1997 and 2007.

The *Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award* recognizes alumni who have demonstrated outstanding success in their chosen field and provided humanitarian service to society.



Guests were treated to a gourmet buffet, dining entertainment, and traveled back in time through a history table filled with yearbooks and memorabilia.





## 2017 Honorees

**Rev. Dr. Lester Brown**, class of 1998, credits his JJC professors for helping him graduate at the top of his class and inspiring him to continue his education. Retired from the Illinois Department of Corrections with 27 years of service, Rev. Dr. Brown has dedicated his life to serving the Joliet community and has received numerous awards for his community involvement. The former Joliet mayoral candidate is in his tenth year of teaching criminal justice and law enforcement classes at JJC.

**Dave Westphal**, class of 1966, is an executive in worldwide agribusiness with more than 46 years of diverse management experience. Some of his notable accomplishments include helping to initiate the sale of Cargill's International Seed Business to Monsanto for \$1.4 billion and designing and placing over 50 seed conditioning plants in 15 different countries. Since retiring he has worked extensively consulting in Africa working with start-up seed businesses. Just weeks after the alumni brunch, Westphal and his team traveled back to Africa to conduct more research.

Honorees receiving the *Susan H. Wood Hall of Fame* are recognized for their exceptional service to JJC. This year's honorees include:

**William Johnson** is the senior faculty member at JJC, having taught in the Agricultural and Horticultural Sciences Department for 49 years. Johnson is also Coordinator of the Agriculture Production/Management and Swine Management programs and is in charge of the internship program for students in those concentrations. Known as "Mr. JJC" and recognized throughout the community, Johnson has been a consistent college donor since 1985, contributing to a number of student funds and endowed scholarships.

**Joe Milosevich** retired in May 2017 after teaching at JJC for 38 years as a fine arts professor and working as director of the Laura A. Sprague Art Gallery. One of Milosevich's greatest accomplishments at JJC was establishing the Permanent Collection of JJC Student Art in 1984. Another was in 2012, when the current art gallery officially opened – a space he designed – in the area that used to be the JJC Bookstore.



Left to right: JJC class of 1957 graduates: Dolores Oram; Sue Zuck; Marcia Metrick; and John Mraz.



Left to right top row – JJC class of 1967 graduates: Marge Fleet; Roy Fleet; bottom row - Rita Carlson; and Mark Teipel.







## JJC Presents **STATE OF COLLEGE ADDRESS** To Community Partners

by Kelly Rohder

Dr. Mitchell presented the second annual State of the College address to community members, stakeholders and local legislators on Aug. 10, sharing institutional initiatives, challenges, and progress the college has made over the past year.

“One of the reasons we established this event last year was to create a specific opportunity to share successes, challenges, and strategic initiatives with our external partners,” Dr. Mitchell said. “JJC’s success is truly dependent on our collaboration with each of you. Your investment and trust in us to

deliver diverse, quality educational opportunities to our district is why we are still here successfully educating our community.”

In her presentation, Dr. Mitchell shared her four pillars of success that she unveiled at her inauguration in February, and which she uses as a guide for leading the college: financial stability and a stable budget; academic programming to meet the needs of a diverse society; enrollment, growth, retention and student success; and community, legislative and philanthropic engagement.



## Additional highlights Dr. Mitchell covered included:

- ➔ JJC has achieved Hispanic Serving Institution status, as granted by the U.S. Department of Education. This means that more than 25 percent of the student population is Hispanic and that the college is eligible to receive federal funding for special programs to support the success of this population;
- ➔ The college achieved its 45th consecutive balanced budget;
- ➔ Key community partnerships that have led to educational training programs such as the Advanced Integrated Maintenance program and Operations Engineering Technology program, both of which provide clear pathways to employment in local industries;
- ➔ The JJC Foundation awarded over \$513,000 in annual and endowed scholarships last year to support students of all ages and backgrounds amidst state financial turbulence. These scholarships are supported by both individuals and organizations;
- ➔ JJC's sonography program received its accreditation in 2016; there are only five in the state of Illinois;
- ➔ JJC's agriculture program won the 2017 Outstanding Postsecondary Program Award from the National Association of Agricultural Education; and
- ➔ The college was up 7.8 percent in new students attending JJC from Fall 2015 to Fall 2016.

