

OWENS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Foundation & Alumni

..... AWARD-WINNING E-NEWSLETTER



June 2026

A Partner in What Comes Next: President Somerville Marks Five Years at Owens

When Dr. Dione D. Somerville was introduced as the eighth president of Owens Community College in June 2021, she set out to deepen the college's impact on students and the region it serves. Five years later, that commitment has only grown stronger.

Under Dr. Somerville's leadership, Owens has expanded its academic offerings, completed a \$27.8 million renovation and expansion of the Healthcare Education Center and introduced its first bachelor's degree program. The college has achieved seven consecutive semesters of enrollment growth while strengthening community and employer partnerships across northwest Ohio.

The Owens Community College Foundation has been an essential partner in that progress, growing its endowed funds to more than \$10 million while distributing more than \$3 million in scholarships to students who need them most.

"We're not just a college," Dr. Somerville said. "We're a partner in what comes next."

As Owens looks ahead, Dr. Somerville's vision remains clear: stay connected, stay responsive and keep moving students' lives forward.



Join us on the Fairway This Fall

The Owens Community College Foundation Golf Classic is back. The 24th Annual Golf Classic takes place **Monday, Sept. 21**, at Belmont Country Club in Perrysburg, and sponsorships and foursomes are already filling fast.

The day kicks off with check-in and lunch before the crowd gathers for the Golf Ball Drone Drop — then it's a shotgun start at noon. That evening, sponsors and tournament winners will be recognized at a dinner and awards program.

Can't make it to the course? Drone Drop tickets are available separately, and winners need not be present to win. Prizes include cash and gift cards. You can purchase Drone Drop tickets at this [link](#).

Proceeds support strategic college initiatives including equipment purchases, program support and student scholarships — a direct investment in Owens students and the communities they'll go on to serve.

Information on sponsorship opportunities or how to register for the event can be found at owens.edu/golf.



Aspire Graduates Celebrate a Hard-Earned Milestone

On May 21, the Owens Aspire College and Career Readiness program celebrated 29 adult learners who earned their high school equivalency diplomas in the 2025-26 academic year — chipping away at the roughly 592,000 Ohioans ages 25 and older who do not hold a high school diploma.

Graduates from the Findlay-area and Toledo-area campuses gathered in Veterans Hall for a ceremony complete with "Pomp and Circumstance," caps and tassels — the latter made possible through a donation from the Owens Community College Foundation.

Two graduates addressed the crowd, sharing stories of perseverance, gratitude and hope. "The support, the love, the excitement for your growth and achievements are never ending," said Tasha Smith, who is now pursuing her Chemical Dependency Counselor Assistant license before starting her associate degree this fall.

For many of these learners, a diploma is just the beginning — and the Foundation is proud to be part of that journey.

Conversations
with OWENS COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENT DR. DIONE D. SOMERVILLE
Podcast
60TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
MAY 21, 2026

Randy Gardner
Former Chancellor, State of Ohio

Mary Beth Hammond
Vice Chair, Board of Trustees

Dr. Denise Smith
Provost and Vice President, Academic Affairs

Jeff Ganues
Owens grad, CFO and Vice President, Business Affairs

Dr. Steve Culbertson
Professor, Humanities

Jen Hazel
Professor, English

Jim Welling
Owens grad, former Owens Express men's basketball coach and Hall of Famer

Jennifer Strauss
Owens grad, Executive Director and Vice President, Nationwide Children's Hospital - Toledo

Conversations Podcast: Owens Community College 60th Anniversary Celebration

Owens Community College has celebrated 60 years of service to our students and our region during the 2025–26 academic year. As we wrap up our celebrations, we have brought together voices from across our institution and our community to share the Owens story. Listen for a reflection on the values that have guided Owens and continue to shape our future.

