

From: [MCGRADY, TRACY M.](#)
To: [ProvostNotes](#)
Subject: Provost's Notes: 10/16/2023
Date: Monday, October 16, 2023 7:55:01 AM

Good morning!

Well, folks, we've officially made it to midterm. Faculty, please remember that **midterm grades are due by 10 a.m. this Friday, October 20.**

Go Anywhere – Student entries in last year's publication of OTC's literary magazine, *Go Anywhere*, have earned some impressive recognition. The Community College Humanities Association selected three OTC students to win awards: Merry Barnett, first place for Best Short Stories; Mackenzie Richardson, first place for Best Creative Nonfiction, and Ameera Al-mahajeri, third place in the Best Poems category. If you have any of these students in class, be sure to recognize them for these achievements. We are so proud of them and of English instructor, Jane Cowden, for her investment in these students who work to publish *Go Anywhere*.

Innovation Celebration – February may seem like a long way off, but the Innovation Celebration 2024 will be here in the blink of an eye. I'm sure several of you full-timers out there have some great ideas that you would implement if only you had the funding. Also, look around: We work with some pretty exceptional people; who in your orbit deserves some recognition? Go to [Innovation Celebration \(otc.edu\)](#) to find out about Student Success mini grants, Game Changer grants, and to nominate someone for a Trailblazer award. If you need a little help getting those creative juices flowing, our Innovation Labs can be a big help. The next one is [scheduled for next Friday, Oct. 20.](#)

Speaking of Exceptional People...- I've been catching up on past episodes of "Oh That's Cool," the podcast hosted by OTC's own Andrew Crocker and Jared Durden. The last episode I listened to featured Kat Westmoreland, one of our college navigators in Health Sciences. Kat shared about her own journey with higher education, her role as a navigator, and the satisfaction brought by helping students achieve. This past summer, Kat's supervisor, Tara Hathcock, shared with me how Kat and several others at OTC rallied around a 17-year-old with lots of personal challenges. This young person wanted out of high school and ended up crossing paths with Kat, who offered to talk with them about their options. Long story short, thanks to conversations with Pan Porter in Disability Support Services and Middle College staff Amy Pointer and Charla Hampton, this student felt supported and encouraged by a clear path forward. When Kat reconnected with the student a bit later, they were completely relaxed, sitting in a chair eating ramen noodles that Amy and Charla had prepared for them. The student excitedly told Kat that they had decided on the construction program. As Kat wrote, "There are staff members mentioned in this email that meant the absolute world to this youth's progress and overall outlook...There are battles that our students face that are completely unknown to us, but when OTC staff approach our students with the compassion that they do, the battles are overcome with support."

Wishing you all an exceptional week!

Tracy

Tracy M. McGrady, Ed.D
Provost & Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Ozarks Technical Community College
1001 E. Chestnut Expressway
Springfield, MO 65802
417.447.8152