Dr. Mitchell closed by sharing with the college's external partners an idea she has been sharing with faculty, staff and students since she became president: "To grow JJC, we must invest in JJC," she said. "While most of higher ed is in survival mode, Joliet Junior College is truly poised for growth."

To see the State of the College address, visit JJC's YouTube channel at:

[www.youtube.com/user/JolietJrCollege](http://www.youtube.com/user/JolietJrCollege)



The second annual State of the College brought together around 100 community partners in the U-Building on the Main Campus.



Faculty member Dan Warning talks with Luann DiMonte. Both are JJC Alumni board members.



Dr. Mitchell greets Mark Schneidewind, manager of the Will County Farm Bureau.



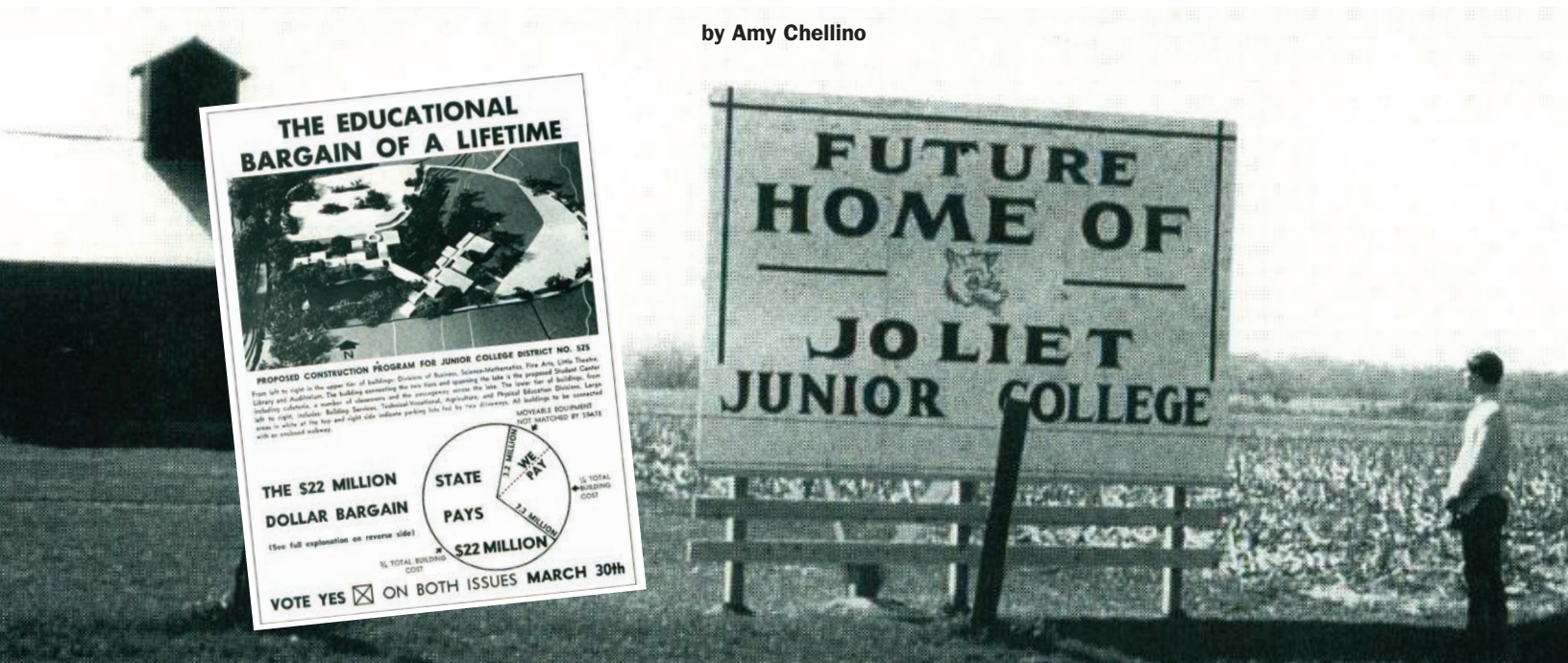
Dr. Mitchell connects with Rob Galick, vice president of administrative services and Dominick Demonica, principal at Demonica Kemper Architects.



