

Board of Trustees Report Johnson State College April 24, 2008



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

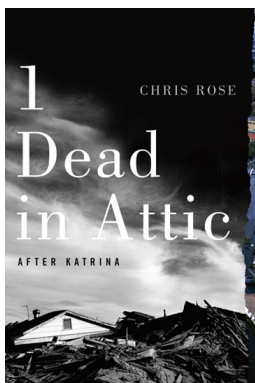
The past couple of reports to trustees from Johnson State College highlighted our exciting renovation project, or as I like to describe it: the transformation of Stearns Hall into a 24-hour, full service student center. The frequency with which we talk about our new student center reflects how central we believe the project is to our approach to enriching the sense of community at JSC. Our construction timeline is aggressive and we are on track for a fall opening and dedication of the new facility.

While our new student center is important, it is people, of course, who stand at the heart of the Johnson State College community. I'd like to introduce you to some of our exceptional faculty, staff and students and to their impressive achievements.

- Professor **Ken Leslie** will be heading north—this time to Finnish Lapland—to further his visual arts study of arctic communities. He was awarded an American Scandinavian Foundation Visual Arts Independent Research award, as well as a JSC Advanced Study Grant. Both will support his travel, research, and painting.
- Professor **Gina Mireault** has been awarded a grant from the Vermont Genetics Network. Gina's research, on infant humor and temperament from three to six months and attachment at one year, is fascinating. Her project, which will include research opportunities for students, will make an impact on our campus.
- Professor **Steve Blair**, VSC Faculty Fellowship Award winner, performed original jazz compositions from his latest CD, *Momentum*. His performance, which included JSC faculty and students, received rave reviews on campus.

- President **Barbara Murphy** returned to campus following a four-week study break whose highlight was a two-week trip to Cape Town, South Africa, meeting with faculty, administrators and students at higher education entities in the Cape Town area.
- Professor **David Hutchinson** conducted an on-site course in Nicaragua over February break focused on educational and counseling services.
- Award winning writer, storyteller, and poet **Julia Alvarez** was on campus on March 27, as the annual Ellsworth Lecturer. She is currently writer-in-residence at Middlebury College, and has written a number of books including *In the Time of the Butterflies*, *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*, and *Once Upon A Quinceañera: Coming of Age in the U.S.A.* Her well-attended talks were popular across disciplines, with students and professors from environmental studies, history, political science, and writing and literature attending.
- JSC student **Caitlyn Dias**, a former Break Away Leader and current America Reads Reading Partner, recently received the Commitment to Service and Engagement Award through the Vermont Campus Compact.
- Members of our men's basketball team once again partnered with Johnson's Laraway School for the annual "Shooting for Goals" program, which is hosted at JSC. The program brings together JSC athletes and Laraway students to practice basketball skills, while learning about good sportsmanship. Our students are exceptional role models for the younger Laraway students.

These are impressive individuals, who represent a small sample of our active and dedicated community.



Finally, JSC recently announced our choice for our Fall 2008 Common Reading Initiative book. Our dedicated group of students, faculty, and staff has selected *1 Dead in Attic* by *Times-Picayune* columnist Chris Rose. The book is a collection of stories chronicling the first year and a half of life in New Orleans following the Hurricane Katrina tragedy. The Common Reading Initiative was launched last year as a program through which all incoming first-year students read the same book before arriving on campus in August. The college developed discussion groups, lectures, films, and performances designed to explore important themes of the book. I anticipate that this selection will set the stage for an exciting, productive fall semester with great music and a visit from the author.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Faculty and Staff Professional Activity



Ken Leslie (Fine and Performing Arts) won an American Scandinavian Foundation Visual Arts Independent Research award. This grant, along with the JSC Advanced Study Grant that he has received, will fund two four-week residencies

in Finnish Lapland, one this summer and the other next winter. Ken will produce paintings and artist's books about this Arctic community, to join his ongoing "Top of the World" series of work already completed in Iceland, northern Alaska, Svalbard and Baffin Island. In early March Ken travelled to the Columbia College Chicago Center for Book and Paper Arts for the opening of an exhibition in which his work appears.

