College Starts Alumni Mentoring Program

Bergen Community College has established an Alumni Mentoring Program and a Speakers’ Bureau to harvest the wealth of knowledge and experience within the BCC alumni community.

Working with the academic vice president’s office, the academic deans, department chairs, and various organizations within the College, the Office of Alumni Affairs will serve as the conduit for linking mentors with academic departments and matching speakers with opportunities on campus.

“This is an opportunity for alumni to make important contributions that will enrich the college experience for Bergen students,” said Vice President of Academic Affairs William Mullaney, PhD. “The mentoring program also is an opportunity for alumni to enhance their own resumes by demonstrating their professional expertise.”

To learn more about being a mentor to Bergen students or a guest lecturer, speaker or panelist, please visit the Office of Alumni Affairs website for an application. You may also contact us at alumninetwork@bergen.edu or (201) 879-8952.

Bergen Opens Full-time Alumni Office

Bergen Community College has established a full-time Office of Alumni Affairs to serve alumni and bring them back to campus to be a part of the Bergen student experience.

Opened in mid-July on the main campus in Paramus, (Room A-304 on the third floor of the Administrative Wing), the Office of Alumni Affairs is an independent department of the College focused solely on alumni. The Board of Trustees appointed Joe Cavaluzzi, former head of Public Relations and Creative Services at the College, to serve as managing director of the new department, with Diana Tofel as executive secretary of Alumni Affairs. Diana previously worked in the Office of the President, where her responsibilities included coordinating scheduling for commencement.

In addition to managing the Alumni Network (ANET), the Office of Alumni Affairs operates a new alumni website; manages the Alumni Mentoring Program and the Alumni Speakers Bureau; supports affinity groups of alumni; works to expand the alumni benefits program; and plans alumni events and activities on-and off-campus.

To share your ideas or obtain additional information about keeping up with old friends – and networking with new ones – to be alerted to events on campus, or become a member of the BCC Alumni Network, please contact the Office of Alumni Affairs or Joe Cavaluzzi, jcavaluzzi@bergen.edu, or Diana Tofel, dtofel@bergen.edu.
A Message from President B. Kaye Walter

Welcome to the BCC Alumni Network.

Thank you for your generosity to the College.

Your participation in the Alumni Network provides funds for scholarships awarded through the BCC Foundation as well as funding for future alumni events.

I cannot overstate how important these scholarships have become to our students. The state and county share of operating costs for the College combined is about 20%, half of what it was a decade ago. That means our students must shoulder an increasing financial burden through tuition. For many, Alumni-and Foundation-sponsored scholarships are the difference between continuing their education at Bergen and leaving college.

The College has diligently – and successfully – pursued grants to help provide programs that dwindling revenues would have made prohibitive. Through service learning and civic engagement, the College is finding creative ways to broaden student learning.

However, the College needs you, our alumni, to help enrich the Bergen experience.

This past summer, the Board of Trustees recognized the importance of alumni in creating the new Office of Alumni Affairs as an independent entity supervised by a senior administrator whose only job is to work with and for alumni.

Through programs such as the new Alumni Mentoring and Speakers’ Bureau, the Office of Alumni Affairs is reaching out to invite former Bergen students back to campus to share their professional experiences as well as their industry and life knowledge with Bergen students.

In the months ahead, the Office of Alumni Affairs will be contacting you with information about other opportunities for you to participate in the Bergen experience.

Please remember, while you may no longer be a student at Bergen Community College, you will always remain a part of the BCC community.

Sincerely,

B. Kaye Walter

B. Kaye Walter, Ph.D.
President, Bergen Community College
Participation continued to grow as the Alumni Network (ANET) held the 4th Annual BCC Alumni Dinner at Seasons in May. A good time was had by all and the event raised money for alumni scholarships awarded through the BCC Foundation. If you would like to help in the planning or set up of the 5th Annual Alumni Dinner, please contact the Office of Alumni Affairs. Please watch your email for a Save the Date.

The ANET honored Professor Arthur Tolve, chair of the Culinary Programs Advisory Committee and Executive Chef-Culinary Programs, and his wife Cecilia Tolve with the Living Legacy Award, presented by ANET Co-Chair Richard Garcia, '82.

