

Board of Trustees Report Johnson State College December 7, 2007



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The end of the fall semester is always an interesting and gratifying time for us at Johnson State College. It offers an opportunity to look back over the past few months, to celebrate successes and evaluate initiatives that might benefit from refinement, and to do so while the academic year stands at its midpoint.

President Murphy delivered her State of the College address on Veterans Day, emphasizing the ongoing strengths of JSC as a mission-driven college and the work ahead. In honor of Veterans Day, she made her remarks within the framework of the G.I. Bill and its significance for opening higher education to unlikely and unprecedented groups of students.

For us at JSC, programming for our first-year students—specifically our Common Reading Initiative—was an extraordinary success. Our programming centered on Ishmael Beah’s book, *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier*, and included discussion groups, musical performances, lectures and films, and culminated with a visit to campus by the book’s author. Beah’s visit on October 22 is still being discussed by students, faculty, alumni and Lamoille County residents who attended the event. He spoke to a standing-room-only crowd in the Dibden Center for the Performing Arts, discussing his life, reading from the book and holding an extended question-and-answer period.

While this fall’s Common Reading Initiative will be a difficult act to follow, we are already working on next year’s book selection. A committee of faculty, staff and students will meet over the holidays and into January with the goal of identifying a text early next semester. Feedback on this year’s program has been uniformly positive, and members of our community are anxious to learn about the direction of next year’s initiative.

While the Common Reading Initiative has been the highlight of the fall, we’ve celebrated other milestones and made progress on several other fronts as well, including:

- We’ve been engaged in a year-long celebration of the 30th anniversary of our External Degree Program and the 20th anniversary of JSC’s Center for Service Learning.
- The college has launched a one-year major gifts campaign, the first phase of our five-year comprehensive fundraising campaign.
- With board approval, the college is moving forward with the transformation of Stearns

Hall into a true 24-hour student center. We will begin moving current residents of the facility to other locations in February. We anticipate that the renovation will be complete by Thanksgiving break next fall.

Our campus community is engaged and excited about the college's future; our students committed and enthusiastic; our faculty optimistic about our bright future. This is a dynamic time at Johnson State College and within the VSC. We are pleased to share the following highlights with the Board of Trustees.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS



External Degree Program

During this 30th anniversary year of the External Degree Program, we continue to focus on the part-time instructors who bring expertise and outstanding teaching ability to their work with EDP students throughout Vermont.

Joanna Meyer has played several key roles in the program for nearly three de-

acades. She currently teaches psychology courses, including the Senior Seminar in Psychology, and supervises all internships for EDP students majoring in psychology. Joanna joined the program as a mentor (advisor) in 1978, during EDP's second semester. Two years later, she became EDP's director and served in that role during the program's formative years. She took a break from EDP in the late '80s, moved to North Carolina, but returned in 1992 to serve as a mentor until she retired from EDP's administration in 2001. She has been an inspiration for hundreds, perhaps thousands, of students and many staff members, including the program's current directors. It is no exaggeration to say the EDP would not be what it is today without her warm intelligence and consistent focus on what is best for students.

Patricia Halpin teaches Nutrition and other health sciences in an online format for EDP. She also teaches Anatomy and Physiology, Biology and other courses for the University of New Hampshire-Manchester. She was the first to design and teach hybrid-online classes there and won the university's adjunct teaching award in 2006. She also teaches at Granite State College, where she serves on academic planning and curriculum committees. Patricia is working with others on a project, funded by a grant from the Davis Foundation, comparing outcomes in math courses using different forms of delivery: online, hybrid and classroom.



Library

Circulation Supervisor **Walt Reeve** notes a steady increase in library usage since the start of the fall semester. While the library has seen growing attendance over the past decade, this recent development is particularly heartening since patrons are not only expanding in number, but also using the library for longer periods during hours of operation.

Linda Kramer, the library's public services librarian, has seen similar growth in the number of information literacy sessions she teaches. Linda also has revised sections of the library Web site, including the addition of e-journal portals to digital research offerings.

In addition to using instant messaging as a means of staying connected to distance students, Access Services Librarian **Jo Anne Edwards** has been serving as a librarian within an External Degree Program course, Nutrition (BIO-3180-JY01).

