NOVA Celebrates 49th Commencement

NOVA held its 49th Commencement with two graduation ceremonies on May 17. Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe was the speaker for the General Commencement at 2:00 p.m., and Dr. Stacey Ocander of Metropolitan Community College (Omaha, Nebraska) addressed attendees at the Health Professions Commencement at 7:00 p.m. Due to capacity at the George Mason University’s Patriot Center, this was the first year there were two graduation ceremonies.

This year, NOVA had 7,789 students who completed their degrees or certificates.

The General Commencement opened with remarks from Loudoun Provost Julie Leidig, NOVA College Board Chairman Michael Wooten and Aaron Latta, student representative on the NOVA College Board. Latta introduced McAuliffe.

Speaking to an already energetic crowd, McAuliffe said NOVA is the best community college in the U.S. and the College is experiencing its own transition as it approaches its 50th anniversary. He thanked all those who have shepherded NOVA through the years, from 761 students in 1965 to 75,000 students today.

McAuliffe pointed out many of NOVA’s accomplishments, including that the College is the largest minority-serving institution in Virginia and currently serves 7,200 military veterans with 647 graduating this spring.

“Many of you are the first in your family to go to college,” McAuliffe said. He highlighted Chris Chen who deferred NOVA admission the first year to work to support himself and his mom. He took classes anyway, driving 54 miles to campus. Recently named a Jack Kent Cooke scholarship recipient, Chen was among the graduates.

“It’s not that you fail, it’s what you do the next day. People want to be with winners, not whiners,” McAuliffe said. “Every day that you get out of bed is a great day. So always remember, always be a happy warrior. It’s your life. Go live it.”
The Health Professions Commencement had 188 Medical Education Campus graduates who attended. Ocander is the dean of health and public services at Metropolitan Community College and president of the National Network of Health Career Programs in Two-Year Colleges.

She reminded the graduates, “Each time you rise, remember, someone may see you and want to be you.”

Acting President Mel Schiavelli wrapped up both ceremonies by asking for a brief moment of silence in memory of Professor Judith Snyder, who was integral to NOVA commencements for more than 25 years. Sadly, she passed away the week before the ceremonies.

Schiavelli told students they were part of the largest graduating class of any two-year college in America, representing 175 countries and territories and 40 percent of all Virginia transfer graduates.

“I congratulate and salute you,” Schiavelli said. “We are proud of you.”

NOVA-TV Center has made the recordings of NOVA’s General Commencement and Health Professions Commencement available online.

**TILT Hosts Inaugural Digital Learning Day for Maturals**

Technology Innovation in Learning and Teaching (TILT), formerly Instructional Support and Development, is a division of the Learning and Technology Resources (LTR) Division. On May 1, TILT hosted its first Digital Learning Day for the Maturals, lifelong-learning senior citizens.

Cyber Seniors participated in breakout sessions to learn about Facebook, Twitter, iPad basics, navigating the computer/Internet and digital video editing. Team TILT and six Alexandria Campus student volunteers made sure that each participant received personal support while learning the 21st century technology tools of their choice.

TILT Hosts Inaugural Digital Learning Day for Maturals Lew Carr, one of the Maturals stated, “Both Joan (the self-described “Techno-saur”) and I so much appreciated the Digital Learning Day for Maturals this past Friday. The (TILT) staff along with volunteers did a wonderful job.”

TILT Coordinator Kirstin Riddick stated, “The Maturals Digital Learning Day was an amazing cross-generational afternoon of fellowship, fun and learning.”

The TILT team will continue to conduct Digital Learning Days as a way to collaborate with Maturals to bridge the digital divide. Team TILT would like to thank the Maturals, NOVA student volunteers and all involved for making the inaugural Digital Learning Day a success.
Alexandria Celebrates Cinco de Mayo With Helping Hands Fundraiser

The Alexandria Campus hosted an end-of-semester fundraiser to celebrate Cinco de Mayo and help raise money for the Helping Hands Fund. Faculty and staff gave donations for the celebratory-themed nacho and taco bar. The Campus community, including NOVA Police who provided moral support, helped raise over $500.

The primary purpose of Helping Hands is to provide assistance for book purchases for Alexandria students who demonstrate financial need. Funds are also provided for emergency expenses on a case-by-case basis. Other fundraisers in the 2015 spring semester included “Souper Bowl” and “Sweets for the Sweet.”