ANET Board Member Jane Grinch, '75, presented the Alumni Hall of Fame Award to Robert Fusco, recognizing his extraordinary achievements as an alumnus.

Academic Counselor Tim Foote garnered the Rising Star Award, presented by Ruth Bedevian, '85.

1 (FROM LEFT – STANDING) BCC Foundation Chairman Robert Hekemian, Jr., Honoree Robert Fusco, Honoree Tim Foote and ANET Co-Chair Richard Garcia. 2 (SEATED) ANET Board member Ruth A. Bedevian, Honoree Arthur Tolve and ANET Board Member Jane A. Grinch.
Alumni on the Move

On the Threshold of a Dream
Jon D’Amore Signs with NY Literary Agent

Jon D’Amore has pursued careers as a musician, corporate executive and a writer since his days as a student at Bergen Community College in 1976 and 1977. Currently a Los Angeles-based writer, Jon recently signed with a major New York literary agency to sell his manuscript, “The Boss Always Sits In The Back” to a publisher.

The signing is a major step forward for the self-published author from Union City, where he was honored on May 24, 2012 by Mayor and Sen. Brian Stack with “Jon D’Amore Day.”

His novel is based on growing up on the fringe of organized crime in Bergen and Hudson counties as well as his own unwitting part in a scam that funneled millions of dollars out of several Las Vegas casinos into the coffers of the North Jersey mob.

Last spring, Jon visited Bergen Community College and spoke to Professor Julia Peterson’s media class about self-publishing. He also donated two signed copies of “The Boss Always Sits In The Back” to the College library for circulation.

His days at BCC still influence Jon, who came to the College to learn about communications in preparation for his musical career.

“I did a radio show from the school studios. It really helped me in my ability to communicate to the masses,” he said. “I still think about that today because I do an internet radio show and often talk about what I did at Bergen Community College.”

For more information about Jon and obtaining a copy of “The Boss Always Sits In The Back” visit http://thebossalwayssitsintheback.com.

UMDNJ University Hospital Recognizes Clara Membra with DAISY Award

Clara Membra, RN, BCC ‘03, thought she was heading for a nursing meeting after her overnight shift at UMDNJ-The University Hospital in February. Instead, the hospital’s CEO and chief of nursing were waiting to congratulate her and present the DAISY Award, a national nursing excellence recognition program that recognizes nurses who give compassionate bedside care and regularly demonstrate superhuman tasks that nurses are expected to perform each day.

Jennifer Smith, RN, BSN, MSN, the hospital’s acting medical-surgical director, nominated Clara based on her extraordinary care of and compassion for a dying patient who desperately wanted to visit family in Africa one last time but lacked the financial means to go. Clara worked with the patient’s friends and church to raise money. The patient died shortly after arriving there.

“I am truly honored, proud and blessed to have such a warm, sincere and compassionate nurse, Clara Membra, as part of the University Hospital family,” said Jennifer Smith, the hospital’s acting medical-surgical director who nominated Clara. “She has always provided the highest standards of care to patients and their families while displaying acts of kindness and empathy.”

Clara is pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from Jersey City State University.

Steven Chung ’12 Starts Honors Alumni Group (In his Spare Time?)

Steven Chung graduated from Bergen in 2011. By the end of 2012, he graduated from BCC with an Associate’s Degree in Social Work with honors, Divisional and Curricular Award for Social Work, a poem published in an issue of The Labyrinth, and as a member of Phi Theta Kappa. He credits his BCC professors for inspiring him to persevere.

“Professor Jacqueline Behn taught me how to expand my mind,” Steven recalled in a recent interview. “Professor Kathleen Williams helped me with communication skills, and Professor Dorothy Altman helped me develop my writing skills.”

Equipped with particular skills he learned from his professors at BCC, Steven strives to see the HAN prosper by increasing alumni involvement and membership, while generating more scholarships to qualified students through collaboration with the Office of Alumni Affairs.

Current Alumni Network members may join the HAN by contacting Steven directly at swc0508@gmail.com or (516) 509-2818, or by visiting him on the HAN Facebook page. Non-ANET members and renewing enrolled student to fund two different scholarships (the Steven W. Chung Honors Scholarship through the BCC Foundation, and the Steven W. Chung Poetry Prize through the Academy of American Poets), the 2012 BCC graduate founded the BCC Honors Alumni Network (HAN) this summer.