Technical Services Librarian **Ray Brior** represented the library at two regional events: the Vermont Cataloguers Roundtable, which took place at the St. Johnsbury Athenaeum, and the Government Publications Librarians of New England annual conference at the University of New Hampshire.

Faculty Librarian **Joe Farara** has been furthering interlibrary efforts within the state as a member of the Vermont Academic Library Directors' Statewide Delivery Service Task Force. He's also been doing bibliographic research for an upcoming collection of the late David Halberstam's sports writing.

Faculty and Staff Professional Activity

Gina Mireault (Behavioral Sciences) has published two articles this fall that translate scientific findings on animal cognition and the human-animal bond for a general audience. One article explores the neuroscientific and behavioral evidence for altruism and empathy in mammals, and the other examines data on the developmental benefits companion animals provide for boys. Both articles will appear in publications of the American Kennel Club. With support from an Advanced Study Grant, Gina attended the 7th International School on the Psychology of Humour & Laughter in Aberdeen, Scotland this summer. She is currently designing a study that will explore the development of humor in infant-parent dyads as a social emotional process. The project will include a cross-cultural comparison of Icelandic and American babies and parents.

Gina and **John Miller** (Fine and Performing Arts) provided a dual presentation on their service learning initiatives for the Vermont Campus Compact annual meeting at JSC on November 12.

Joseph Salerno (Fine and Performing Arts) gave a gallery talk on October 25 at Helen Day Art Center. His series, "Interpreting Nature: Part III," ran from September 14 to November 17.

Diane Huling Reed (Fine and Performing Arts) gave an all-Chopin piano recital in October at the Unitarian Church in Montpelier. The recital was reviewed favorably in the *Times Argus*.

The first annual Lamoille County Seminar on Public Service, held at JSC on October 18, included an award for meritorious service, presented by Gail Sylvester Cashman to Professor and Senator **Bill Doyle** (Humanities). The presentation of the award was followed by a speech by Judge **Edward Cashman** (Humanities) on public virtue.

Fred Wiseman (Humanities) played an important role at an October hearing held by the Vermont Commission on Native American Affairs. The public hearing addressed legislative attempts to craft an amendment to a law passed in 2006. The law granted Abenaki state recognition, but stopped short of allowing Vermont Abenaki to meet federal rules for selling their arts and crafts as native-made. The Commission met November 29 to complete wording of proposed legislation, then seek a sponsor in the Legislature, where several members have pledged to help change the law.

Leslie Kanat (Environmental and Health Sciences) was invited to participate in an environmental sciences forum at the headquarters of Pearson Benjamin Cummings (PBC) publishers in San Francisco, CA, on October 6. He shared his reviews of several books published by PBC and met with several authors and editors.

The **Center for Service Learning** at Johnson State College celebrated its 20th anniversary with a September 28th event at Dibden Center. President Barbara E. Murphy welcomed CSL staff, returning alums of the program, and friends and family members before **Ellen Hill** (Career Center) presented "CSL History and Reflections." Other speakers at the event included **Heather Noyes McAnirlin** (1996) and **Glynis Pamplin** (1999).

Sara Kinerson (Career Center) worked closely with **Cynthia West** (Humanities) to coordinate and host a cultural Mask Making Project. This project paired each student in Cynthia's first-year seminar, Cultivating the Cross Cultural Mind, with an international student at JSC. Working in pairs, the students learned to cast one another with plaster and created masks of their hands and/or faces. Prior to and during this event, the international students shared a bit about their culture with their partners and discussed what it is like to be a student in the United States. Participants are now working on completing the masks which will be hung in the library foyer and LLC Computer Lab. An opening and celebration of this work was held December 4.

A special feature that aired on the weather segment of the WCAX Evening News on October 11 highlighted **Jean Haigh** (Education) on a hike to Pulpit Rock. The segment cited Jean's skills as a teacher as well as her commitment to nature.

Richard Shanley (Education) organized and supervised the Regional 5/6 and 7/8 grades Spelling Bee Competition sponsored by the Vermont Principals Association at Northfield High School on November 3. Twelve schools from the Central Vermont Region competed for a spot at the State Spelling Bee Finals held at the State House on November 17.