Life in Orleans County, a new video documentary by **Bill Doyle** (Humanities) and students in his Vermont History and Government class in conjunction with videographer Vince Franke, was screened on Vermont Public Television on March 2. Bill's *My Turn* ("State's citizen legislature at risk") appeared on the editorial page of the February 23 *Burlington Free Press*.

In February **Bob Genter** (Environmental and Health Sciences) taught a field course for Upward Bound students entitled "Ecology of Subtropical Ecosystems." This course was taught in conjunction with **Tony Blueter** (Upward Bound) for the sixth year and helps prepare first-generation college-bound high school students for higher education.

Leslie Kanat (Environmental and Health Sciences) gave testimony to the Vermont Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy on March 12. He presented a hydrologic perspective of waste storage at the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Plant in Vernon, VT. Two students from his first-year seminar on nuclear energy attended.

Hans Haverkamp (Environmental and Health Sciences) and **Gina Mireault** (Behavioral Sciences) have both been awarded Vermont Genetics Network grants. Gina has received a \$24,995 pilot project grant to study "Infant humor and temperament from 3 to 6 months and attachment at one year." Reviewers called hers a "strong and interesting proposal" and noted that the project, including its opportunities for student involvement, would have a large impact on the Johnson campus. Hans has received a \$70,000 project grant to study "Baseline airway mechanical function and airway function during exercise in asthma." Reviewers called his a solid and interesting project and described him as a promising new investigator. **Liz Dolci** (Environmental and Health Sciences) was a major asset to both investigators in the development of their successful proposals.

Since November 2007 **Brad Moskowitz** (Environmental and Health Sciences) has been serving as a volunteer ski patrol at Stowe Mountain Resort. He has received multiple days of training on topics such as emergency medicine, musculoskeletal injuries, medical emergencies, lift evacuation, crisis management, toboggan training, and has completed coursework and received certifications in the National Incident Management System and the Incident Command System from the Emergency Management Institute and FEMA.

Carolyn Mecklosky (Fine and Performing Arts) led a Peace Flag Workshop at the Johnson Village winterfest. Participants printed 50 peace flags and raised money for the Johnson Food Shelf. Carolyn was also in a Winter Group show at Painted Caravan, Johnson.

Andrew Patterson-Tutschka (Fine and Performing Arts) has paintings in the Scott Gallery exhibit "Young Philadelphia Realists," featuring ten emerging artists from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. Andrew and his colleagues in this show received a very significant and favorable review in a March issue of *Seven Days*.

The Library has begun a multi-year assessment of its collections for curricular relevance. Using methodologies established by the Association of College and Research Libraries, the first stage of this work targeted and updated resources in high-demand subject areas. Technical Services Librarian **Ray Brior** evaluated the library's backlog of donated materials, and added approximately 350 items. He is also creating a Webpage devoted to newly acquired items. With the assistance of Library Systems Administrator John Schrader, Public Services Librarian **Linda Kramer** has explored numerous approaches to embedding reference contact information in the library's public catalog. The reference staff is in the process of reviewing these models and will determine a finalist. Faculty Librarian **Joe Farara** has been working closely with **Sherlock Terry** (First-Year Experience). They've been charged with arranging cultural events associated with the college's Common Reading Experience.

Thanks to the hard work of **Kate Wilson** and **Ellen Hill** (Career Center), the March 26 Job Fair was the best yet at JSC. With 31 employers and 125 students in attendance, the event surpassed expectations. Student evaluations were complimentary and positive. One of the most frequently cited compliments was the variety of employers present and how friendly they were.

Third and fourth graders at Cambridge Elementary worked with the Vermont Dance Collective for two days in March, tracing traditional dance styles popular in Vermont and New England back to their European ancestors. Entitled Dancing through History, the residency culminated in a final performance in the school gymnasium. The Vermont Dance Collective was founded by **Maris Wolff** (Fine and Performing Arts).