Steven created HAN while attending classes full-time at New York University in pursuit of his Bachelor’s Degree in Social Work, and simultaneously taking courses at Columbia University for a Human Rights Certificate, and at the New York Film Academy to obtain an Acting for Film Certificate. He also has earned his Professional Certificate in Conflict Management from Sullivan University, Certificate of Achievement in Effective Communications & Human Relations and Certificate of Achievement in Leadership Training for Managers from Dale Carnegie Training.

The 21-year-old former Elmwood Park resident who now lives in Bayside, NY, is a testimony to determination. After dropping out of high school at the age of 15, he later graduated from a ministry-run high school in 2010 only to discover that his diploma was not accredited. As a result, Steven returned to school to obtain his GED from Bergen in 2011. By the end of 2012, he graduated from BCC with an Associate’s Degree in Social Work with honors, Divisional and Curricular Award for Social Work, a poem published in an issue of The Labyrinth, and as a member of Phi Theta Kappa. He credits his BCC professors for inspiring him to persevere.

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Nicole Limperopulos, ‘00, Earns Ph.D. at Columbia University Teachers College

Nicole Limperopulos, BCC ‘00, completed her Ph.D. at Teachers College, Columbia University this spring. Nicole serves as the assistant director of the Summer Principals Academy at Teachers College, which is the largest university-based principal preparation program in the nation.

In addition to overseeing operations, fiscal management and student recruitment, she manages program accreditation, and led the Summer Principals Academy to secure full national accreditation through the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education.

After her graduation from Bergen, Nicole earned a B.A. in History from Fordham University and an M.S. in History Education from Lehman College. Her doctoral studies and research focused on the cognitive effects that chronic exposure to community violence has on urban male adolescents.

Nicole spent eight years as a teaching fellow in New York City public schools, garnering two nominations for National Teacher of the Year. At the Teachers College, her achievements include helping launch a summer Principals Academy in New Orleans.

North Carolina Association of Colleges and Employers Honors Eric Melniczek

Eric Melniczek, ’95, is making a difference for graduating college students in North Carolina. The North Carolina Association of Colleges and Employers recognized the 1995 graduate of BCC for his contributions to the post-secondary career services and employment field while working as director of Career and Internship Services at High Point University.

Among Eric’s contributions, the University cited his serving as a contributor to the Emmy Award-winning “JobQuest” television program and publishing his book, “Transitioning to the Real World: A Guide to Navigating Your First Year Out of College.”

Initially I had very little direction,” he said. “Working at the college, participating in clubs, spending time with professors; all these things helped mold me into the person I have become.”

Eric currently resides in High Point with his wife Amanda Dye Melniczek. (As this was being written, Eric and Amanda were awaiting the birth of their first child.)

The Garfield High School Hall of Fame inducted BCC Track & Field Coach Erika Czujko last spring. A former Bergen student athlete in 1998 and 1999, she led the College record holder in the women’s shot-put. Erika took the BCC men’s Track & Field team to the NJCAA meet this year.

North Carolina Association of Colleges and Employers Honors Eric Melniczek

Eric Melniczek

North Carolina Association of Colleges and Employers Honors Eric Melniczek

Eric Melniczek

Bergen Slugger José Padilla Graduates from Montclair

Former BCC centerfielder José Carlos Padilla, ’09, garnered New Jersey Collegiate Baseball Division II and III All-Star honors (second team), as well as being named to the 2013 All-NJAC Team, on his way to graduating from Montclair State University this spring. He led Montclair in on-base percentage and batted .486 with a 14-game hitting streak.

José, who lives in Bergenfield, played for Bergen Community College in 2008 and 2009, posted a .363 on-base percentage, which was second in the nation, and batted .494 in his final season as Bulldog. He plans to have a career as a physical therapist in the field of athletics.

The Office of Alumni Affairs is on a mission to share your story with other BCC Alumni. Tell us what you’re up to. It’s a great way find old friends and start new friendships with BCC alumni who share your interests. Send your profile, contact information and a photo (optional) by email to the Office of Alumni Affairs, or by land mail to:

The Office of Alumni Affairs
Bergen Community College
400 Paramus Road, Rm. A336
Paramus, NJ 07652-1599
College Breaks Ground on Health Professions Integrated Teaching Center

The College broke ground in August on a $26 million, 65,000-square-foot Health Professions Integrated Teaching Center that will cement Bergen Community College’s role as a key provider of trained healthcare professionals in Bergen County and northern New Jersey.