When she's not busy supporting the Business and Economic Department as its administrative assistant, **Renate M. Callahan** does volunteer work for the Vermont Women's History

Project. The VWHP is creating a major Web-based information database on women in Vermont. Renate's volunteer efforts involve maintenance work on the Web site and keeping it up to date. She works closely with project coordinator Judith Irving to realize the project aim of providing an interesting, comprehensive and lively, while historically accurate, account of the history of women in Vermont.

The semester got off to a string of impressive performances at **Dibden Center**. These included the Sierra Leone Refugees All Stars band and author Ishmael Beah, both part of the First Year Experience program, the Vermont Symphony Orchestra, a Mongolian Dance troupe (arranged in collaboration with Lamoille South Supervisory Union Superintendent Holden Waterman), and the Dark Star Orchestra. The college production of *Big Love*, directed by **F. Reed Brown** (Fine and Performing Arts) also played to sold-out audiences and featured a cast of 18.

Liz Dolci and **Karen Uhlendorf** (both Environmental and Health Sciences) and **Jan Herder** (Dibden) attended the Vermont Environmental Consortium conference on "Education in the New Environmental Economy" at Norwich University. A van full of JSC students, organized by student **Elizabeth Wiren** from the Green Solutions Club, as well as some of Karen's students also represented JSC. The need for thorough environmental education was discussed as well as the urgent need for students to enter the workforce as engineers, biologists, chemists, policy makers and scientists.



JSC students with Professor **Bill Doyle** are working again in collaboration with professional videographer Vince Franke of Peregrine Productions to bring history alive through interviews with long-time residents and the use of local historical

photographs, obtained with the help of the Orleans Historical Society. Orleans County, where the rivers run north, is defined by agriculture (including logging, woodworking, extensive maple orchards, dairy farming), by its stunning geography (including deep water, spring-fed lakes like Willoughby and Shadow Lake, mountains including Jay Peak), and the long, peaceful border with Canada. Capturing this history through the interviews with the county's elders is the goal of the project. The world premier of the film will be on Friday, December 14, at 7 p.m. at the Barton Community House in Barton. The film will also be shown at JSC on Thursday, December 13, in the Ellsworth Rooms of the Library and Learning Center at 2:30 p.m., with all the student filmmakers in attendance.

Student, Alumni, and Community Partner Activities and Achievements

EDP education student **David Connelly** received word that his Praxis II scores were among the highest 10 percent in the nation. He received a certificate of recognition for this achievement. **Gina Ritscher-Winters** (Education) supervised his Practicum II last spring.

Students at more than 100 colleges, including Johnson State, demonstrated on October 2 in support of six African-American high-school students in Jena, LA, who have been charged with violent crimes amid racial tensions in the small town. **Dan Owen** and **Katie Crown** helped organize the JSC effort, which included an education/fundraising exhibit mounted by the peace group on campus.

Jerry Potter (2000) successfully defended his dissertation; he is earning his Ph.D. in chemistry from the University of Vermont. His doctoral research involved the synthesis and study of organic photovoltaic materials—a subject which **Les Kanat** (Environmental and Health Sciences) introduced him to in an Energy and Mineral Resources course. He is the third departmental graduate, this year, to receive a Ph.D. in the sci-

ences. The other two are **Mike Balshi** (2000) and **David Krayeski** (1995).

Scott Graner and **Amanda Thomas**, both Physical Education licensure students, have been honored by the Vermont Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (VAHPERD) as this year's recipients of the organization's Outstanding Future Professional Award. Only two of these awards are given each year to students majoring in one of the disciplines represented within VAHPERD, a state-level professional organization of the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD), and this year both of the honorees are JSC students. Scott and Amanda were recognized at the state VAHPERD conference in Killington. They will also attend the AAHPERD Eastern District Association Convention in early 2008 in Newport, Rhode Island. There, they will again be recognized and be considered for selection in the next tier of Outstanding Future Professional awards at the district level. The award is based on academic achievement, professional involvement in HPERD and college organizations, contributions to their major department and community, professional potential, leadership qualities and individual accomplishments.