# ‘Time to Leave the Cradle’:

## Joliet Junior College Became a Class I District & Separated from Joliet Township High School Fifty Years Ago

by Amy Chellino



When students first arrived for class at Joliet Junior College’s temporary buildings on Sept. 22, 1969, they were met with a traffic jam on Houbolt Road with 2,000 cars attempting to make it to class on time. For Professor of Agriculture Bill Johnson, the one word that comes to mind when recalling that first day is, “Mud!”

“The first day of classes it was cold and raining very hard...Houbolt was a gravel road over soil,” Johnson recalls. Former Assistant to the Dean, Walter Zaida, says there was just no time for the city to expand the road before classes started.

Once on the temporary campus, students found cardboard walkways, minimal furniture and a few buildings without plumbing. Johnson cheerfully adds that the experience was like an “adventure” for students and faculty and although the conditions were not always ideal, it was “still an improvement” for the college to finally have its own space. These sentiments are echoed in an article from *the Blazer* from April 25, 1969 that shared, “More important to students, however, the entire campus will belong to the students and the College.”

“Students and faculty were happier to be out on their own,” Zaida recalls. And in many cases, he described

how the temporary buildings were even better than sharing space at the high school which was cramped and inflexible.

After inhabiting limited space at Joliet Central High School since 1901, Joliet Junior College became a Class I district on Feb. 18, 1967 and separated from the high school becoming Illinois Junior College District 525. “A statewide system of community college districts was proposed as the next Illinois experiment in higher education,” Zaida explains. “Locally, then, the decision was made that we can do this...It was time to leave the cradle.”

A College Board of Trustees was established and determining how this division would happen with shared faculty, classroom space, and college funding were at the center of decision making. A *Blazer* article from Sept. 5, 1967 explained, “administration, teachers, business office and students must be untangled after some 65 years of working as one.” An architectural firm was hired to develop the 368-acre Richards farm on Airport Road (now Houbolt). This location was selected for the close proximity to the highways and accessibility to students. Where some saw only a cornfield, aesthetic elements of



the land which included a small lake inspired the initial design of an enclosed bridge with glass walls that would become the centerpiece of the campus.

District 525 voted on a referendum to fund the new campus. Advertised as “The Education Bargain of a Lifetime,” the referendum was nearly unanimously approved on March 30, 1968.

Moving to an interim campus during the construction process was imperative to accommodate the continued growth of Joliet Junior College and provide a physical break from the high school. A temporary campus of 17 prefabricated buildings similar to military barracks were constructed on the land of the college’s new home. Each building was named after an existing community college and departments were given corresponding names. For example, the Agriculture Department was in the Prairie State building and English was in the Spoon River building referencing the classic literature text *A Spoon River Anthology*.

Adjacent to the temporary campus, ground was broken for the permanent campus on Nov. 15, 1970. The construction brought an enthusiasm to everyone at the college. A dedication ceremony for Phase I happened on

Oct. 22, 1972. The Agriculture Department was one of the first to move to the new campus.

“There was more space than we could imagine,” Johnson remembers.

At the heart of this endeavor is an appreciation for adventure, progress and learning. The lasting vitality of Joliet Junior College is due to the “amazing community support” explains Johnson. The loyalty and dedication of the community has defined Joliet Junior College as a forward thinking center for education, enrichment and opportunity.

Zaida echoes this sentiment. “Joliet and the surrounding areas had pride in education and were the builders of education,” he says. “There was a climate of respect for the education of youth and hiring strong instructors and supporting them.”

As a student, professor, administrator, alumni or citizen, you are a part of the Joliet Junior College legacy that began in 1901. Each day as students walk through the doors of JJC’s campuses, pioneering spirits are uplifted and the quest for knowledge and opportunity continues.



Remember that first day in September? Total and mass confusion for all.



### 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  
 ph: (815) 280-2344



# CAMPUS CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

With the opening of the Romeoville Campus Expansion in August, JJC has completed its three major outstanding construction projects from the 2008 Master Plan and the 2013 Master Plan Update.



## City Center Campus

The City Center Campus in downtown Joliet opened for classes in January 2017, and a grand opening celebration was held on April 11. The six-story, 96,000 square-foot building is the new home of Culinary Arts, Workforce Development and Adult Education, replacing the former hotel that the college occupied beginning in 1980. The old hotel building was demolished in May. Additionally, the Renaissance Center for banquet and event operation underwent extensive renovation and has reopened for operation by a third-party vendor, Premier Events and Banquets.