Guests in this episode:

- Randy Gardner, *former Chancellor, State of Ohio*
- Mary Beth Hammond, *Vice Chair, Owens Community College Board of Trustees*
- Dr. Denise Smith, *Owens Community College Provost and Vice President, Academic Affairs*
- Jeff Ganues, *an Owens grad who is CFO and Vice President, Business Affairs*
- Dr. Steve Culbertson, *Owens Community College Professor, Humanities*
- Jen Hazel, *Owens Community College Professor, English*
- Jim Welling, *an Owens grad who is the former Owens Express men's basketball coach and Hall of Famer*
- Jennifer Strauss, *an Owens grad who is Executive Director and Vice President, Nationwide Children's Hospital – Toledo*

Listen now: rss.com/podcasts/owenscccconversations
Also available on Amazon, Apple, Google, iHeart Media and Spotify.

Owens Invites Alumni to Participate in African American Festival Parade

The Owens Community College Office of Admissions and the Black Student Union is inviting Owens alumni to walk in the African American Festival Parade on **Saturday, July 18**. Participants wearing Owens shirts will meet at the **Toledo Urban Federal Credit Union (1441 Dorr St., Toledo) by 8:30 a.m.**

Please contact admissions@owens.edu to participate!



First Solar Grant Unlocks Free Summer Camps — and There's Something for Every Learner at Owens

Summer is a season of possibility, and Owens Community College's Work and Play program makes it easy for learners of all ages to make the most of it.

Adults can choose from in-person and online courses designed to fit busy schedules, including real estate and Microsoft Office training, robotics, photography, ceramics, phlebotomy, CPR and leadership development. Whether the goal is launching a new career, earning a short-term certificate or simply exploring something new, there's a path forward at Owens.

For younger learners, summer camps bring hands-on fun with real purpose. Kids can discover the world through the World Travelers camp, build coding skills with Scratch Jr. or try the brand-new AI and Machine Learning camp — an exciting introduction to one of today's fastest-growing fields.

This opportunity was funded by a grant from the First Solar Community Giving Fund of the Greater Toledo Community Foundation to support Summer Day Camp scholarships for children ages 5–12. The camps offer STEAM-focused education in a safe, fun and engaging environment designed to build critical thinking and problem-solving skills while nurturing each child's natural curiosity. Scholarships are available at no cost to families while funding lasts.

Registration is open now. Browse classes and camp options at owens.edu/camps. Call (567) 661-7357 to ask about scholarship funding.



Early Learning Center Pre-K Graduation

The Early Learning Center on the Findlay-area Campus celebrated their Pre-K graduates in May with a ceremony and fun! Good luck to the proud grads as they make their way to the new world of kindergarten in the fall.

Owens Trustee Mary Beth Hammond Named Chair-Elect of State's Community College Association

Owens Community College Board of Trustees member Mary Beth Hammond has been named chair-elect of the Ohio Association of Community Colleges, the statewide organization representing all 22 of Ohio's community colleges. Hammond has served on the Owens board since 2013 and on the OACC executive committee for more than two years, most recently as secretary.



A retired senior private banker and vice president with Fifth Third Bank, Hammond brings more than 30 years of financial and civic leadership to the role. Her commitment to the community college mission is personal — as a community college graduate herself, she has long championed the access and affordability that institutions like Owens provide to students across the region.

We congratulate Mary Beth on this well-deserved recognition!

Volleyball Prospect Camp Coming to Owens This July

Owens Community College will host a volleyball prospect camp on Wednesday, July 15, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Open to all high school

Eat, Drink and Support the Owens Foundation

Thank you for attending our Dine & Donate events!
If you missed the chance to participate this time, be sure

players, the camp offers a full day of skill development and college-level coaching experience for just \$75. Whether your athlete is exploring options or preparing for the next level, this is a great opportunity to get on the court at Owens.

To register or learn more, contact Express head volleyball coach Kacie Trame at kacie_trame@owens.edu.

to follow us on **Facebook** and **Instagram** to stay updated on future opportunities to dine, give back and support Owens.



foundation@owens.edu
owensalumni@owens.edu
(567) 661-7100



OWENS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
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Owens Community College | 30335 Oregon Road | Perrysburg, OH 43551 US

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