

SUMMER 2008

Invention

THE MAGAZINE OF THOMAS EDISON STATE COLLEGE

Soaring

Anthony DiNota, '97

OMNIFLIGHT

- ▶ 20th Annual National Institute on the Assessment of Experiential Learning
- ▶ Alumni Profiles:
Mackington Joseph, '08, Fred J. Lewis, '90

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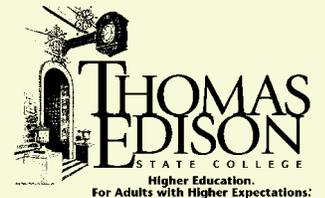
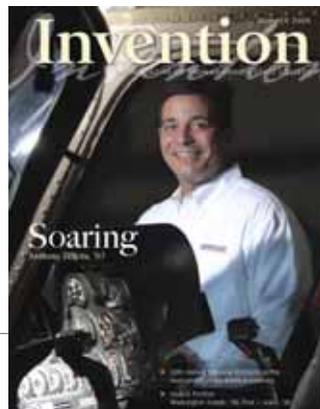
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Dear Alumni, Students and Friends,

Thomas Jefferson said, “Nothing can stop the man with the right mental attitude from achieving his goal.”

This issue of *Invention* celebrates that sentiment through the stories of three of our graduates whose accomplishments bring Jefferson’s quote to life and embody its spirit and meaning.

Anthony J. DiNota, '97, is president and chief operating officer of Omniflight Helicopters, Inc., a leading provider of air medical services in the United States. A husband and father of three, DiNota describes how his studies at Thomas Edison State College helped his professional advancement take off in the aviation industry and helped him find success in a field that has captivated him since childhood.

Another alumnus featured in this edition of *Invention* is Mackington Joseph, '08, an employee of Public Service Electric and Gas Company (PSE&G) New Jersey’s largest utility company. Joseph, who is currently pursuing a master’s degree at Thomas Edison State College, explains how the College enabled him to pursue his education and advance his career while taking care of his daughter.

We also meet Fred J. Lewis, '90, a successful business leader and author who was able to take care of “unfinished business” by completing his degree at Thomas Edison State College, despite a hectic schedule.

We are honored to serve individuals like these, whose “right mental attitudes” and dedication helped them accomplish their academic goals.

I hope you enjoy this edition of *Invention*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George A. Pruitt". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "G" and "P".

Dr. George A. Pruitt
President

College Celebrates 20 Years of Sponsoring the National Institute on the Assessment of Experiential Learning

NATION'S PREMIER TRAINING EFFORT FOR PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT ENTERS SECOND DECADE

Higher education is one of the only fields where an organization operating in a very competitive market would demonstrate how it performs one of its most distinguishing programs with its competitors.

In June, Thomas Edison State College celebrated its second decade of doing just that at the 20th annual National Institute on the Assessment of Experiential Learning, an event organized and sponsored by the College to provide an intensive learning experience on the best practices in prior learning assessment for professionals in education.

Prior learning assessment was initially called portfolio assessment when it was developed in the early 1970s by the Cooperative Assessment of Experiential Learning, a project made up of a small group of colleges and universities, including Thomas Edison State College. Prior learning assessment is a process where students demonstrate that they possess college-level knowledge of a subject that has been acquired outside of a traditional classroom setting, such as at work or through volunteer service.

"What is important to remember about prior learning assessment is that students do not get credit for experience; they earn credit by demonstrating that they possess college-level knowledge of a subject in a valid and reliable manner," said Dr. George A. Pruitt, president of Thomas Edison State College.

In 1988, Thomas Edison State College established the National Institute on the Assessment of Experiential Learning and began organizing and sponsoring the annual event in conjunction with the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning, the organization that ultimately grew out of the Cooperative Assessment of Experiential Learning project in the early 1970s.

This year, the National Institute took place at the Nassau Inn in Princeton, N.J. In honor of the event's 20th anniversary, the College also sponsored a Forum in Assessing Adult Learning at a Distance, at the Nassau Inn.



(above left) Dr. Pamela Tate, president of the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning, was keynote speaker for the Forum on the Assessment of Adult Learning at a Distance, which preceded the National Institute.



(above center) At this year's National Institute, the prior learning assessment was brought to life through a demonstration led by Dr. Ernie Kovacs Jr. of Fairleigh Dickinson University, and members of the New Jersey State Police.