On Town Meeting Day Academic Dean **Daniel Regan** was elected to a three-year slot on the Hyde Park Elementary School Board of Directors.

He continues to serve as a trustee for the Village of Hyde Park and as a board member for the Lamoille Family Center.

Student and Alumni Activities and Achievements

During basketball season members of the JSC men's team partnered with Johnson's Laraway School to shoot hoops with the kids. Laraway School serves youth experiencing learning challenges. The "Shooting for Goals" program, hosted at JSC every Thursday afternoon during the season, allowed Laraway kids to practice their shooting, passing and guarding skills while learning about teamwork and good sportsmanship. "It's a learning experience on both ends," Coach **Mike Osborne** (Athletics) observes, "The kids from Laraway get a chance to watch positive young men play basketball with skill and professionalism while also modeling good communication skills. It provides a sense of structure. For our players, it's a chance for them to be leaders, to offer guidance and build rapport with the kids." The JSC players represent a multicultural mix of students from as close as Johnson and as far away as Sudan. They are committed to getting the kids excited about fun physical activity.

Students in a Food and Beverage Management course this semester are planning, organizing, and will execute a four-course dinner at Applecheek Farm in Hyde Park. Teams of students are in place to address marketing, concept and ambience, menu development, food preparation, and service. This meal will be in honor of Sarah Lizotte. Any proceeds from the dinner will be shared between the Sarah Lizotte Memorial Scholarship Fund and a fund for next year's food and beverage management class. The class is taught by **Todd Comen** (Business/Economics) and has support from a Freeman grant. HTM students also helped organize and manage a benefit concert/dance for **James Mabor's** non-profit, Werkok Youth Development Association (WYDA), that is focused on bringing clean water and youth leadership

development to his village in Southern Sudan. The benefit was held at Club Metronome in Burlington.

On March 11 nearly a dozen WAM students presented what they learned from attending the Integrative Healthcare Symposium 2008. Led by **Susan Green** (Behavioral Sciences), the student group attended this national meeting in New York City over winter break, with assistance from the President's Fund for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

Students **Tim Thurston** and **Greg Perry** were awarded \$4,000 stipends to work with **Bob Genter** (Environmental and Health Sciences) on Vermont EPSCoR's Vermont Streams Project. They will study sources of phosphorus loading and varieties of coliform bacteria in streams in the Lamoille River drainage basin that flow into Lake Champlain.

During the February break **Brad Moskowitz** (Environmental and Health Sciences) once again brought eight JSC students to the Sawtooth Mountains of Idaho for an extended classroom experience that forms the basis of the Winter Expedition class. The expedition was chock full of learning opportunities and the students experienced a variety of challenges, from strenuous days with heavy backpacks to morning and evening lectures on avalanche phenomena, snow science, mountain weather, and human factors in decision-making. **Patrick Graham** (Outdoor Education, 2005), who is a guide for Sun Valley Trekking, Inc., co-instructed the field session and served as an exceptional mentor to the aspiring students. All of the students received Level One Avalanche certifications through the American Avalanche Association.

The new principal of Stowe Middle School is a JSC alumna, **Melanie Slick Carpenter** (M.Ed.). Currently a writing coordinator and language arts teacher at Peoples Academy Middle Level in Morrisville, she will replace Nancy Shiok when the latter retires in June.

STUDENT SERVICES

Student Government Association

Jonathan Harris, SGA President, is working with a local nonprofit organization/thrift store on a project called "Boxes not Dumpsters," which seeks to save useful items and furniture from becoming waste, and getting it to those who have need for furnishings and other useful household items. Working with the Business Office and Maintenance, the SGA will be working with local agencies to identify needs and coordinating a collection of these items from the folks moving out of the college apartments in the week after commencement.

The Lambda club, with the guidance of Hall Advisor **Amy Serino** has initiated a "Safe Zone" program at the College. The program's intent is to create a more accepting and diverse atmosphere, with specific attention to Gay, Lesbian, Bi-sexual and Transgender (GLBT) issues. Trainings will be offered for faculty and staff to help them serve as better allies to this group.