Funded as part of the $750 million Building our Future Bond Act that voters approved last November, the Center will feature 16 SMART classrooms and 10 dedicated laboratories – including medical simulation and computer tabs.

The three-story facility, to be located in front of the Pitkin Education Center on the Paramus campus, will include a state-of-the-art dental hygiene clinic for students to provide low-cost preventive oral health care to the Bergen County community as part of their clinical education.

Construction is slated to begin this fall on the building designed by RSC Architects, of Cliffside Park, and be completed in 2015.

Last year, more than 1,000 BCC students enrolled in health professions programs.
Lady Bulldog Shauntierah Douglas Sets National Record in Javelin Toss

Last spring, freshman Shauntierah Douglas, of Garfield, threw the javelin 45.19 meters or 148 feet, 3¾ inches for a new National NJCAA record, besting the old record of 1999 by 20 feet. She helped lead the Lady Bulldogs Outdoor Track & Field team to 5th place in the NJCAA Division III National Championship. Shauntierah and teammates Gina Pettigano of Elmwood Park and Yaniri Jiminez of Passaic garnered All-American recognition.

Bergen Increases Opportunities for STEM Students

Two years ago, a Georgetown University study revealed that 63% of people with a bachelor’s degree in science, technology, engineering or math (STEM) earn more than individuals holding a non-science master’s degree; nearly half of those STEM bachelor’s degree-holders out-earn Ph.D.’s in non-STEM fields.

Bergen Community College recognizes the potential to improve students’ futures as well as America’s competitiveness with a strong STEM education. Here’s a look as some of the STEM initiatives under way at BCC.

■ A $3.8 million U.S. Department of Education grant is funding STEM Graduation Pathway to Success (GPS), a five-year program that enhances academic support to help STEM students on the path to graduation, transfer to four-year schools and entry to professional fields.

■ Buoyed by a $2 million grant from the Emil Buehler Perpetual Trust, the College opened its Aviation Education Center in the TEC Building a year ago with both airplane and helicopter flight simulators.

■ The College hosted the first Teen STEM Day last winter and drew more than 500 students from Bergen County middle and high schools for a day of presentations by BCC faculty and industry professionals.

■ BCC will host the STEM C² (Community College) Research Summit in April, 2014, to promote the intellectual and investigative development of students, faculty and staff in STEM and collaboration among community colleges, high schools and 4-year colleges and universities in New Jersey and the surrounding areas.

Once a Bulldog... Always a Bulldog

College Forming Alumni Network for Athletes

The College’s Athletic Department is starting a Sports Alumni Network.

Are you a former BCC student athlete? Coach? A team manager?

If you were a Bulldog in any shape or form, this is an opportunity to catch up with friends and fellow BCC student athletes, past and present. The Sports Alumni Network will organize events and get-togethers around sporting events, home and away.

If you are interested in joining, please email your contact information to Managing Director of Athletics Jorge Hernandez, hernandezj2@bergen.edu or call (201) 447-7183.

Please include any ideas for events you would like to attend.

Flight simulator in Aviation Education Center.

Going Where Good Careers Grow

Bergen Increases Opportunities for STEM Students

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Alum Thanks Prof. Sadock for “Enlightening and Opening my Mind”

EDITORS NOTE: J.M. Mariotti, ’02, recalls how Dr. Geoffrey J. Sadock inspired him and changed the way he views the world.

Dear Dr. Geoffrey J. Sadock:

I am not sure if you remember me, but I will forever remember and thank you for enlightening me many years ago.

My name is JM Mariotti, and although I am a lawyer now, none of my success would have been possible without you and Bergen Community College (BCC). As a student in your literature class in 2001, you challenged and pushed me to succeed. You opened and expanded my mind, and you taught me how to appreciate and love learning. This profoundly impacted and enabled me to grow and mature, and I cannot thank you enough.