“Prior learning assessment was revolutionary and controversial when it was first developed, but has since become accepted in academia.”

Dr. Pamela Tate, president and CEO of the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning, was the keynote speaker for the forum.

The National Institute featured presentations by nationally renowned leaders in prior learning assessments, such as Dr. Nan Travers and Dr. Alan Mandell, Empire State College; Dr. Harriet Cabell Walker, formerly of University of Alabama; and Dr. Barry Sheckley, University of Connecticut.

Dr. Pruitt said the longevity of the National Institute on the Assessment of Experiential Learning and the growth in the



Group shot of attendees and presenters of the first National Institute event held in 1989 at the Henry Chauncey Conference Center in Princeton, N.J.



Dr. Alan Mandell, of Empire State University, presents at the 20th annual National Institute.



(from left) Dr. Harriet Cabell Walker, Dr. George Pruitt and Dr. Barry Sheckley share a moment at the second National Institute in 1990.

number of schools that offer prior learning assessment – from a handful of schools in the 1970s to approximately 1,000 institutions today – is a testament to the success of the early work of the cooperative project and the institute itself.

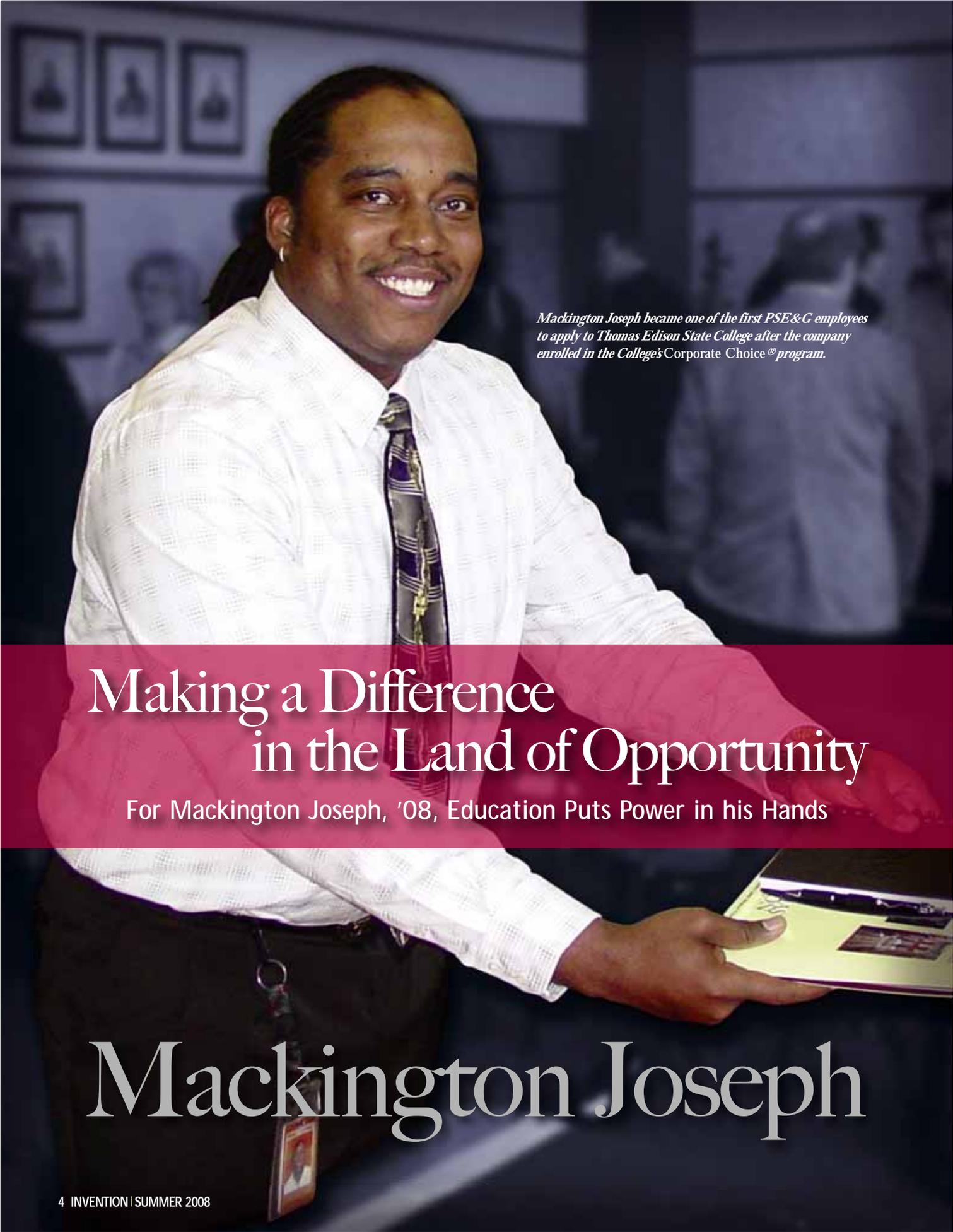
“It was revolutionary and controversial when it was first developed, but has since become accepted in academia,” he said. “We still have a vested interest to ensure practitioners, both new and experienced, learn the latest and best practices, as well as quality assurance, accreditation issues and making sure the process is done right.”