Center for Service Learning

JSC was recognized at the Vermont Campus Compact Gala on March 18th, held at the University of Vermont. **Caitlyn Dias**, a former Break Away Leader and current America Reads Reading Partner, received the Commitment to Service and Engagement Award, and Break Away Leader **Brian Merrill** (class of 2008) was recognized as a finalist for the Vermont Teddy Bear Student Citizen Award. In addition, Laraway Youth and Family Services received the Engaged Partner Award, and JSC and Laraway were honored with the Campus-Community Partnership Award.

From March 7-9, four students from Break Away, the Bonner Leader Program, and America Reads attended the IMPACT Conference in Boston at Northeastern University. They attended workshops on homelessness, effective leadership skills, how to best use technology to further spread your message, and many other topics.

The office is sponsoring a number of events this spring, including a blood drive held March 27. Upcoming offerings include training for student leaders on activism and the April alternative spring break service trips.

Upward Bound

On Friday March, 14th two high school seniors in JSC's Upward Bound program, **Benjamin Raymond** and **Julia Trombley**, were invited to the State House in Montpelier for Vermont TRIO day. They had been nominated based on their positive attitude, their high achievement levels in their UB and high school work, and leadership and participation in UB. These two students spent the day learning about state government and had the opportunity to meet with Governor Douglas as well as their local representatives. They were accompanied by **Allison Laflamme**, Assistant Director of Upward Bound.

Athletics and Recreation

Team JSC (a group of students, faculty, and staff) participated in the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life at the Trapp Family Lodge in early March. The "team" also participated in a six hour spinning marathon, a benefit for Vermont Special Olympics, held on April 5.

JSC student athletes garnered a number of North Atlantic Conference (NAC) awards. In men's basketball, **Charlie Viana** was named 1st Team All-Conference (also was a Conference Co-Player of the week in January) and **Bobby Shedd** was named as an Honorable Mention member. Earlier in the season **Ian Passino** had received Conference Rookie of the Week honors.

The women's basketball team saw **Jenna Lewis** named 1st Team All-Conference.

Claudia Martineau, who in January had been honored as the NAC Player of the Week, was named to the NAC 2nd Team.

Residence Life

Residence life staff members recently completed two successful and high-profile service projects. Resident Assistant **Cherise Boutin** raised \$150 for Special Olympics through her participation in the Penguin Plunge. RAs **Christabella Cherubino** and **Christina Gilbert** collected and organized clothes for the Clarina Howard Nichols Center, a local women's shelter.

Health and Counseling Services

Health Center Director **Rebecca Hill** is mentoring a UVM NP student one day per week. It is anticipated that this will lead to increased collaboration with the UVM School of Nursing.

The Director of Counseling Services, **Andrea Kelly**, attended a week-long conference over February break titled "Meditation and Visualization Practices" with Daniel Brown, PhD.

Office of First-Year Experience

The Office of FYE (with the help of college staff and administration) is in the process of engaging the members of the Class of 2012 in conversations that focus on the students' first year experiences and thinking. These one-on-one interviews, called "20 Questions" are based on a survey instrument designed by Dr. Richard Light and are intended to encourage students to reflect and share.

Interviews will be face-to-face and interviewers will record answers in writing. Data will be collated and a report will be written on the findings. The report will be shared with the JSC community through Blackboard.

BUSINESS AFFAIRS

Business Office

During February, TDBankNorth installed a digital deposit system. The JSC Business Office is now able to deposit checks digitally, on the same day as receipt, without a trip to the bank. In the month of April, JSC will be closing the books on the 3rd quarter of FY08. Looking ahead to the 4th quarter and year-end closing, the schedule has been set for both sets of year-end external audits, A-133 and the financial audit.

