

Support Staff Employee of the Year

Nancy Jones was recognized by the college's Classified Association for her innovative approach to lab learning during the pandemic. Jones is the lab science manager on the Portsmouth Campus.

"There are many people deserving of this award and I'm humbled and honored to be recognized in this way," Jones said.

Jones, 63, typically sets up labs for science students, but the transition to virtual learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic prompted Jones to work with professors for a solution for at-home lab work. Typically, science kits for at-home labs cost students \$140. Jones used everyday items, including peroxide, vinegar, food coloring, sugar and fruit to make kits that were free of charge for students.

Jones, a Suffolk resident, collected and assembled all the nonperishable items for the kits in her home and even color-coded them for easy distribution at the Portsmouth Campus. When students came to campus to pick up the kits during a drive-through event, she even ensured they had the right size gloves before they left campus.

"The pandemic was difficult for everyone, and I was glad to do my part to facilitate learning," Jones said. "It was wonderful to connect with students while being COVID-19 compliant."

Jones also volunteered with The Community Feed at TCC at MacArthur Center and at Foodbank pop-up markets on Portsmouth Campus where she bagged up collard greens and other vegetables for students.

She served as co-chair of the Classified Association and developed mini-zoom events to answer COVID-19 pandemic questions and facilitate the staff's return to work.

"The college community has been a very important part of my life," Jones said. Six months after I started here full-time, my husband died unexpectedly. The job saved me, and the people here became my family."

Jones enjoys gardening, quilting, reading and travel. She has rescued many cats and a few dogs and given them a home on her farm.

Wage Employee of the Year

TCC alum **Daniel Owens**, the reference desk assistant in the Joint-Use Library, is the Wage Employee of the Year. Owens, 42, started at TCC as a student worker in 1996 and has been a dedicated library staffer for more than 25 years.

"The atmosphere at TCC makes this a great place to work," Owens said. "The students are my priority, and my goal is to always get them the answers and resources they need."

The Virginia Beach resident earned an Associate of Science in Computer Science at TCC in 2002.

"When facing any challenge at work, Danny's creativity and technical know-how often combine to result in a solution that is not necessarily obvious but usually works out better in the end for the patron," said Brittany Horn, interim director of the JUL. "Danny has an amazing, understated way of interacting with the wide variety of library users we see every day. He is requested frequently by students and public patrons returning to the library because he demonstrates knowledgeability, competence and patience."

Owens enjoys wood burning, model cars, and his Raspberry Pi web server. In his free time, Owens spends time playing pool in the Virginia Beach Student Center.