Dr. Pruitt added that it is important to share how the College performs prior learning assessment with other institutions, even those competing in the same market as Thomas Edison State College.

“Higher education is a public benefit and we have an obligation to the field to make sure prior learning assessment is practiced properly and benefits the learners who possess the type of knowledge this process validates.”



Dr. Morris Keeton, who served as CAEL's first chief executive officer, presents at the National Institute in 1991. Keeton is widely known as the first "dean" of prior learning assessment.



Mackington Joseph became one of the first PSE&G employees to apply to Thomas Edison State College after the company enrolled in the College's Corporate Choice[®] program.

Making a Difference in the Land of Opportunity

For Mackington Joseph, '08, Education Puts Power in his Hands

Mackington Joseph

Alumni Profile

Learning the language was just one of the barriers that Mackington Joseph had to overcome when he came to United States from Haiti in 2001.

Even though he did not speak English, Joseph wanted to find a good job and advance his education while taking care of his young daughter. Today, he is pursuing a master's degree, teaching at a community college and is a rising star at Public Service Electric and Gas Company (PSE&G), New Jersey's largest utility. He figures that is a pretty good start.

"I was lucky to have a father who cared enough for his children, all 10 of us, to work hard for more than 25 years in the USA to bring us here to join him in the land of opportunity that is the United States," said Joseph. "In America, I realized that opportunity is education."

However, Joseph realized not all opportunities in higher education are equal. He began earning a bachelor's degree in electronics engineering technology at the New Jersey Institute of Technology. Unfortunately, Joseph could not finish the program because commuting to Newark for class was not compatible with his work schedule and taking care of his daughter as a single parent.

use of the company's tuition assistance program. PSE&G's Workforce Development program provided the impetus for Joseph's success.

"My previous work experience, on top of the degree I earned from Thomas Edison State College and my current pursuit of the College's Master of Science in Management degree, offered me the privilege of becoming an instructor for PSE&G," he said.

Joseph first joined PSE&G in January 2004, as an underground helper and quickly moved up through the ranks — most recently completing a three-and-a-half-year engineering technician apprenticeship. In his new position as a training and development specialist in engineering, Joseph helps create opportunities for others at PSE&G.

In addition to his new position at PSE&G, Joseph teaches Introduction to Electronics and Introduction to Digital Computers at Mercer County Community College. He also serves as a student representative on Thomas Edison State College's Academic Council, which develops and implements new courses, curriculum and degrees for the College.

"The most amazing aspect about Thomas Edison State College

“ The most amazing aspect about Thomas Edison State College is how the educational teams in charge managed to develop a virtual learning environment that is simulating, as closely as possible, the face-to-face educational environment most students are naturally familiar with. ”

Finding Thomas Edison State College, said Joseph, enabled him to complete his degree while he managed his personal and professional responsibilities.

So far, 2008 has been a banner year for Joseph. He became a U.S. citizen in March and in July completed his Bachelor of Science in Applied Science and Technology degree in electronic engineering technology.

