OLNEY CENTRAL COLLEGE

KNIGHTLINE

NOVEMBER 2026

CALENDAR

November

7-13 — National Radiologic Technologists Week

11 — Campus Closed, Veterans Day

25 — Last Day to Withdraw from Fall Semester Classes

20-21 — Madagascar, OCC Theater, 7 p.m.

21-22 — Madagascar, OCC Theater, 2 p.m.

26-27 — Thanksgiving Break

30 — Final Day for Food Drive Donations

December

3 — OCC Community Choir Christmas Concert, OCC Theater, 7 p.m.

11 — Last Day of Fall Semester Classes

12 — Music Department Instrumental Concert, OCC Theater, 7 p.m.

14-17 — Final Exams

18 — Last Day of Fall Semester

21-31— Campus Closed, Winter Break



Dr. James Sigler (right), STEM Dean of Instruction at Illinois Eastern Community Colleges, showcases equipment in the newly renovated biology lab during the Science Labs Open House on October 20. The event gave community members an opportunity to tour the updated facilities and see the improvements firsthand.

Olney Central College opens door to new era of science education

Olney Central College welcomed community members, alumni and prospective students to its Science Labs Open House on October 20, offering an opportunity to tour the newly renovated facilities in Dr. Kent L. Wattleworth Hall.

"The Science Labs Open House was a terrific opportunity to showcase the transformation of the four labs," said OCC President Chris Simpson. "Those that attended were able to see firsthand how these renovations will enhance the teaching and learning experience for faculty and students."

The extensive $2 million project transformed OCC's existing physics, chemistry and two biology laboratories into modern, high-tech learning environments featuring updated flooring, cabinetry, equipment and technology.

"We were thrilled by the response to the renovated science labs," Simpson said of the Open House. "Visitors were not only impressed by the modern appearance of the labs, but also by the enhanced functionality and opportunities to provide for hands-on learning."



During the Science Labs Open House, OCC Assistant Professor of Life Sciences Chris Mathews demonstrates the Anatomage Table, which was relocated to the newly renovated laboratory.

The labs opened for student use in mid-September and have been well received.

"I think it looks nice, clean and aesthetically pleasing," OCC student Tori France said of the updated lab where her biology class meets. "It looks how you would picture a college science lab. I especially like the new lab tables. It's easier to see our professor when he is teaching, compared to the old lower tables where we were all clustered together. It's definitely a more open environment for learning."

The renovation project received extensive financial support from the OCC Foundation through the purchase of new equipment including a $10,000 water purification system.

The organization awarded faculty an additional $18,200 in mini grants to procure instructional equipment.



OCC Assistant Professor of Life Sciences Nick Short discusses the improvements to the science facilities with OCC Foundation Executive Board Member Sherry Brauer during the Science Labs Open House.

"We are deeply grateful to the OCC Foundation and its donors for their support of this project," Simpson said. "Their investment in these renovated science labs is an investment in our students, our faculty, and our community."



OCC's new Athletic Meeting Room provides student-athletes with a dedicated space to gather, study and relax between classes. The welcoming environment also offers a place for prospective student-athletes and their families to meet with coaches during campus visits.

OCC creates new space for student-athletes

A former nursing classroom is finding new life as a welcoming space for Olney Central College student-athletes.

Located on the second floor of Dr. Kent L. Wattleworth Hall, Room 217/218 is being transformed into a place where OCC Knights can gather, study and relax between classes.

"A dedicated athletic space sends a message to our student-athletes that they matter and that we value their contributions to our institution," said Dean of Instruction Amy Tarr, who was instrumental in bringing the project to fruition. "Athletics is about more than competition. It is about building relationships, developing character, creating connections and fostering a sense of pride in being part of a team. Having a modern, welcoming space helps create that identity and reinforces that they are an important part of the OCC community."

Athletic Director Nick Short says the new Athletic Meeting Room is a valuable addition for the OCC teams.

"We've never really had an athlete-dedicated space outside the ball fields and the gym," he said. "Now we have a very nice space. It's something I think our athletes will enjoy and appreciate. It also creates more space for study tables, especially when students are working together on projects."

Efforts to refurbish the room began following the Nursing Department's move to the new Health Professions Center earlier this year. Improvements have continued throughout the fall with the addition of new furniture including comfortable chairs and couches along with eye-catching environmental graphics.

Student-athletes also volunteered their time to help repaint the room, which is located outside the Learning Commons.

"It's very much a multifunctional space, and it's still evolving," Short said. "Once we get the TV installed and see how much room we have, my plan is to display the team pictures each year, along with photos of past players that will



Members of the OCC Men's Basketball team review game footage in the new Athletic Meeting Room, using the dedicated space for team preparation and collaboration.

become permanent fixtures in the room. Those details are already in the works."

In addition to serving current students, the Athletic Meeting Room will provide a welcoming place for prospective student-athletes and their families to converse with coaches during campus visits. Short has already put the room to use for recruitment.

"It's somewhere they can talk that is inviting and not a cramped office," he said.

Tarr sees the room as an important recruitment tool, giving prospective students a look at OCC's commitment to its athletic programs.

"When prospective student-athletes visit our campus, we want them to see firsthand that OCC is invested in their experience and committed to providing an environment where they can grow, succeed, and feel that they belong," she said.

