

From: [MCGRADY, TRACY M.](#)
To: [ProvostNotes](#)
Subject: Provost's Notes: 5/15/2023
Date: Monday, May 15, 2023 8:38:39 AM
Attachments: [A A A Graduation Speech.pdf](#)

Good morning, and Happy Finals Week!

Well folks, we made it. Another academic year is (almost) in the books, and what a fantastic year it has been. I look forward to celebrating it with all of you on Thursday at Commencement! This is my last *Provost's Notes* until August, so I'm taking full advantage. But first, a couple of quick updates:

Plant Sale Success: Heather Eberlin reports that this year's Plant Sale at Richwood Valley was a huge success. **Thursday's sales alone totaled nearly \$11,000!** Thanks to all of you who supported our Ag students through this event. Now we'll look forward to those gorgeous mums in the fall.

New Name for General Education: As our young college matures, we continue to evolve to responsive to our students and communities we serve. As we do so, we see curriculum changes and our program inventory expand. A couple of years ago, we changed the name of the Allied Health division to Health Sciences to better reflect the breadth of programs we have grown to offer. Now it's General Education's turn. The division is changing its name to **Arts, Sciences and Business**. This is recognition that the division is more than just Core 42 offerings, and the division's new name better reflects the programs offered. We'll transition to the new name over the summer, although our Web Services team has wasted no time in getting [the new name on the OTC website](#).

Technical Education Short-Term Offerings: Our Tech Ed faculty have been hard at work this semester developing several short-term training opportunities for students. These trainings are designed to do a couple of things: 1) help people learn basic skills for quick employment in high-demand industries, and 2) provide earned college credit that will not be lost if they decide to pursue a degree or certificate later. Precision Machining and Information Technology Infrastructure are offering short-term courses this summer, and more will be offered in the fall. **A big shout-out to the Tech Ed faculty and to Dr. Robyn Gordon**, Dean of Technical Education, for all their hard work.

OTC Cares: I'm sharing a couple of different things here that may appear unrelated, but bear with me. The first is from a student of mine, DeAnna, who had hoped to be the student speaker at Commencement; however, she missed the deadline to apply. Late Friday night, she sent me what would have been her speech had she been selected. As she explained in her email:

"...I was told that I should at least share it with you so that you can pass it along to the staff and they can all read it and understand what a truly immense difference this college makes in the lives of its students...If this gets forwarded, I hope this message will also: Thank you all so much for this beautiful opportunity, and for helping me to see what I'm truly capable of. From the janitors and Commons service staff to the Deans and Board members and all between. Thank you. You are why this college is the best."

I promised DeAnna I would share it, and I have. The attached document is the speech in its entirety.

The second thing I'm sharing is part of an email from a new faculty member, who recently had a significant health scare. Her email is thanking her colleagues for stepping up, taking over her classes, communicating with HR on her behalf, and visiting her in the hospital to make sure she had what she needed. She writes:

"The heart and compassion that you have for the students at OTC are also given abundantly to the faculty members. The support I have felt is like nothing I have ever experienced before...I absolutely love working here, I love my team, and I am abundantly grateful...I'm so proud to be an Eagle."

What do these two emails have in common? To me, it's this: In the rush of the day-to-day, with all its headaches and challenges and complaints, I sometimes forget how fortunate we are. I sometimes take it for granted. Maybe you do, too. Emails like these help me remember just how good we have it here. It's been a long time since I worked anywhere else, and I often forget what it was like to do a job that felt like it had little impact. Where I felt like I was just another employee. We started talking about OTC Cares a couple of years ago as a framework for caring for students, but we can't deliver on that framework without caring for each other.

So yes, OTC moves fast. We change. We disrupt. We do hard stuff. We sometimes argue. But we also love big and love hard. Not just our students, but each other.

Enjoy this last week. I'll see you at Commencement on Thursday!

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