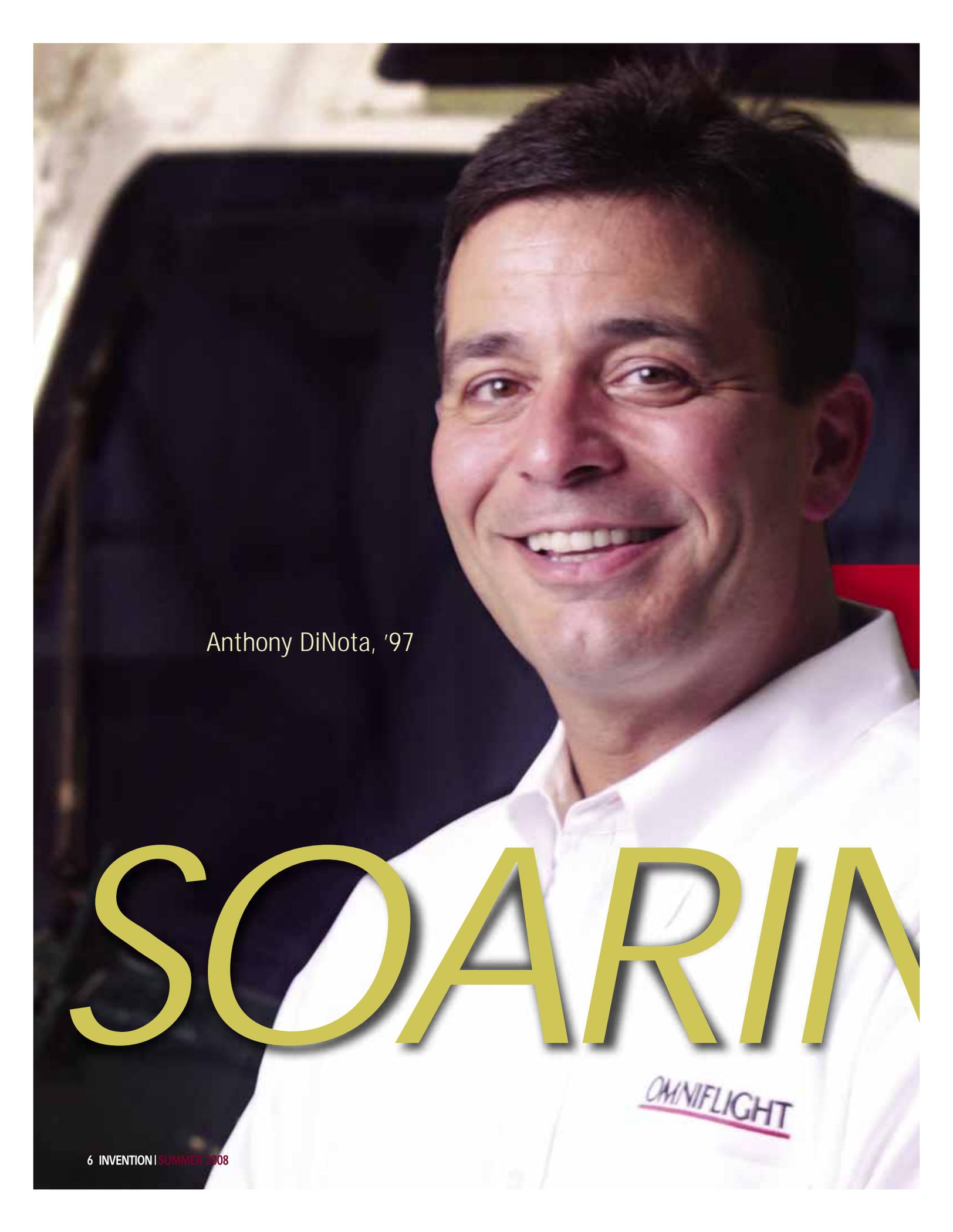
Joseph credits the College and his employer for developing a partnership that fosters educational opportunities.

In 2006, PSE&G enrolled in the College's Corporate Choice® program, which enables PSE&G employees to maximize the

is how the educational teams in charge managed to develop a virtual learning environment that is simulating, as closely as possible, the face-to-face educational environment most students are naturally familiar with," he said. "I can reach my mentors at any given time if I really need them, even if they reside at the other end of the world."

In addition to his Thomas Edison State College degree, Joseph holds three associate degrees earned in the U.S. and a Bachelor of Science in Economics from the Law and Economics College of Haiti at Port-au-Prince.

He resides in Ewing with his 11-year-old daughter, Kellysha, who takes after her father when it comes to education.

A close-up portrait of a man with dark hair, smiling warmly. He is wearing a white collared shirt. The background is dark and out of focus, with a red shape visible on the right side.

Anthony DiNota, '97

SOARING

OMNIFLIGHT



How Thomas Edison State College Helped Anthony DiNota Become One of the Aviation Industry's Rising Stars

Since he was a child, Anthony J. DiNota has looked to the sky and been fascinated with aviation.