Physical Plant

On April 24, JSC will hold its formal ground-breaking ceremony, celebrating the transformation of Stearns Hall into a Student Center. The college was fortunate to receive favorable pricing on this project and no modifications to the design are required. Construction during the summer will be challenging, with dining services moving to the SHAPE facility. A mid-September end date for the project is planned.

The Physical Plant Department is working closely with the Chancellor's Office on the installation of TMA – computerized maintenance management software. It is expected that this system will increase the efficiency of the department and facilitate planning for preventative maintenance.

Summer projects, including bathroom renovations in Martinetti Hall, and new classrooms and Public Safety Office in Dewey Hall are planned to begin in June. Physical Plant personnel are working with local contractors and the Chancellor's Office to schedule this work. In addition, designs for renovations to the SHAPE facility, and Gateway to the campus are underway. These renovations are planned for the summer of 2009.

CES

For the months of February and March the Conference and Events Services Office has scheduled, coordinated and supported a

multitude of meetings, events, trainings, and activities on campus. Some of these include: the Annual Legislative Breakfast, Clarina Howard Nichols Center, Wellness and Alternative Medicine Presentations, Winter Fest 2008, Hunger Banquet, Red Cross Blood Drive, Ellsworth Trust Dinner Reception, and Scott Ritter Presentation.

Over the upcoming weeks, JSC will host many celebrations and events. A partial listing includes: Extended Classroom Experience, 3rd Annual Employee Recognition Luncheon, Fund for JSC Meeting, JSC 101, Athletic Banquet, the Ally Dinner, Board of Trustees visit, and Commencement 2008. Summer will be a very busy and challenging time with the construction of Stearns that will be underway. We have many returning groups for the summer including Burklyn Ballet Theater, Talent Development Institute, Northeast Heritage Music Camp, Green Mountain Youth Symphony, Vermont Vocal Arts Institute and various sports camps. With kitchen renovations underway, we are planning for nice weather and many cook-outs!

Information Technology

The college is currently replacing all Dell switches with HP ProCurve switches. The Dell switches have not responded to advanced programming required by Campus Manager, thus posing a potential security risk. These switches will be replaced over the next one to two months.

The IT Department is currently planning for its summer network infrastructure upgrade to bring the core switch router, network servers, library, computer lab facilities, and Martinetti Hall, to gigabit interface, and allowing for a re-design of the fiber pathways. Additionally, plans for upgrading computer lab equipment and the creation of three new "technology-enhanced" classrooms are also underway.

ADMISSIONS AND FINANCIAL AID

Admissions

As of April 3rd, overall applications for Fall 2008 are running ahead of last year's numbers by 2% with an increase in Vermont (6%) and NEBHE (8%) applications. Students from 25 states have applied for admission, however, our primary market (feeder states) continues to be located in Vermont and the Northeast.

Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York and New Hampshire provide the most out-of-state applications. Applicants who have expressed an interest in art, education, social sciences, and biology or environmental sciences show an increase. Business applicants show a slight downward trend.



A new initiative, March Madness-Spring Decision Days (March 14, 21, 28) was introduced as a way to bring students to campus for on-

the-spot decisions, after the March 1st priority deadline. Thirty-nine students attended; thirty-six of the students were seniors and of those, nineteen applied for admission. Fifteen students came from out-of-state and twenty-four were Vermonters. Several students had already applied, but attended the program to tour the campus and meet with an admissions and/or financial aid counselor.

The challenge at this time of year is to convert the accepts to deposits, preferably by the May 1st candidate reply date. Students are comparing financial aid offers from the colleges where they've applied. Parents are calling the Financial Aid Office to discuss their student's aid award; many are requesting additional aid in the form of grants and scholarships to reduce the amount the loans.