## Event Center

The Event Center, on the southwest side of Main Campus, was completed in the spring 2017 semester. The 85,223 square-foot facility features a fitness center for student athletes, two basketball courts, configuration options for competition basketball and volleyball tournaments, batting cages, bleachers and seating (to accommodate both athletic competitions and graduation ceremonies), athletic staff office space and a presentation room. In May, the college hosted its annual graduation at the Event Center, marking the first time JJC has been able to accommodate graduation on Main Campus in seven years. A grand opening celebration for the Event Center was held on Sept. 12.



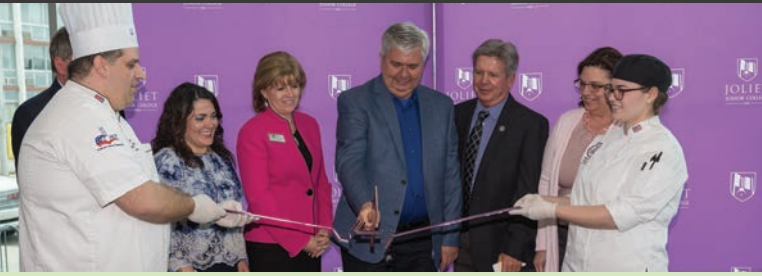
## Romeoville Expansion

The new addition to the Romeoville Campus marks the first major construction there since the campus opened in 1993. The 50,028 square-foot new building, which opened for fall 2017 classes in August, includes space for: enrollment services, counseling, financial aid, testing and tutoring, a bookstore, cafeteria, science laboratories, classrooms and offices. With new and expanded course offerings, students can now complete a full associate of science (A.S.) degree (a transfer degree), entirely at the Romeoville Campus without coming to Main Campus. Additionally, the college completed renovations on the 24-year-old original campus building. A grand opening celebration for the Romeoville Expansion was held on Oct. 10.





# News Briefs



*Chef Andy Chlebana, Board Chairman Bob Wunderlich, Trustee Alicia Morales, Dr. Mitchell, Trustee Andy Mihelich, Trustee Mike O'Connell, Trustee Maureen Broderick, and Rosie Cowell, a 2015 culinary arts alumna.*

Approximately 175 people attended Joliet Junior College's grand opening for its new City Center Campus on April 11, which featured a ribbon cutting ceremony, tours of the new space, and refreshments made by culinary arts students.

Remarks were given by JJC Board Chairman Bob Wunderlich, JJC President Dr. Judy Mitchell, Joliet Mayor Bob O'Dekirk, Dominick Demonica of Demonica Kemper Architects, and Rosie Cowell, a 2015 culinary arts alumna.

"We could not have done this without the support of our partners at the city, county and state levels—so we thank them for their belief in us and their ultimate investment in the education of our community,"

Dr. Mitchell said. "We also owe our gratitude to the citizens within our district that supported our 2008

## JJC Receives Salute to Service Honor from JTHS

by Jasmine Cooper

Joliet Junior College was honored as a Salute to Service award recipient, receiving a medallion from Joliet Township High School District 204 on May 2 at the Jacob Henry Mansion in downtown Joliet. The award recognizes the outstanding partnership between District 204 and the college.

At the event, JTHS Superintendent Dr. Cheryl McCarthy presented the Superintendent's Medallion to Joliet Junior College for the support services it offers to JTHS students, which include dual credit courses – classes that count as college credit but students can take in high school, saving them both time and money.

"I truly believe our relationship with JTHS is stronger than ever," said JJC President Dr. Judy Mitchell. "District 204 continues to be a dedicated collaborator in our collective mission: to positively impact our community through access to education."

In addition to providing students with an affordable education, JJC and JTHS have also worked together

## JJC Celebrates the Opening of City Center Campus

by Rachel Rose



referendum. Partial funds from that referendum supported this project and as you'll see today when you tour the campus those dollars were invested wisely in classrooms, learning labs, student support areas, and community gathering spaces."

Designed by Demonica Kemper Architects, the six-story, 96,000 square-foot building in downtown Joliet houses the college's workforce development, GED/ESL training, adult education and culinary arts, all programs that have a direct impact on improving employment opportunities for JJC students and community members.