“I can remember as a very young boy standing in my driveway as aircraft flowed into New York City’s LaGuardia Airport and watching with wide-eyed wonder and thinking, ‘how do they do that,’” recalled DiNota, ’97. “How does something so big and heavy glide by with such grace?”

VG

Today, he is still enthralled by aircraft and has turned his passion into a career that is soaring.

In November 2007, DiNota was named president and chief operating officer of Omniflight Helicopters, Inc., a leading provider of air medical services throughout the United States. Based in Addison, Texas, the company operates 100 aircraft nationally from 72 bases in 17 states.

As president and COO, DiNota oversees the company's operations, regional organization, maintenance and clinical services.

"My priorities lie in helping to strengthen Omniflight's focus in the areas of safety, quality, reliability and availability," he said. "We strive to continually and consistently deliver on safety, a critical business component; provide the highest

quality service; assure reliability by delivering a service that can meet the needs of the communities and customers we serve; and ensure that our aircraft and crews are ready and available whenever needed. Achieving excellence across all of these areas helps us to increase our presence in the air medical services arena."

DiNota's aviation career began in 1978, as an aircraft fueling attendant with AeroServices in White Plains, N.Y. From there, he began to learn the aviation business from the ground up. In 1984, DiNota joined The Singer Company in Stanford, Conn., and worked his way up the ranks to director of aircraft maintenance. In 1991, he joined Delta Air Lines as a line maintenance technician and again, started to advance.

However, DiNota soon realized professional advancement would

require something more than his solid work ethic and love of aviation – a college degree.

"After my first six months at Delta, I realized that without an undergraduate degree, my ability to advance into their leadership team would be limited," he said.

DiNota actually started to look at Thomas Edison State College in 1987. In 1991, he enrolled and spent the next seven years working nights and weekends to complete all of the course requirements necessary to earn a Bachelor of Science in Applied Science and Technology degree.

"I have to say it made me a better student and a more capable manager. Undertaking a program like this actually does many different things," he said. "I earned a degree but equally important is the development of life



“ After my first six months at Delta, I realized that without an undergraduate degree, my ability to advance into their leadership team would be limited. ”



Anthony and his wife, Kim.

skills, such as time management, critical thinking, multitasking and being a self-starter, which are priceless.”

After graduating from Thomas Edison State College, DiNota’s career really started to take off.

In 2001, he joined Atlantic Southeast Airlines as vice president of maintenance and engineering. He was named chief operating officer for the airline in 2007, a position he held at the time of his appointment at Omniflight Helicopters.

“Anthony is a seasoned veteran who has dedicated many years to the aviation industry. Our senior management team is leading Omniflight toward future growth, and Anthony’s capabilities and expertise play a key role in helping to take the company closer to its goals,” noted Robert Peiser, Omniflight chairman and CEO.

Despite DiNota’s demanding schedule, his formal education did not stop with a bachelor’s degree. Since graduating from Thomas Edison State College, DiNota has earned a Master’s in Business Administration (MBA) from Shorter College in Rome, Ga., and completed leadership and management development programs at Emory University’s Goizueta Business School in Atlanta, Ga., and a manufacturing development program at The University of Tennessee Business School in Knoxville, Tenn.

Today, DiNota lives in Dallas with his wife, Kim, who runs her own international consulting practice, and their three children, Isabella, 7; Anthony John (A.J.), 5; and Bennett, 3.

DiNota said he recommends Thomas Edison State College to anyone interested in earning their degree but who thinks they are too busy to return

to college.

“I had a demanding work schedule that required me to travel internationally quite often, limiting my ability to attend a traditional higher education program,” he said. “Thomas Edison State College is an accredited program that accepted my prior FAA certification work as an aircraft maintenance technician for equivalency and applied 55 credit hours to my degree program. This afforded me the flexibility I needed and provided the ability to work online, test to equivalency, attend local accredited schools, and provided life-changing experiences. This College is the ultimate in flexible, convenience and fit for me, which has thankfully paid off as I continue reaching for the sky in my aviation career.”

Taking Care of Business



THOMAS EDISON STATE COLLEGE HELPED BUSINESS AUTHOR
FRED J. LEWIS, '90, MEET HIS OWN STANDARDS FOR SUCCESS

Fred J. Lewis

Alumni Profile

Fred J. Lewis knows how to sell a product and lead an effort.