Five students in the Non-Profit Management certificate program—**Justin Halvorsen**, **Molly Norcross**, **Kris Connelly**, **Annie Pitts** and **Megen Bulley**—are leading a fundraising campaign to benefit a new initiative that aims to engage and support Johnson elementary and middle school students in alternative after-school activities. Club Johnson will work to keep students between grades 5 and 8 off the streets and productively engaged during after-school hours. Besides fundraising, JSC students will also serve as individual mentors.

Alumnus **Scott Monroe**, assistant editor of the Stowe Reporter and Waterbury Record, has received a major award from the New England Society of Newspaper Editors. Scott was selected for the 2007 Master Reporter Award for Weeklies, an annual competition

open to any weekly newspaper in the six New England states. It is a career award, based on the quality and range of reporting shown by nominees. Scott may be the youngest winner in the history of the award.

STUDENT SERVICES

Student services departments have been working together to offer programming and service opportunities for students. A notable example was the recent Alcohol Awareness Week, which featured seven days of educational programming delivered through discussion panels, interactive games, speakers, and various forms of entertainment. Staff members from residence life, the counseling and health centers, athletics and the student government association collaborated on this project. Earlier in the semester, the Center for Service Learning partnered with residence life staff and student government officers to do campus clean-up work.

Upward Bound

Coming off another successful and well-received summer session, the Johnson State Upward Bound program sent six students to the New England Student Leadership Conference in September, where they joined students from other TRiO programs from across New England and upstate New York. The conference provided students and staff with the opportunity to develop, refine and implement their leadership skills through participation in workshops and hands-on activities.

The JSC Upward Bound program works with 90 students from 10 area high schools who come to the campus each summer for a five-week college preparatory program. Program director **Tony Blueter** recently received a letter of gratitude from a parent of a former participant who has subsequently made a successful transition into college. The parent's note, which is reflective of the positive feedback this program receives from participants and their families, read in part: "The impact

you [the JSC UB staff] have all had on their lives will probably be the biggest anyone ever has on them, and I know they will never forget any of you or what you have helped them accomplish. The UB students as well as the parents owe you a lot. Thanks again to you and all of your staff."

Residence Life

This continues to be a very positive fall for residence life. Despite the continuing record-high number of students in residence, the number of alcohol and drug violations on campus has dropped by approximately 40% from this time last year.

Center for Service Learning

The Center has created a new blog, "The Engaged Life," which can be accessed at jcsen-gagedlife.blogspot.com. This semester a total of 103 volunteers have offered 461 hours of community service through the CSL. Students are being enrolled in the AmeriCorps Education award program, which provides monetary awards for specific levels of service provided.

Break Away (alternative break) participants and leaders have been chosen for this spring's trips. The trips focus on disaster relief in New Orleans, environmental preservation in Oregon, addressing hunger and homelessness in Cincinnati, and learning about youth and urban education in Washington, D.C.

Bonner Leader Program

New community partnerships are being established with Lamoille County Court Diversion and the Waterville Town Library, with the expectation that student leaders will be placed at each of these sites. The program has sponsored a "Talko Tuesday" program, which consists of student-led forums for open conversation on campus "hot topics."

Athletics and Recreation

Senior **Casey Rusin** of Wilmington, VT, completed a remarkable soccer career at JSC, becoming the first player in college history to eclipse the 100-point mark, finishing with 103

points in her four years. She led the Badgers in scoring this season, helping the team to its highest number of wins (8) and first post-season conference appearance since 2004. Casey holds the following records at JSC: career points (103), career goals (43), career assists (17), most points in a game (12), most goals in a game (5), and most games played (70). Thankfully we have not seen the last of Casey as a student athlete – she is also a stand-out on the women’s basketball team.

A number of Badgers received North Atlantic Conference (NAC) honors at the end of the fall season. In men’s soccer, senior **Trent Gould** and junior **Zach Lees** were named to the NAC 2nd Team. Seniors **Casey Rusin** and **Jenah Bugbee** were named NAC Honorable Mention in women’s soccer. Earning 2nd team NAC honors in cross-country were junior **Jon Preuss** on the men’s team and freshman **Nemesia Sorcar** from the women’s squad. In women’s tennis junior **Chelsie O’Connell** received a NAC Honorable Mention for singles play. Women’s tennis team coach **Nelson Murray** was named NAC Coach of the Year.

ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS

Information Technology

IT is pleased to report the installation of a new backup and recovery system that allows in-flight backup of data. This new system dramatically improves the college’s ability to rebuild its servers in the event of a catastrophic server or disk failure by rebuilding from the backup system. Additionally, this system will allow for the continuous backup protection of Microsoft Word and Excel files to a location where the user can obtain the backups without IT intervention.

Local disaster recovery/risk analysis planning began in October. The IT department conducted a thorough risk analysis and identified a

number of mitigation steps. They immediately implemented several key changes to reduce the college’s risk to its servers and infrastructure. Next steps include discussions with Chancellor’s Office IT staff regarding continuity of service in the event of a wide area network failure due to flooding near the Railroad Street bridge.



Students using the computer labs at JSC generate approximately 1.5 million printed pages annually. Often the pages are printed in error, or are never picked up by the students resulting in many reams of paper entering the waste stream. Being mindful of our responsibility to the environment, IT implemented new print management software at the beginning of the fall semester. This software tracks the total number of pages printed per person in the college’s academic computing labs. During the fall semester, students have been able to see the total number of pages printed, and learn about printing costs. With implementation of this software, we have seen a 15 percent reduction in total number of pages. Our next step is to launch a “quota” of approximately 400 black-and-white pages per year to help students think before they print. Each page over 400 will have a small per-page fee attached; however, we anticipate that few students will be charged this fee as the total volume of printing has been reduced with the awareness campaign.

BUSINESS AFFAIRS

Business Office

Sheilah Ladd, Johnson State College controller, has transferred to Lyndon State College replacing Bob Bean who retires later this year. **Toby Stewart**, who most recently served as Value Stream financial controller for Goodrich Aerospace in Vergennes, joined the college as our controller on November 19. Toby brings nearly 15 years of financial accounting experience in the aerospace industry with him.

Quarter-end processing for the first quarter of FY2008 was completed successfully. The college is showing a strong financial position with increased enrollments and an improved mix of in-state and out-of-state students. A new budget tracking and management process, implemented this past quarter, has improved department managers' understanding of their budgets and is leading to better budget management.

Physical Plant

The planning phases for the Stearns Hall renovation project are in full swing. A request for proposal (RFP) for a construction management firm was launched in October. Planning is also underway for the relocation of key functions from Stearns Hall during the demolition and construction phases. It is anticipated that two classrooms, one conference room, the bookstore, mailroom, the Baselodge and college Women's Center must be relocated by February 28, 2008. While the disruption will be significant, faculty, staff and students are looking forward to the facility's transformation into a true 24-hour student center.

Conference and Events (CES)

CES has seen an increase in the number and size of events served this year. This means that events held on campus are experiencing larger crowds. CES continues to modify its protocols and procedures to help event planners execute events more smoothly. Additionally, closer working relationships with key departments such as Media Services are also being developed.

CES has been spending substantial time planning for the relocation of functions and events from Stearns Hall to alternate locations. Additionally, they are working closely with ARAMARK and our outside groups to develop plans for delivering meals and rooms during summer 2008 while construction is ongoing. This is a challenging project, and we are pleased to report that the overwhelming majority of our outside groups are supportive of the changes—and not too concerned about the disruptions.

HUMAN RESOURCES

New staff

Leila Bander, who has been teaching fine arts at JSC for the past five years and coordinating exhibits in the Scott Gallery in Dibden Center has been hired as the coordinator of arts on campus. Leila will direct and coordinate visual arts activities that build community through engagement among students, staff and faculty. She earned her Masters of Fine Arts from Boston University and is an accomplished artist who has been exhibiting her work for more than 10 years.