In addition to centralizing the culinary arts program, allowing growth for additional student support services, and modernized facilities for the adult education and workforce development programs, the new campus offers two new restaurants which are open the public: Thrive on the first floor, and Saveur, located on the second floor.

on the Latino Empowerment Conference, the African American Teen Summit, the Advanced Integrated Maintenance (AIM) program for students interested in technical careers, the nursing assistant program, and the Educational Talent Search program, funded by the U.S. Department of Education.



*Dr. Mitchell, along with many JJC faculty and staff, accepted the Salute to Service award on May 2 on behalf of the college.*





John H. Weitendorf, Jr. shares a laugh with friends and family at the 10th Anniversary Event.

## Weitendorf Agricultural Education Center 10th Anniversary Event Raises Over \$25,000 by Amanda Quinn

The Weitendorf Agricultural Education Center 10th Anniversary Event, held on March 4, raised over \$25,000 for the agriculture center's programming and equipment needs. Over 400 alumni and friends attended the celebratory pig roast dinner, complete with line dancing, music by Hillbilly Rockstarz, a donut truck, and live and silent auctions.

"The generosity of the Weitendorf family in funding this amazing facility 10 years ago has had a significant impact on the education and training we have been able to provide agriculture students for the past decade," said Kristi Mulvey, executive director of the JJC foundation. "Thanks to the many alumni, friends, and community partners who helped us celebrate this milestone for the facility and the agriculture program."

The center is named after John H. Weitendorf, Sr., a 1942 JJC alum who donated \$2.2 million and the 32-acre site to build the facility. Weitendorf, Sr., who worked as a realtor for most of his life, passed away in September 2011.

### 10th Anniversary Event Sponsors

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The Weitendorf Family

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Strawn Pork LLC

*A special thank you to the many alumni and friends who donated items to our live and silent auctions.*





## Board Welcomes New Members, Incumbents Following April Election

by Rachel Rose

The April 4 consolidated election resulted in one new trustee and three incumbents to fill two two-year terms and two six-year terms on the JJC Board of Trustees.

Following formal confirmation of the election results, incumbents Daniel O'Connell and Alicia Morales were confirmed as winners for the two six-year terms and Jake Mahalik and Susan Marie Klen were confirmed as winners for the two two-year terms at the Board of Trustees May 1 meeting.

Sadly, since Klen passed away on March 7, trustees needed to appoint a replacement for her. They voted to appoint incumbent Mike O'Connell, who garnered the most votes behind Klen. Klen previously served on the board from 2009 to 2015.

### Following are the official vote totals for the winners:

Daniel O'Connell, 24,201 votes	Susan Marie Klen, 26,457 votes
Alicia Morales, 22,074 votes	Mike O'Connell, 24,981 votes
John (Jake) Mahalik, 26,768 votes	

Also at the May 1 meeting, the board reorganized and chose current Chairman Bob Wunderlich to continue in that role. Trustee Maureen Broderick was chosen to serve as vice chairwoman, and Trustee Mike O'Connell was chosen to serve as board secretary.

Additionally, Sante Deserio was seated as the 2017-2018 student trustee. The student trustee sits on the JJC Board of Trustees and works closely with Student Government to ensure the thoughts and opinions of students are represented at board meetings. Deserio is a sophomore majoring in political science with plans to pursue law school after completing his undergraduate work in May 2018.

The board also presented a posthumous award honoring the life of former Trustee Klen. Members of Klen's family accepted the award on her behalf, which recognized Klen's widespread volunteer work throughout the district and her lasting impact and legacy at the college.





# 2017 Foundation Sponsorship Campaign

by Amanda Quinn

Thank you to our business and community partners who have invested in the 2017 JJC Foundation Sponsorship Campaign. These donors committed to sponsoring two of our signature events, the JJC Athletic Golf Outing in July and the JJC Haunted 5K Run/Walk in October. Platinum and Gold Sponsors were also recognized at the Weitendorf Agricultural Education Center 10th Anniversary Event in March.

## Platinum Sponsors

Demonica Kemper Architects  
Exxon Mobil Corporation  
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Tim Klotz Memorial Fund



Dr. Judy Mitchell addresses participants of the third annual Haunted 5K Run and Walk. In total, the race raised \$40,000 for JJC student scholarships, college programs and athletics.



Carl Buck (far left) and the Rathbun, Cservenyak & Kozol foursome.



Board Chairman, Bob Wunderlich, and JJC Foundation President, Rosa Angeles, from First Midwest Bank welcomed golfers to the outing.