Over the past three decades, he helped transform many items into household names that are used by millions of people today. In addition, thousands of business leaders have attended his lectures and read his books on developing winning strategies for business.

Yet despite his professional success, his own standard for excellence prompted Lewis to complete his college degree.

"While I had accomplished much in my personal and professional life, the one gap in my resume of credentials was the formalized recognition that a degree represents," he said. "Not having my degree left 'unfinished business' that needed to be completed."

A successful businessman and author, Lewis developed his expertise in sales, marketing and leadership during a 30-year career with The Quaker Oats Company where he helped transform products such as Cap'n Crunch™, Kibbles n' Bits™ and Gatorade™ into household icons.

"Leading teams of people to accomplish established company goals and objectives was one of my major responsibilities," he said. "Other major responsibilities included the development of sales strategies and promotional programs to cultivate and improve consumer sales."

Ironically, Lewis began seeking a flexible option to complete his college degree as he taught a marketing course at Jersey City State College (now New Jersey City University) in Jersey City, N.J.

"In the pre-Internet days the options were limited," recalled Lewis. "Legitimate alternatives to traditional classroom study available for men and women who were trying to balance working and furthering their education were not always easy to find. I was referred to Thomas Edison State College by the

chair of the Business Department at JCSC."

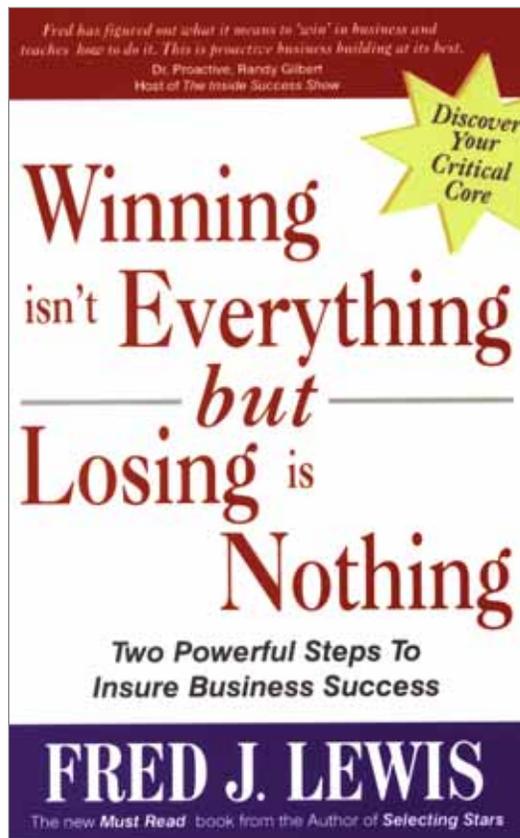
Lewis had attended Point Park College and The University of Pittsburgh, both in Pittsburgh, Pa., and took courses at St. Mary's University in San Antonio, Texas. He had approximately 80 credits when he enrolled at Thomas Edison State College.

Lewis, who earned his Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree in 1990, said the College allowed him to complete his education on his schedule.

"I traveled significantly for work during my time at Thomas Edison State College and it didn't matter if I was in New Jersey or any other state. I was just a phone call away from any help I needed," he said. "I can say without a doubt that Thomas Edison State College has some of the most qualified people who bring the programs to life and provide the kind of services that students, like myself, need."

Lewis has much to share about sales, marketing, management and leadership.

To help others become successful in business, Lewis shares his strategies and insights through books and lectures. His latest book is *Winning isn't Everything but Losing is Nothing*, released in March 2007 by WordWright. He has also authored *Selecting Stars — The Handbook for Hiring Success*.



In addition to his books, Lewis shares his strategies in his seminars called "The Dynamics of Leading and Managing," which have been attended by thousands of business people and students from numerous companies, government agencies and educational institutions.

Lewis resides in Scottsdale, Ariz., with his wife, Kathy. He currently serves as a member of the Business Advisory Council and chair of the Marketing and Economics Committee at the University of West Florida College of Business in Pensacola, Fla.

Attention All Alumni & Students:

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Thomas Edison State College is seeking essays from our graduates and students about what it is like earning your degree through the various methods of earning credit available at the College. Articles selected by the College will be published in its electronic and print publications and Web site.