ADMISSIONS AND FINANCIAL AID

Admissions

Spring 2008. This is the time of year when the admissions staff is simultaneously recruiting for both spring 2008 and fall 2008. For spring 2008, inquiries and applications are both up 22 percent, and deposits are up 18 percent (26 vs. 22). In addition to print and radio advertising, three on-campus "Transfer Days" are scheduled for Thursday, December 13, Tuesday, January 8 and Tuesday, January 15. Transfer Days provide prospective students an opportunity to bring their applications to campus on an on-the-spot decision. Counselors will also provide transfer students with tentative credit evaluations. A phone-a-thon was held on Saturday, November 3, and JSC students contacted all 221 spring inquiries. A total of 170 new students enrolled for spring 2007 (24 first-year, 42 transfers, 12 returning JSC stu-

dents, and 92 EDP) and we hope to bring in at least 80 first-year and transfer students for spring 2008.

Fall 2008. It's too early to predict our numbers for fall 2008, but at this time, all indications are encouraging for another successful year. Our inquiries are up 2 percent at 7,458; applications are up 46 percent (67 vs. 46) and numbers of students attending the October open house were up (92 vs. 80). Our November open house had more than 425 students and families registered. Our Saturday information sessions and tours have been well attended, and students are already signing up for the Early Admission Day programs in December. EAD, like the Transfer Day programs, provide high-school seniors a chance to come to campus for an on-the-spot decision. We have also added a few new initiatives to our recruitment plan including advertising in Hobson's International publication and Web site, hosting an off-campus reception and recruitment at several Hispanic fairs. We have received international inquiries from more than 575 students from 52 countries expressing the most interest in business, biological and life sciences, visual and performing arts and education. The most inquiries have come from students in Pakistan, Korea, Indonesia, Singapore and Vietnam. Also, new this fall was the addition of an off-campus reception in Manchester, New Hampshire. **Rebecca Pastor, Pat Dasaro**, JSC students from NH, and several alumni hosted the event.

The admissions staff has traveled to hundreds of college fairs, high schools and community colleges from Canaan, VT, to Chicago and the travel season isn't over yet! JSC is fortunate to have a dedicated "traveling" admissions staff with **Rebecca Pastor, Pat Rogers, Elga Gruner**, and fall recruiter **Melissa Henderson** on the road for JSC. On a sad note, Associate Director of Admissions **Drew Farrell** resigned after seven years at JSC. Over the years, Drew has been responsible for visits to Vermont high schools and some out-of-state travel, along with many other office duties. He

completed most of his VT travel this fall, and the remaining programs will be picked up by **Penny Howrigan** and other staff. We wish him the best in his new career.

Recruitment is a demanding job. We could not host the on-campus events without tremendous support from faculty, staff and student tour guides. We appreciate everyone's involvement this semester as we work together to bring in the fall class of 2008.

Financial Aid

Highlights from the JSC Financial Aid office include:

- The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for 2008 - 2009 is now only available online as an interactive form or as a PDF that can be printed out and mailed in. This change will reduce the millions of unused paper forms distributed to schools.
- As of January 1, the minimum wage in VT will increase from \$7.53 to \$7.68 per hour. This means that all JSC student employees currently earning less than this amount will receive a pay increase.

Financial aid awards have been mailed to spring 2008 applicants whose files were complete. Awarding will continue through January. The financial aid staff has also been preparing for awarding fall 2008 applicants beginning in January. Another initiative that's consumed staff time is the surveys of loan lenders (16 surveys were sent out and 13 were returned). The VSC financial aid team met November 3 to review the surveys, and a summary is being compiled.

DEVELOPMENT AND ALUMNI RELATIONS

Annual Fund planning and personal contact with donors has occupied most of this office's time during the past month. Associate Director **Evan Smith** has prepared an annual fund specific to each alumnus' decade, and Director

Sally Laughlin is traveling to meet with major donors and prospective donors.

This year's Title III Endowment Challenge Match has been received and \$80,000 added to the JSC endowment. An additional \$180,000 in matching funds has been earned and will be received over the next two years. Once the match pending is received, the endowment will be just below \$2 million.

Fundraising for Professor Bill Doyle's Vermont History and Government class' third Vermont history video, *Life in Orleans County*, is nearly complete, with gifts from Community National Bank, Passumpsic Savings Bank, Chittenden Bank, Newport Rotary, and private individuals, as well as funds from the JSC Student Government Association and the President's Office.