

March 18, 2026

# EMPLOYEE-FIRST MINDSET DRIVES HUMAN RESOURCES

The role of Human Resources at Middlesex College takes many forms.

“I like to tell people that I am an unofficial firefighter,” laughed Lyn Stephen, the Executive Director of Human Resources. “Our job is to provide solutions for complex problems and find a way to balance the employee experience with the student experience and make sure the mission and vision of the institution are all connected.”

Human Resources plays an important part in creating a positive environment for College employees. Stephen has streamlined the job responsibilities and titles for the individuals on her nine-person team, so that when employees have a question or concern, they know who to contact in Human Resources. She has opened lines of communication on Microsoft Teams so that her staff can address issues quickly, and she has given them the freedom to think outside the box to resolve issues.

“I am a problem solver,” said Anny Lantigua Jaquez, the acting Manager of Total Rewards and Employee Experience. “I want to be helpful.”

Customer service is the key to what Human Resources does. The staff understands that one of their core responsibilities is guiding employees through processes in ADP, the platform that handles human resources services including payroll, and helping them navigate the College’s various benefit offerings. They serve as a liaison between employees and the College’s systems and external partners, approaching every interaction with attentiveness and a customer-focused mindset.

“HR is like an advisor and partner that protects the College and serves the employees,” said Andrea Del Priore, Title Compensation and Labor Relations



Specialist. “We want to mitigate risk and be compliant with collective bargaining agreements, and we want to be equitable in our compensation structure. It ripples through every facet of the employee experience.”

The HR team seeks to direct employees to the right HR team member. The HR office in Chambers Hall is also equipped to mentor students working there to create a talent pipeline to Human Resources or the workforce.

There are some obstacles that are not easily resolved. Many employee issues are related to benefits provided by the State of New Jersey or other external partners, and getting a quick answer is sometimes challenging. These limitations can understandably cause frustration for employees, and at times, that frustration is directed toward Human Resources despite the fact that the issues originated outside of the College’s control.

“We work to ensure that employees understand where gaps in our processes may arise, and although certain elements are beyond our control, we consistently engage with our external partners to encourage timely attention to pending matters,” Stephen said.

# WHAT'S HAPPENING ON CAMPUS

## NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH KEAN UNIVERSITY

Middlesex College signed an articulation agreement with Kean University, a top transfer destination for our Education students, creating a clear pathway for transfer students by reducing credit loss, delays, and unnecessary costs as they move toward obtaining their teaching certification. The partnership with Kean will allow students looking to obtain a degree in Elementary Education K-6 with Endorsement in Teaching for Students with Disability (TSD), Early Childhood Education P-3 with Endorsement in TSD, or Elementary Education Option in Bilingual Education Certification K-6 to transfer seamlessly. Removing these barriers amid New Jersey's ongoing teacher shortage is a win for local schools and communities seeking educators ready to teach. The agreement was developed in collaboration with Education Professor **Pattiann McMahon**, Acting Department Chair **Giuseppe Rotolo**, and Dean **Tim Hack** along with Kean University faculty and staff.



## CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Our Edison Campus and New Brunswick and Perth Amboy Centers honored Black History Month in various ways throughout the month of February. Both Centers created daily spotlights in main student areas that uplifted key figures in Black culture and showcased history. The New Brunswick Center and Edison campus hosted Black History Kahoot trivia as well as Black History movie screenings, showcasing Black storytelling. The Edison campus hosted a jam session with Mitch Matlock and the Live Radio Band in the College Center Main Lounge. The events, organized by Student Life Director **Zulema Cheek** and her team, provided students with meaningful opportunities to reflect on Black history, celebrate cultural contributions, and engage in important conversations about perseverance, and advocacy.

# INTERCOLLEGIATE DIALOGUE

Over 50 students, faculty members, and administrators gathered in West Hall for the Middlesex College X Raritan Valley Community College Interactive Dialogue. The event, hosted by Middlesex College's **Political Science Club**, was the first of its kind between New Jersey community colleges and was designed to foster student engagement and build meaningful cross-campus partnerships. The event featured breakout groups, where random groups of participants discussed and then shared their thoughts about challenges they encountered at their institution. The dialogue concluded with student-driven actions aimed at strengthening engagement and leadership across campuses. The goal of the Political Science Club is that this event will spark more collaborations and partnerships with other institutions.