Majewski and Students Present at the National Convocation

Annandale Physics Professor Walerian Majewski was invited to participate at the National Academy of Sciences’ (NAS) Convocation on Integrating Discovery-Based Research into the Undergraduate Curriculum, May 11 to 13. Majewski was among a group of 50 faculty experts in early undergraduate research from 30 universities and four community colleges nationwide invited to develop a consensus paper to be submitted to the White House. The paper covered introducing discovery-based science experiences, beginning with first-year students, also at the community colleges.

Representatives from the National Research Council, NAS and the National Science Foundation were in attendance, as well as four invited students from the Washington, D.C. area who have participated in research. The idea is to use an academic year course-based format to introduce research for freshmen and sophomores, with an emphasis on those populations that are underrepresented in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

This three-day convocation was a follow-up to the February 2012 report, “Engage to Excel,” from the Presidential Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST 2012), urging the STEM education community and funding agencies to “advocate and provide support for replacing standard laboratory courses with discovery-based research courses.”

PCAST found that “economic forecasts point to a need for producing, over the next decade, approximately one million more college graduates in STEM fields than expected under current assumptions.”

This new national initiative, which hopefully should boost the number of U.S. STEM specialists, is strongly supported by the White House’s Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), represented at the convocation by the OSTP Associate Director for Science Jo Handelsman.
Faculty described 12 existing college and university programs (almost all in biology) and found, that this jump-start in authentic research labs, instead of the standard cookbook labs, increased retention in STEM majors by 35 percent and doubled the STEM graduation rate.

Majewski submitted a report “Early Undergraduate Research Experiences in Physics for STEM NVCC Students,” presenting his successful model developed at a community college. In addition he posted a dozen of his group’s research presentations and reports on the convocation’s website and offered some of them to the participants in print.

Majewski is planning to create a NOVA Faculty Research Group to consider implementations of those ideas at the College, in different sciences and in engineering. These projects should be driven by the faculty research interests, using their doctoral and post-doctoral research experience.

**TRiP Students Receive Network Technician Certificates**

Six Technology Retraining internship Program (TRiP) students recently received their Network Technician Certificates. TRiP started in 1998 and is designed for people who want to try their hand at IT. They pay for one course at a time and if they like the program, students continue on toward the completion of the 168-hour program. Registration for one of the mandatory courses gives a student the opportunity to participate in the internship program. This internship is non-paid but it is an essential element of the program because interns work alongside IT techs and gain practical on-the-job training.

Once students have completed 66 hours of classroom and hands-on training and reached the Network Technician Certificate level, they are able to seek employment in entry-level IT jobs.

For more information about TRiP, contact David Campbell at 703.323.3859 or Kofi Mitchual at 703.323.3829 or go online.

**Alexandria Recognizes Leaders at Awards Program**

The Alexandria Campus Student Life Office hosted the annual Alexandria Student Leadership Awards Program on April 30. The program recognizes student organizations, student leaders and organization advisors for their accomplishments during the academic year. Nominations were accepted for both organization awards and student leader awards.

Organization awards included Program of the Year, Interest Group of the Year, Student Organization of the Year and Student Organization Advisor of the Year. Included in the individual student leader awards were Student Ambassador of the Year, Peer Tutor of the Year, Student Volunteer of the Year and Student Leader of the Year.
The eight honorees this year are:

Program of the Year – Small Business Management Conference hosted by the Metropolitan Business Group (a Alexandria Campus student organization)
Interest Group of the Year – De-Stress for Success
Student Organization of the Year – Spanish-American Latino Student Association (S.A.L.S.A)
Student Organization Advisor of the Year – Professor Martha Davis (S.A.L.S.A advisor)
Student Ambassador of the Year – Solome Ayele
Peer Tutor of the Year – Amanuel Eshete
Student Volunteer of the Year – Moises Davidson (S.A.L.S.A. member)
Student Leader of the Year – Rodney Velasquez (S.A.L.S.A president)