SPECIFICALLY, WE ARE LOOKING FOR YOUR PERSPECTIVES ON:

- ▶ Taking an online course
- ▶ Prior Learning Assessment
- ▶ Taking a TECEP® or other examination program
- ▶ Taking an e-Pack®
- ▶ Taking a Guided Study course
- ▶ Taking an online final or midterm
- ▶ Time management
- ▶ Balancing work and family while earning your degree

Articles should be between 300-500 words. Longer articles may be submitted, and all submissions are subject to editing. If you are interested, please submit your articles to media@tesc.edu.

Randy J. Becker BSAST '90

Randy J. Becker, P.E., CCM, a construction manager with PDS Engineering and Construction, Inc., in Bloomfield, Conn., recently received the "Instructor of the Year" award from the Associated Builders and Contractors' Construction Education Center in Rocky Hill, Conn.

Lisa M. Carlucci MSM '01

Lisa M. Carlucci received an MA in Education – Curriculum & Instruction from Gratz College. Her thesis was entitled, "*Using Differentiated Instruction to Increase Student Achievement in the High School World Language.*"

Guy Eddon BA '02

Guy Eddon earned his PhD from Brown University, Department of Computer Science, in May 2008.

Carl F. Eddy BSAST '85

Carl F. Eddy was promoted to the rank of full professor of engineering technology at Luzerne County Community College in Nanticoke, Pa. Eddy is a certified telecommunications engineer and a member of the MENSA Society.

Devlin W. Fitzpatrick BA '04

Devlin W. Fitzpatrick, MBA, was recently certified by the Human Resources Certification Institute as a PHR (Professional in Human Resources). This designation certifies that the holder has completed two years of exempt-level work as an HR practitioner and has passed a rigorous examination, demonstrating a grasp of applicable HR competencies, including workforce planning and employment, compensation and benefits, and employee and labor relations.

Shawn D. Lazeski BSAST '04, MSM '07

Shawn D. Lazeski recently departed from the United States Navy and began his new career with Westinghouse Electric Corporation. Lazeski is helping to usher in the nuclear renaissance as senior project engineer for the new AP1000 reactor plants that Westinghouse is building around the world. He noted that Thomas Edison State College's flexible programs made it possible for him to finish a graduate degree while serving in the military and starting a family.

Dr. Gordon Leichter BSBA '92, MSM '01

Dr. Gordon Leichter is core professor of Business Administration TUI University in Cypress, Calif., and director of Business Development at Pharmadule Inc. in Bedminster, N.J. Leichter noted, "If it was not for the great programs that Thomas Edison State College offered, my pursuit of continuing education would not have been possible. I was very motivated by comments received from my professors concerning my master's thesis, which gave me the initiative to pursue a doctoral degree. It took six years, but I completed it on June 23, 2006. I am now a part-time professor at the

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school where I earned my PhD. I credit my accomplishments to the fine programs and encouragement I received as a student at Thomas Edison State College."

Joe D. Lindsey BSBA '97

Joe D. Lindsey joined Dailey Resources, Inc., a Texas-based professional business intermediary firm after graduating from Thomas Edison State College with a BSBA in finance. He is a member of the M&A Source, the International Business Brokers Association (IBBA) and the Texas Association of Business Brokers (TABB), and is a member of TABB's Board of Directors as well as serving his third term as president of TABB's Dallas-Fort Worth Chapter. Lindsey is a member of the Credentialing Committee for the IBBA and the M&A Source. His professional credentials and certifications include the Certified Business Intermediary (CBI) and the Board Certified Broker (BCB) designations. He is licensed as a Texas Real Estate Agent (LREA).



Paul Lucas BA '01

Paul Lucas leveraged his degree from Thomas Edison State College to earn a commission in the Air Force in March 2002. He has since completed a Master of Arts in Adult Education and Distance Learning from the University of Phoenix. Most recently, Lucas was named Air Force Weather's 2007 Company Grade Office of the Year and additionally earned the capacity recognition as a member of the team selected for Top Technical Achievement in 2007. Lucas noted, "I could not serve my country at the capacity I do were it not for completing my degree through Thomas Edison State College."

Rev. P. Susan Mamchak AA '75, BA '76

Rev. P. Susan Mamchak was recently appointed to the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders Fair Housing Board. Rev. Mamchak has her own consulting firm, working with faith-based organizations and community development, and also serves as a board member of New Creations in Christ, an affordable housing initiative.



Jean L. Mervine MSM '05

Jean L. Mervine was recently named senior director of Finance with Soroptimist International of the Americas, headquartered in Philadelphia, Pa.