# OUR HONORS STUDENTS SHINE



Students **Mariela Flores** and **Victor Gil** were awarded a Scholarship for Equity and Access Award from the Northeast Regional Honors Council (NRHC). To qualify for this award, students must belong to a traditionally underrepresented group, have a recommendation from an administrator of the Honors Program, and have their presentation proposals accepted for an upcoming conference. The students submitted a personal statement as well as their proposals – Mariela's being "The Epicurean Survey: Fostering Well-Being Within the Campus Community," and Victor's "The Socially Aware Homo Sapiens: Conservation Efforts and Social Media." The students, accompanied by Honors Program Coordinator **Claire Condie** and Professor **Jennifer Applebee**, presented their proposals at the NRHC Conference.

# FEEDING OUR STUDENTS



For the past year, members of the **Sri Radha Gopinath Temple** in Edison have been preparing and delivering hot meals on Thursdays for Middlesex College students to pick up in the College Center. The effort is in contribution to the World Food Movement, an initiative to serve free, fresh, and nutritious meals to everyone in need and build a healthier and happier world. The Temple began serving meals in February in the College Center lobby on Thursday afternoons, which will continue throughout the Spring semester. Many of our students face food insecurity, with over 500 students acquiring services at our Middlesex College Resource Hub and Food Pantry in the Fall semester. Edison Mayor **Sam Joshi** and Middlesex College President **Mark McCormick** joined the Temple members in serving meals to our students at the inaugural meal.

## CONNECTIONS

External Partner(s)	Middlesex College Representatives	Action
Old Bridge Township Public Schools	President McCormick, Vice Presidents Laureano and Miller, Deans Aydin, Hack and Rodriguez-Gregory, and Acting K-12 Partnership Director Mooney	Discussed ways to expand the partnership with the College

## OUTREACH

Date(s)	Outreach Activity	Location or Means of Access
Thursday, February 19	Dunellen High School College Fair	Dunellen
Thursday, February 19	Perth Amboy High School-Application Assistance	Perth Amboy
Friday, February 20	Lord Stirling School Career Day	New Brunswick
Saturday, February 21	2026 Black History Month Program-HBCUs	Linden
Wednesday, February 25	Fast-Track Admissions Day	Edison Campus
Wednesday, February 25	Metuchen High School College Fair	Metuchen
Wednesday, February 25	Satisfactory Academic Progress Workshop	New Brunswick Center
Wednesday, February 25	Satisfactory Academic Progress Workshop	Perth Amboy Center
Thursday, February 26	JFK Hospital College Fair	Edison
Saturday, February 28	Menlo Park Mall Camp Fair	Edison
Tuesday, March 3	East Brunswick High School College Fair	East Brunswick
Tuesday, March 3	North Plainfield High School Vocational Employment Fair	North Plainfield
Tuesday, March 3	On-site ESL Placement Testing	Perth Amboy Center
Thursday, March 4	Budgeting for College Students Workshop	New Brunswick Center
Saturday, March 7	Mini Open House and Resource Fair	New Brunswick Center
Sunday March 8	Middlesex College Summer Camp Open House	Edison
Thursday, March 12	Perth Amboy Small Business Expo – Information Table	Perth Amboy Center
Tuesday, March 16	On-site ESL Placement Testing	Perth Amboy Center
Multiple Times	Admissions Information Session*	Virtual Events
Multiple Times	FAFSA on Demand Workshop*	Virtual Events
On an ongoing basis	Live chat appointments*	Via the web

\*in English and Spanish

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Date	Event	Location or Means of Access
Wednesday, April 8* and Thursday, April 9*	Board Committee Meetings	Via Zoom
Wednesday, April 15 5 p.m.	Board meeting	Boardroom and via Zoom

\*Schedule TBD