The Exxon Mobil foursome was comprised of four JJC alumni.





Left to right: JJC President Dr. Judy Mitchell '98, nursing professor Dr. Maria Wolfe, Automotive professor Dan Warning '06, JJC alumnus and CEO/founder of Petco Petroleum Corporation Jay Bergman '68, JJC Board of Trustees member Maureen Broderick, and Alumni Relations and Annual Fund Manager Kelly Larson.

## JJC Alumnus Jay Bergman Wins State Award

by Kelly Larson

Jay Bergman, a 1968 graduate of Joliet Junior College, was honored by the Illinois Community College Trustees Association (ICCTA) at its annual banquet in June 2017.

Bergman, philanthropist and founder/CEO of Petco Petroleum Corporation, received the statewide Distinguished Alumnus Award which recognizes the professional and humanitarian accomplishments of individuals who have graduated from Illinois community colleges.

A lifelong resident of Joliet, Bergman put himself through college. At one point, Bergman said he was working more than 50 hours a week as he carried his full load of classes at JJC. He persevered and transferred to Illinois State University (ISU), where he continued to balance his studies with work, and graduated in 1970.

**“JJC made me understand that there was life beyond the neighborhood and that an education was something to treasure.”**

– Jay Bergman, '68

“JJC gave me the knowledge to be successful in business and the desire to encourage others to realize their potential can only be achieved by furthering their education,” says Bergman, who served on the JJC Alumni Board as president in the 1980s and was recently recognized as the longest serving member of the ISU Board of Trustees from 2003 to 2017.

“The benefits of attending a community college can be seen in the successful lives of our graduates,” said ICCTA executive director Mike Monaghan. “As a first-generation

student, Jay Bergman could have easily chosen a simpler path, but his perseverance has made him a community college success story.”

For the past ten years, Bergman has also served at the state level as a member of the Illinois Board of Higher Education and is a part of the executive committee.

In 2012, Bergman and his wife Lori donated more than \$780,000 to the Chicago region of the American red cross. He shares his time as a Board member for the American Red Cross of Chicago and Northern Illinois region; the Chicago Zoological Society/Brookfield Zoo; and the Community Foundation of Will County.

He received an honorary doctorate from Lewis University in 2014 for his service in Illinois higher education.

In addition to Bergman, JJC faculty members Dr. Maria Wolfe (nursing) was nominated for the ICCTA Outstanding Part-Time Faculty Member Award and Dan Warning '06 (automotive service technology and alumni board member) was nominated for the ICCTA Outstanding Full-Time Faculty Member Award.



Joliet Junior College alumnus and CEO/founder of Petco Petroleum Corporation Jay Bergman '68 is pictured with ICCTA secretary Kathy Spears.



# People Then and Now

*Joe Milosevich, Retired JJC  
Fine Arts Professor*

by Kelly Larson



Retired JJC fine arts professor and gallery director, Joe Milosevich was recently inducted into the Susan H. Wood Hall of Fame for his exceptional service to JJC.



## THEN

In 1979, Joe Milosevich began working at Joliet Junior College as a full-time director of the Laura A. Sprague Art Gallery and fine arts professor of painting, drawing and design.

He said the best thing about working at JJC was being in a position where he could nourish and witness the creativity expressed by his students, who regularly created award-winning artwork for Illinois community college art competitions.

In his time, he mentored numerous students toward productive careers in art, including several nationally recognized artists. This level of commitment to academia earned him numerous accolades including the title of Outstanding Full-Time Teacher from JJC in 1996.

One of Milosevich's greatest accomplishments at JJC was establishing the Permanent Collection of JJC Student Art in 1984. Another was in 2012, when the current art gallery officially opened – a space he designed – in the area that used to be the JJC Bookstore.

## NOW

After 38 years of teaching and running the gallery at JJC, Joe Milosevich retired in May 2017. The following month, the professional artist was honored by the JJC Alumni Association at its annual brunch. Milosevich received the Susan H. Wood Hall of Fame Award which recognizes an individual who has served JJC in an exceptional way.

Joe has been married to his college sweetheart, Diane, for 40 years. The couple retired at the same time and look forward to traveling and spending more time with their growing family. Their big retirement trip included a tour of Grand Teton and Yellowstone National Parks over the summer. They both love scenery and wildlife – most trips include stops at quilt shops for Diane and antique malls for Joe.

