

**From:** [MCGRADY, TRACY M.](#)  
**To:** [ProvostNotes](#)  
**Subject:** Provost's Notes: 11/1/21  
**Date:** Monday, November 1, 2021 8:37:53 AM

---

Good morning!

I hope you all enjoyed what turned out to be a beautiful Halloween weekend. It was fun to see all the creative costumes in my neighborhood and to have some sense of normalcy again.

A few announcements today:

**Trailblazer Award Nominations:** Who's having a positive impact on student success? Well, just about everyone around here! It's easy to identify colleagues that are deserving of a [Trailblazer Award](#). These awards are designed to honor individuals who have created and adopted innovative practices. This is your opportunity to give your colleagues the recognition they deserve! Nominations close November 30.

**Happier U:** The Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development has partnered with the Show Me Hope Crisis Counseling Program and the Missouri Department of Mental Health to create *Happier U*, a digital resource center to promote mental health. While this initiative is targeted more toward college-age students, *HappierU* is available to anyone looking for ways to focus on becoming their happiest, healthiest self. *HappierU* features a series of videos, podcasts, and digital content, providing science-based advice, strategies, and coping mechanisms for stressful situations. The content can be accessed on demand and shared on any digital platform. By accessing the *HappierU* content hub [here](#), individuals can view all of the latest content, subscribe for updates, and more. The content is free and available to everyone. Please share this resource with your students (perhaps by embedding [the link](#) in your Canvas course sites).

**Spring 2022 Syllabus Template:** You've probably seen your Spring 2022 classes pop up on your Canvas dashboard, so you may now be wondering when you can get your hands on the syllabus template. The date for the Spring 2022 syllabus launch is November 19. More information will come your way shortly.

**OTC Cares:** Those of you who are members of the OTC Faculty Facebook group may have seen a post shared by Jean Stewart, one of our talented Art instructors here at OTC. The author is not identified, but the sentiment is powerful:

*When I was 12, I babysat this girl for a few years, and she would come to me and show me her art; drag me by my hand and point at the pieces she'd made during the week. She would ask me to "do the voice," and I'd put on a sports-announcer, Olympics-style voice and be like, "Such form! This level of coloring! Why, I haven't seen such perfection in Crayola in a long time! And what is this? Why, Jeff, now this is a true risk...it seems she's made...a monochrome pink canvas...I haven't seen this attempted since winter of 1932...and I gotta say, Jeff, it's absolutely splendid!" And she'd fall back giggling. At the end of every night, she'd check with me: "Did you really like it?" And I'd say yes, and talk about something I*

*noticed and tuck her in. She was just accepted into three major art schools. She wrote me a letter. Inside was a picture from when she was younger. Monochrome pink. "Thank you," it said, "to somebody who saw the best in me."*

We all have those challenging students – the ones who push our buttons and cause us to want to tear our hair out in frustration. Some are downright rude and disrespectful – and, of course, that is never okay. But this anecdote is a great reminder that we all have “the best” in us and how impactful it can be when others do the hard work of discovering and acknowledging it. And this goes for each other as well. I’m sure you have a colleague or two that causes you frustration from time-to-time. As I mentioned last week, OTC Cares is about putting a focus on our students, but we also have to care for ourselves and each other to create an environment of collegiality and cooperation so our students can thrive. This week, I encourage you to really focus on seeing the best in others – and, just as importantly, in yourself.

Have a great week!

**Tracy M. McGrady, Ed.D**

Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs  
Ozarks Technical Community College  
1001 E Chestnut Expressway  
Springfield, MO 65802  
417.447.8152