TOTAL Workshops Available

TOTAL Workshops Available
NOVA’s Extended Learning Institute (ELI) announces its schedule of Topics in Online Teaching and Learning (TOTAL) workshops for the summer semester:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>Workshop Title</th>
<th>Length of workshop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 1</td>
<td>Blackboard Basics</td>
<td>3 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writing Directions</td>
<td>2 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Designing Meaningful Discussion Activities</td>
<td>3 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 22</td>
<td>Using Best Practices in Online Teaching</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Designing Rubrics and Providing Feedback</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 13</td>
<td>Blackboard Basics</td>
<td>3 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Establishing Social Presence</td>
<td>3 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Developing Collaborative Activities</td>
<td>2 weeks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The TOTAL professional development workshops are intended for faculty who teach (or want to teach) blended and online courses. Each workshop focuses on a single topic, so you can build an individualized professional development plan by selecting only the workshops you need. It is suggested that you take one workshop at a time; all workshops are offered multiple times during the year. See the TOTAL project website for workshop descriptions.

The workshops are facilitated online in Blackboard and involve reading of resource materials, completing application assignments and interacting with colleagues. Each workshop requires about five hours of work a week. Assignments are due weekly (sometimes mid-weekly) and are graded. If you complete all assignments and achieve an 80 percent or higher average, you receive a Virginia Community College System (VCCS) certificate of completion.
Registration is now open via NOVA Academy and closes at 12:00 p.m. on the Friday before the workshop start date. See HR’s professional development page on the NOVA website for NOVA Academy login directions and a user guide.

To register:
1. Search on VCCS TOTAL to see the workshops listed. Ignore the “classroom” delivery designation; the workshops are conducted online in Blackboard, which NOVA Academy does not recognize.
2. Click on a workshop title to see the sections.
3. Click on an NVCC – ELI section to enroll or manage your enrollment in that section.

For questions about the TOTAL workshops, contact Joan Osborne at josborne@nvcc.edu. If you need assistance registering in NOVA Academy, contact Reza Karimi at mkarimi@nvcc.edu.

June 15: 10 Years of Nature Photography Day


“Students and I have often gone out to explore the natural world on or near June 15,” Nuhn said.

Year round, she finds that her ESL students are serious about safeguarding the environment, a theme she builds into every ESL course she teaches.

“Photography opens doors,” according to Nuhn. “It’s a fabulous means of storytelling and even changing the world.”

She emphasizes that patience and concentration are musts in photographing wildlife and natural scenes. This year, June 15 is a Monday, so the occasion could be a creative start to a week of classes and other work. Thanks in part to social media and enthusiasm by the general public, Nature Photography Day now extends internationally. Nuhn produces public service announcements and media materials each year. Details are available at http://www.nanpa.org/nature_photography_day.php.

Alexandria Honors Hosts End-of-Year Celebration

The Alexandria Honors Committee hosted an end-of-the-year celebration April 30. Several Honors students and faculty attended as well as the provost and deans. The committee chair was Dr. Mike Amey.
Amey gave a brief recap of the many successes that the Alexandria Honors students had this year, including conference presentations and off-campus trips. Two integral members of the Alexandria Honors committee, Dr. Suman Mukherjee (Biology) and Counselor Marjorie Kinnaman, are leaving and will be greatly missed. The committee presented them with the books for next fall’s Alexandria Honors book club.

In the days prior to the celebration, the committee solicited nominations from students and faculty for awards. The Alexandria Honors student of the year was Vincent Cordrey and the Alexandria Honors Faculty of the Year was Amey.

Dr. John Sound, incoming chair, closed the event with his goals for next year.

**Career Representatives Needed for Pathway Connection**

The Pathway Connection (PC) Program is searching for career representatives to participate in a College and Career Fair hosted for high school students in Fairfax County Public Schools and Arlington Public Schools. Pathway Connection is a college and career readiness program for 10th and 11th grade students who would like additional support in preparing for post-secondary education.

This summer, PC is hosting a three-day summer institute at NOVA. On the last day, June 25, students will participate in a College and Career Expo. Local colleges and universities have been invited to attend as well. PC needs representatives from education, medicine, law, politics/public policy, IT, culinary arts, science, theater and many others.

The only requirement is that representatives have at least a bachelor’s degree (exception for military, firefighters and police officers). They must also enjoy speaking with youth about career and education.

To register, go online.

**Event Details:**

Date: Thursday, June 25  
Time: 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. (Setup at 8:30 a.m.)  
Place: NOVA’s Annandale Campus in the CE Forum  
Professionals will have their own table, and students will come up to speak to them. Each person is asked to bring items for the table related to their career field. Lunch will be provided.