I can recall as clear as day you telling our class that the American mind can be narrow, and that we must never become complacent. We must remain eager to learn; and we should yearn to travel and study the past in order to expand our horizons. That deeply resonated and affected my life. I have since visited all of Central America and Western Europe; Ukraine; Lithuania; Morocco, and most recently, while on honeymoon, Dubai, and Thailand. Just as you led me to believe, each of these regions offered great learning opportunities. I gained so much mentally and spiritually as a result of these travels and the diverse art and cultures I experienced therein.

These are just some of the reasons I continue to deeply appreciate the time you devoted to our class. Your care and advice gave me hope. It allowed me to see, understand, and appreciate things that I thought were well beyond my reach. It allowed me to go on from BCC to become a young, mature professional adult who graduated from Fordham University, the Rutgers School of Law, and then [several years later] the Fordham University Graduate School of Business.

I will forever remain appreciative, grateful, and thankful to you and BCC.

Truly,

JM Mariotti

Class of ’13 Grad Attending Cornel U. Thanks her “Lucky” (NJ) Stars for Bergen Experience

Hello Ms. Lisa Castellano,

My name is Monica Neira, and I am one of your NJ Stars students. Although we may not have formally met, I just wanted to thank you for all that you have done for the NJ Stars program. NJ Stars was one of the primary reasons I attended Bergen. Two years have passed, and I am taking my last class needed to graduate from Bergen. I am moving on to Cornell University and being a part of your program aided in my acceptance. I hope you continue to be successful in recruiting students for NJ Stars and that they appreciate the program and all that Bergen has to offer as a foundation for moving on to excellent four-year schools, including the Ivy League, as much as I did.

Thank you,

Monica Neira, ’13
Alumni Annual Fund Gifts 7/1/12 to 6/30/13 (FY 2013)

Jaime An-Wong
Dayna Arcuro
Mary Ann Ascolino
John Avanzato
Carole Barlow
Barbara Barnett
Ruth Bedawen
Karlita Behringer
Patricia Belmonte
Barbara Birkaweg
Jill Brady
Maria Brought
Rosemary Brown
Virginia Brown
Frances Carl
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Mercedes Chisholm
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Marlyn Daub
Dora Dosk
Gregory Dianman
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Kenneth Easton
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Monique Erdlich
Barbara Farese
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Florinda Galli
Bonnee Garpest
Elizabeth Silmore
Agnus Glick
Joel Graber
Louise Graham
Marylin Granat
Jane Grinch
Gregory Gurian
Linda Hall
Jerrina Hemphill
Wladia Herrk
Norma Hamstra
Maureen Hunter
Rose Jaenity
Beverly Kazickas
Betty Kerker
Ryan Kierns
Michael Knowles
Maurine Koch
Alan Kormann
Alan Kutzkys
William LaRaia

Sylwester Larena
Sonia Lavalle
Anthony Lochan
Frank Loiacono
Maryjoie Lomigian
Jose Lorenzo
Patricia Lux
Ann Lynd
Uwe Malakas
Elaine Mander
Kathleen Manzi-Casey
Nahia Manzueta
Phyllis Marito-Masterson
Angela Martin-Fehr
Ruth Mayer
Kelly McCormick
Frederick McGarrill
Rosalie Mendel
Milagros Mendez
John Mehta
Mark Monacelli
Anthony Monaco
Dennis Moran
James Mosley
Abbe Mravsky
George Murphy
Bonnee Nayla-Page
Laura D'Ors
Kevin O'Dea
Maureen Osborne
Betty Patty
Freda Pickering
Robert Piskalsky
Annette Pivonich
Mark Pucciarelli
Diane Rachel

Claudia Reitmeyer
Susan Reuter
Diane Romano
Susan Rumanoff
Elaine Romito
Timothy Ross
Richard Rucio
Diana Rancuro-Martinez
Bette Ryan
Adriana Sacco
Maria Saxxomondo
Helena Samel
Sharon Scangarella
John Setteducato
Deborah Siskern
Michael Stevin
Cindi Smal
Lynne Smith
Henry Smith
Lorraine Spilsetk
Patrick Straw
Richard Sudol
Lisa Talarian
Peter Thompson
Elsa Tielman-Pearce
Stever Timmermann
Patricia Tobin
Pamela Trasse
Anthony Vecchione
Annette Vernon
Lawrence Ward
Robert Weyer
Michael Wilkinson
Carolyn Wolak
Kathleen Zawryt
Meiling Zou