Retirement also means more time for the award winning artist to exhibit his own artwork which has taken him all over the world including Italy, Austria and Mexico.

Joe and Diane reside in Crest Hill, Illinois and have three children and one grandchild.







## Planetarium Shows

### Tuesday Shows – 7:30 p.m.

Nov. 21	How to Choose a Telescope
Dec. 5	Story of the Christmas Star
Jan. 2	Solar System
Jan. 16	Dark Matter
Jan. 30	Galileo
Feb. 13	Sunstruck
Feb. 27	Mars
March 13	Two Small Pieces of Glass
March 27	Seasonal Skies
April 10	Humans and Robots in Space
April 24	Orbits: Keep Moving or Die
May 8	Asteroids and Comets
May 22	Black Holes
June 5	Seasonal Skies

### Sunday Holiday Show – 2:00 p.m.

Dec. 17	Story of the Christmas Star
---------	-----------------------------

### Thursday Shows – 6:30 p.m.

Dec. 14	Story of the Christmas Star
Jan. 11	Seasonal Skies
Jan. 25	Larry Cat in Space*
Feb. 8	Galileo
Feb. 22	The Little Star that Could*
March 8	Seasonal Skies
March 22	Humans and Robots in Space
April 5	Sunstruck
April 19	We Go to the Moon*
May 3	Larry Cat in Space*
May 17	Solar System
May 31	Seasonal Skies
June 14	Dark Matter



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](http://www.jjc.edu/info/planetarium).

\*Shows put on for the very young astronomer





**MUSIC**

- Nov. 29 Student Recital, noon
- Dec. 1 Jazz Band Concert, 7:30 p.m.
- Dec. 3 Community Band Concert, 3 p.m.
- Dec. 8 MadriGala, 7:30 p.m.
- Dec. 10 Carols and Chocolate, 3 p.m.
- Dec. 12 Guitar and Percussion Concert, 7:30 p.m.
- Feb. 13 Student Recital, noon
- March 18 Metropolitan Youth Symphony Orchestra (Admission \$10), 4 p.m.
- March 28 Student Recital, noon
- April 25 Student Recital, noon
- April 29 Choral Masterworks Concert, 3 p.m.
- May 4 Jazz Band Concert, 7:30 p.m.
- May 6 Community Band Concert, 3 p.m.
- May 7 Honors Recital, 7:30 p.m.
- May 8 Guitar and Percussion Concert, 3 p.m.

**MUSICA VIVA**

- Feb. 11 Global Concert & Cuisine: Northern Illinois University Steelband, 3 p.m.
- March 11 Faculty Artist Concert: Rich Moore, 3 p.m.
- April 8 Guest Artist/Alumni Concert: Mary Elizabeth Bowden, 3 p.m.

**THEATRE**

- March 1-3 Spamalot by Eric Idle and John DuPrez, 7:30 p.m.
- March 3-4 Spamalot by Eric Idle and John DuPrez, 2 p.m.
- April 12-14 and April 19-20 She Kills Monsters by Qui Nguyen, 7:30 p.m.
- April 14-15 and April 21-22 She Kills Monsters by Qui Nguyen, 2:00 p.m.

**ART**

- Nov. 6 to Dec. 8 Joliet Junior College Area High School Art Exhibition
- Jan. 16 to Feb. 9 Water Street Studios Artists Collective
- March 5 to 29 Tim Hurley: Retrospective
- April 23 to June 28 Joliet Junior College Art Students' Juried Exhibition

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





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**Celeste Milton**, a **1974** graduate, has worked in hospitals, medical sales, home health and quality improvement as a registered nurse since walking the halls of JJC. Milton spent her first year of classes in temporary buildings or “Quonset huts” as the college began construction on Houbolt Road. “I remember how grand and impressive the first completed building looked; it was exciting to attend classes in the new building.”

Milton, a nationally recognized speaker, retired in 2016 from The Joint Commission after serving 14 years. In this role she directed four national projects for improving quality and safety of care for patients in hospitals across the country.

**“My associate degree in nursing from JJC allowed me to pursue great opportunities in nursing.”**

**– Celeste Milton '74; RN, BSN, MPH**

## 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/info/alumni](http://www.jjc.edu/info/alumni) to submit your story and reconnect with your college.