In addition to spring travel to recruit the fall class of 2008, the admissions staff now turns

its attention to yield activities. On March 31, the staff and President **Barbara Murphy**, with the help of many faculty and staff, hosted the fourth annual reception at ECHO at the Leahy Center for Lake Champlain. Professors, current students, alumni and staff visited with prospective students and families. Informal conversations were held throughout ECHO as everyone enjoyed music provided by the JSC Jazz Band. Special thanks to professor **Steve Blair** for bringing talented JSC musicians to the event and to all faculty and staff who worked hard to promote their programs: **Amy Beattie, Tania Bacchus, Bob Genter, Brad Moskowitz, Karen Uhlendorf, Ken Burrill, Ken Leslie, Mary Martin, Tyrone Shaw, Fred Wiseman, Neil Shepard, Colin Penney, Dave Cavanagh, Dave Bergh, Laura Megivern, Michele Whitmore, Sally Laughlin, Ken Schexnayder.** Seniors, juniors, a sophomore and several transfer students attended the program. Twenty-two student family members attended; the yield from last year's reception was high and we expect this year's to be as well.

Other yield activities include off-campus receptions, with admissions staff and alumni, meeting students in CT and MA. The CT reception, held on April 2nd in Rocky Hill was a success with 11 students and a total of 25 attending. Three of the accepted students indicated that they would enroll at JSC. Our capstone event of the recruiting season, the annual JSC 101 Open House, was held on Friday, April 18th. JSC faculty, staff and students were involved in the event. The highlight of the program was the Academic and Student Activities Fair.

In addition to a few more student group visits, and the Saturday information sessions, our last formal event of the year was the annual Consortium of Vermont Colleges (CVC) Guidance Counselor Bus Tour. Forty-five counselors from CA, CT, IL, MA, ME, NH, NJ, NY, OR, RI and VT visited JSC on Tuesday, April 22 from 3:45-5:00 p.m. JSC is one of 18 colleges the counselors visited.

Financial Aid

While the admissions staff travels and plans events, the financial aid staff is busy awarding the incoming students, reviewing scholarship applications, counseling families of incoming students, arranging for loan exit counseling sessions for graduating seniors, and gearing up for the summer session.

DEVELOPMENT AND ALUMNI RELATIONS

Annual Phonathon

This year's alumni phonathon ran for fourteen days between March 9 and 30. At the busiest point, twenty-one student callers were employed and took to the phones as College ambassadors and to seek financial support for the annual fund. This direct contact succeeded in raising just over \$18,000. It also helped to raise awareness about some of the projects currently underway at Johnson. Students were able to reconnect with "lost" alumni and receive updated address and job information as well as encouraging the submission of class notes. Reunion year alumni were informed about the upcoming Reunion.

For the most part, student callers enjoyed speaking with just about everyone they reached. They heard stories from alumni reminiscing about their days at Johnson and were provided with great encouragement relative to the fulfillment of their own personal educational goals.

The current state of the economy was a challenge and seemed to have an impact overall, however the good news is that thirty percent of those people making pledges were first-time donors.

Public Events

Former United Nations weapons inspector **Scott Ritter** spoke to a standing-room-only crowd in Bentley Hall on March 31. His talk was entitled: *Media Silence on Iraq & Iran in*

an Election Year. Ritter's critique of the occupation of Iraq and the often reported march to war with Iran sparked vigorous debate among student and guests in the audience.

Award winning writer, storyteller, and poet **Julia Alvarez** was on campus on March 27, as the annual Ellsworth Lecturer. In addition to her evening lecture, Alvarez conducted an open class in the afternoon. She presented on the *Alta Gracia* project with her husband and partner in this initiative, Bill Eichner. They talked about the sustainable farm/literacy center established in Alvarez' native Dominican Republic. While doing research for a piece for Nature Conservancy, she was astonished by what she calls the "green desert," or once-forested land stripped of its cover where acres upon acres of sun-grown coffee are produced. She and her husband wanted to find a way to give back to her country and the possibility of remedying – or at the very least contributing to – this situation caught their attention. The result was their 1996 purchase of *Alta Gracia*, a 260 acre farm in the impoverished central mountain region of the Dominican Republic. The Annual Lecture is supported by the Ellsworth Trust, a private foundation set up for the benefit of the study of political science and history at JSC.