See the flyer in the Flyers section of this edition. For more information, contact Viridiana Acosta at vacosta@nvcc.edu.
Brian Williams’ “The Lonely Drone” at the Fisher Art Gallery

Schlesinger Center Margaret W. & Joseph L. Fisher Gallery is featuring “The Lonely Drone,” oil paintings on aluminum by Brian Williams, through Sunday, July 12.

For “The Lonely Drone,” Williams’ oil paintings on aluminum bring to mind imagery of earthly horizons that could conceivably be captured by an unmanned aerial vehicle. Williams wants the viewer to imagine being in soundless flight looking at a distant horizon without complete context: knowing what is land, sea or atmosphere. For this series, Williams has restricted himself to a three-inch brush and thus has to approach detail from a different angle: painting layers upon each other with varying amount of wet-on-wet painting.

For the past five years, these abstract, otherworldly landscapes have been focus of Williams’ painting. The paintings evoke realistic dunes, seascapes, mountains or cloud formations yet are the result of an intuitive painting process. He empowers the negative space by using a grey or tinted color to separate portions of the landscape in a way that allows multiple interpretations.

Brian Williams’ “The Lonely Drone” at the Fisher Art Gallery Born in 1968 to a German artist mother and a U.S. military father, Williams absorbed his mother’s artistic lessons when they lived in the American South before arriving in the Washington, D.C. area in 1984. Recent exhibits include a series inspired by the late 1960’s science fiction cult film classic “Barbarella” and a solo show of paintings inspired by the mysterious 3.2 million year old skeleton named “Lucy” that was unearthed in Ethiopia.

Williams lives in Arlington, Virginia, and exhibits regularly at Studio Gallery in Washington, D.C. His work can be seen at www.mayalane.com.

Located on the upper level of Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center, the Fisher Art Gallery is named for the late Margaret “Peggy” Fisher and her husband, Joseph Fisher. Gallery hours are Monday to Friday 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and during performances.

Applying for Funding Through the AANAPISI Program

NOVA is currently considered an Asian-American, Native American, Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISI) institution as a result of an earlier application for eligibility. NOVA is now applying to participate for funding in the U.S. Department of Education’s AANAPISI Program to expand its outreach into the Asian, Asian-American, Native-American, and Pacific Islander and high needs, low-income populations in NOVA’s service area and to enhance educational services and cultural program opportunities it provides to this large and rapidly-growing segment of its enrollment.

The initiative was the brainchild of Manassas Provost Roger Ramsammy, who solicited assistance from Academic and Student Services Initiatives Director Deborah Rosen (CS). Rosen
led the team that assembled the project proposal, along with Don Smith (MA), and a multicampus advisory committee with many supportive faculty and staff.

The AANAPISI project at NOVA would be a wonderful addition. With 16.5 percent (12,373) Asian-Pacific students for Fall 2013, NOVA is considered a thriving Asian-serving institution.

The services to be provided by the AANAPISI grant include (1) strengthening academic and tutoring services available through staff dedicated to AANAPISI students and developing a summer bridge program to increase retention and graduation rates; (2) establishing a “virtual AANAPISI student center,” The NOVA AANAPISI e-Center, hosted by NOVA’s website, as an online clearinghouse of information relevant to the population, connecting AANAPISI students looking for peer-to-peer mentoring or advice, and providing students easier access to NOVA academic, campus life and financial aid services; (3) broadening AANAPISI culturally-based activities on its campuses and hosting visits into the community to attend AAPI-related associations and events, uniting AAPI students from all NOVA facilities; (4) providing iPads to loan to students who lack access to technology; (5) increasing library holdings related to AANAPISI subgroups; (6) conducting additional research on the target group; and (7) providing professional development for faculty related to the target group.

The objectives of the program are to improve semester-to-semester and fall-to-fall retention rates of AANAPISI and other students enrolled in the program, successful course completion in key courses, achievement of a credential and transfer.

To learn more, contact Rosen at drosen@nvcc.edu.

Announcements

1. Technology Training (T2)
   Summer Workshops – Faculty & Staff
   For more info AskTechTraining@nvcc.edu

2. Career Representatives Watned for Pathway Connection Summer Institute
   AN Campus
   June 25 – 9 a.m. 11 a.m.
   Email vacosta@nvcc.edu if interested