Michael E. Poland ASAST '94, BSAST '01

Mike Poland was recently recognized by the Society of Maintenance and Reliability Professionals with a certification. The Certified Maintenance and Reliability Professional credential is granted by their certifying organization and requires extensive practical and technical knowledge of the methodologies of this profession, including a detailed exam process. This achievement was soon followed by a promotion to the Managing Principal of Reliability Support Services at Life Cycle Engineering, Inc. LCE is a company specializing in reliability and maintenance solutions with focus in both industrial and government markets with its headquarters in Charleston, S.C. Prior to these accomplishments, Poland worked for the Department of the Navy as a Life Cycle Engineer for nuclear powered aircraft carriers following his retirement from the U.S. Navy.

Mark Simpson BSAST '83

Mark Simpson recently joined Saul Ewing LLP as a partner in the firms Intellectual Property and Technology Practice Group in its Philadelphia office. Simpson brings 23 years of experience in IP law to Saul Ewing and his focus is patent procurement in the electrical, computer software/hardware, networking, telecommunication, electro-mechanical, and business method arts, and related IP counseling and litigation. Simpson also earned a JD degree from the University of Baltimore, and an undergraduate electrical and electronics engineering degree from Temple University.



Alan Slepp AA '76

Alan Slepp, who went on to earn an MS in business policy from Columbia University, is a 73-year-old retiree doing a theatrical portrayal of Ben Franklin for elementary schools, senior centers, libraries, historical societies, etc. Slepp noted, "I have excellent training and experience as an actor and have become somewhat of an 'expert' on Ben Franklin. I deliver information about colonial times in first person singular, and the stories are chosen to be appropriate for the audience and acted out accordingly."



Mary Lukes Stamoulis BA '97

Mary Lukes Stamoulis has had three novels published, "*Shadow War in Crete*," "*Liberated in the Valley of the Kings*" and "*The Last Emperor of Constantinople*." She is currently working on her fourth novel, "*Knights in Rhodes*," to be published by www.publishamerican.com.



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APPLAUSE APPLAUSE

Rolando J. Valdes Sr. BSAST '06

Rolando J. Valdes Sr. completed his requirement for the MSHRM degree at Thomas Edison State College despite suffering severe injuries from a December 2006 motorcycle accident, followed by a two-month coma and six months of rehabilitation. Although he is disabled, Valdes hopes to find employment in the near future teaching at the middle school level.

Ronald L. Virgili BA '73

Ron Virgili, a systems analyst, is currently employed as a contractor to the United States Navy. His office is on the campus of the University of New Orleans.

Frank J. Wagner AA'73, AS '76, BA '79

Frank J. Wagner is now serving as assistant to the director of the Msgr. Shenrock Library, an unaffiliated resource center located in Manchester Township, N.J. Wagner retired in mid-2005 from the New Jersey Department of Higher Education after nearly 32 years of service at Kean University and Richard Stockton College. He has begun religious studies at Ilem (Institute for Lay Ecclesial Ministry) and plans to pursue a master's in theology with a concentration in pastoral formation.

Eugene T. Yeager BA '00

Eugene T. Yeager is the CEO of his own business Hot Topics Media LLC, a corporate entertainment company that provides high-level events to Fortune 500 and Russell 2000 companies. Yeager noted, "I cannot thank Thomas Edison State College enough for the education and knowledge that it has provided me in ensuring my success."

Please tell us about your...

- ▶ New Job
- ▶ Promotion
- ▶ Award
- ▶ Marriage
- ▶ Baby
- ▶ Career Switch

If it's news to you, it's news to us!

We invite you as a member of our family of Thomas Edison State College alumni to tell us about the exciting things happening in your life. Let us know what's new with you since you graduated from the College or how your experience at the College changed your life, and we may include your updates in a future issue of *Invention*.

To contact us, please fill out the form below and mail it to: Thomas Edison State College, *Invention* Editor, 101 W. State St., Trenton, NJ 08608-1176; fax it to (609) 777-1894; or e-mail your good news to invention@tesc.edu. You may include photos to accompany your news. Items will be published as space permits.

Name _____

Former/Maiden Name _____

Company _____ Title _____

Home Address _____

Check here if this is a new address.

City, State, Zip _____

Day Phone () _____

Evening Phone () _____

E-mail Address _____

Check here if this is a new e-mail address.

Class Year _____ Degree _____

Information for *Invention*: _____