BCC Well Represented at Oral Cancer Walk

In September, Dental Hygiene ANET members, students, faculty and their families participated in the 6th Annual Oral Cancer Foundation Walk/Run for Awareness to focus attention on early detection of head and neck cancer. “We were the largest team and the only school in New Jersey to participate. I am very proud of the Dental Hygiene Alumni Network’s strong showing,” said Goli Kocharian, who leads the Dental Hygiene ANET and organized the trip to Perona Farms, in Andover. Special thanks to Vice President Naydeen Gonzalez-De Jesus, Ph.D. and Student Affairs for sponsoring the bus.
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Theater, Music and the Arts at Bergen Community College

Anna Maria Ciccone Theatre 2013 – 2014

Oldies Weekend Celebration The Four Aces & the Unique Comedy of John Pizzi Friday, Sept. 27, 2013, 7:30 p.m.

The Shirrelles Featuring Shirley Alston Reeves & the Hilarious Jeff Piriz Saturday, Sept. 28, 2013, 7:30 p.m.

Ali Stroker – Actress, Singer, Wild Child Tuesday, Oct. 1, 2013, 1:30 p.m.

Gary Lucas “The Edge of Heaven” Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2013, 7:30 p.m.

Cristina Fontinelli in Concert Friday, Oct. 11, 2013, 7:30 p.m.

Peter Yarrow (of Peter, Paul and Mary) Friday, Oct. 18, 2013, 7:30 p.m.

The Great Cissy Houston in Concert Friday, Nov. 8, 2013, 7:30 p.m.

Bergen Sinfonia Holiday Concert Conducted by Murray Colosimo Friday, Dec. 20, 2013, 7:30 p.m.

Black 47, “The Best Irish Band in America” – Fri., March 7, 2014, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 28, 2013, 7:30 p.m.

Hilarious Jeff Pirami The Four Aces & the Unique Oldies Weekend Celebration

Friday, Sept. 27, 2013, 7:30 p.m.

George Wein’s New World Folk Festival

Fridays during Fall Semesters

Ciccone Theatre

Gallery Bergen

Sandy: Artists Respond to a Once and Future Superstorm – Curators Professors Suzan Boothe and Marriott Sheldon


Fahrenheit 451 (Grades 9-12)

Wednesday, Oct. 3, 2013, 7:30 p.m.

The Jackie Robinson Story (Grades 6-8)

Thursday, Jan. 16, 2014, 10 a.m. & 12:30 p.m.

Toying With Science (Grades K-12)

Thursday, Feb. 13, 2014, 10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

Vumbua Dance Theatre of Harlem’s 2013-2014 offerings include performances, please contact Joyce Becker at jbecker@bergen.edu or call (201) 493-3507.

Fahrenheit 451 (Grades 9-12)

Wednesday, Oct. 9, 2013, 7:30 p.m.

National Player’s Macbeth (Grades 9-12)

Wednesday, Sept. 25, 2013, 7:30 p.m.

The Annual Ars Nova Concert (Grades K-12)

Thursday, Feb. 13, 2014, 10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

The Jackie Robinson Story (Grades 6-8)

Thursday, Jan. 16, 2014, 10 a.m. & 12:30 p.m.

The Threepenny Opera

Ender Hall Lab Theatre

Oct. 25, 26, 31, Nov. 1 and 2, 2013

by Noel Coward

“Blithe Spirit”

Ciccone Theatre

Tuesday, Dec. 17, 2013

Distinguished Artist – Dustin Boettger and Marriott Sheldon


West Hall Third Floor

Reception, Tuesday, Oct. 15, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

(Alumni Invited)

The Directors Lab

May 1, 2 & 3, 2014

Ender Hall Lab Theatre

22nd Annual Young Playwrights Festival

Thursday, June 5, 2014

Ciccone Theatre

Comedy Improv/Vaudeville Night

Presented by BCC Theatre Club

Fall and Spring Semesters

Dates TBA

Ender Hall Lab Theatre

The Annual Ars Nova Concert

Thursday, Oct. 17, 2013, 7:30 p.m.

Performing Arts Presents

The BCC Department of Performing Arts

CONCERTS & RECITALS

In Th...