OCC Men's Basketball Coach Grayson Flittner says his players are already taking advantage of the room for team film sessions, reviewing game and practice footage, as well as study sessions and recruiting visits.

"We appreciate having another space available to support our program both on and off the court," he added.

Short expressed appreciation to the administration for making the project possible and providing the room for OCC's student-athletes.

"I want to thank Amy Tarr and Chris Simpson for spearheading this and securing the funds to support it," he said. "We're very grateful for their support and efforts to provide this dedicated space. It's a wonderful addition. I want to thank the student-athletes who helped as well."

Knights Tip Off Their Seasons



The 2026-2027 Lady Knights Basketball Team includes Rayci Phelps, Taylyn Banta, Lanie Lipps, Kelysse Weiler, Melaina Zedalis, Jamia Jones, Caitlee Gray, Julia Lashley, Jenna Roth, Raven Jones, Emma Gregg, Calajia Mason, Maya Jackson, Olivia Lemke and Amiya Ray.



The 2026-2027 Men's Basketball Team includes Ozzy Ash-Holloway, Ian Macon, Miles Woodfork, Jamael Cosley, Jordan Babcock, Jaydon Eldridge, Raphael Nibishaka-Guiraud, Rokas Liucvaikis, Isaiah Beauchamp, Tyson Baumgardner, Gavin Woelfle, Tim Dahlin, Jayden Goff and Cedric Schall.

Spring registration now underway

Spring registration is now underway. Stop by Student Services or call 618-395-7777 to schedule an appointment with an advisor.

The Spring 2027 schedule is available at www.iecc.edu/schedules.

OCC is offering several spring Community Education classes including Community Band, Fused Glass Art, Woodworking and Open Art Studio.

For more information and a complete listing of classes, visit www.iecc.edu/communityed.

Spring classes start January 11.

Sports Schedule

Women's Basketball

November 13 — vs. Milwaukee Area Technical College at Lincoln Land, 7:30 p.m.
November 14 — vs. College of Lake County, at Lincoln Land, 3 p.m.
November 18 — vs. Lewis & Clark, 5:30 p.m. at home
November 19 — vs. Three Rivers, 5 p.m. at home
November 28 — vs. Jefferson College, 1 p.m. at home
December 2 — at Danville Area, 5 p.m.
December 9 — at Rend Lake, 5 p.m.
December 12 — at Wabash Valley, 1 p.m.
December 15 — vs. Kaskaskia, 5 p.m. at home

Men's Basketball

November 11 — vs. Western Kentucky Community & Technical, 7 p.m. at home
November 14 — at State Fair Community, 3 p.m.
November 18 — vs. Greenville, 7 p.m. at home
November 24 — vs. Mineral Area, 5 p.m. at home
November 28 — vs. Jefferson College, 3 p.m. at home
December 2 — vs. SEMO Prep, 7 p.m. at home
December 5 — vs. St. Mary-of-the-Woods, 3 p.m. at home
December 9 — vs. Rend Lake, 7 p.m. at home
December 12 — at Wabash Valley, 3 p.m.

Tickets now on sale for OCC Theater's Madagascar

Tickets are now on sale for Olney Central College Theatre's production of *Madagascar – A Musical Adventure,* bringing the wild and wacky world of Alex the Lion and his friends to the Dr. John D. Stull Performing Arts Center November 20-22.



Get ready to "Move It, Move It!" as the beloved Dream Works animated movie comes to life on stage in this fun-filled musical adventure for audiences of all ages.

The production follows Alex the Lion, Marty the Zebra, Melman the Giraffe, Gloria the Hippo and a hilarious crew of penguins as they escape New York's Central Park Zoo and embark on an unexpected journey.

Alex is the king of the urban jungle and the star attraction at the Central Park Zoo. Along with his best friends Marty, Melman and Gloria, he has spent his entire life enjoying the comforts of captivity. But when Marty's curiosity gets the better of him, he escapes with help from the mischievous penguins, setting the friends on a wild adventure far beyond the zoo.

Filled with colorful characters, laugh-out-loud moments and an upbeat musical score, *Madagascar – A Musical Adventure* brings the popular story to life on stage.

Performances are scheduled for Friday, November 20, at 7 p.m.; Saturday, November 21, at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.; and Sunday, November 22, at 2 p.m. Performances will be held at the Dr. John D. Stull Performing Arts Center.

Tickets are $14 each and may be purchased at www.iecc.edu/occ/theater.

Madagascar — A Musical Adventure is sponsored by The Glover Chair of Music.

Bryce Weiler shares experiences and insights with OCC students

Bryce Weiler recently returned to Olney Central College to share his experiences and insights on accessibility and inclusion with students in Shasta Bennett and Jervaise McDaniel's College Success courses.

A sports commentator and disability consultant, Weiler draws on his personal experiences with blindness to help organizations improve accessibility and create more inclusive environments.

He has worked with professional organizations, including the Baltimore Orioles, and is co-founder of the Beautiful Lives Project, a nonprofit dedicated to creating opportunities for individuals with disabilities to participate in sports.

During his visit, Weiler encouraged students to consider the importance of inclusion and the ways individuals and organizations can help create opportunities for everyone.



Associate Professor Shasta Bennett introduces guest speaker Bryce Weiler to students in the College Success courses.

OCC Student Senate hosting annual Food Drive

Olney Central College's Student Senate is collecting food donations to help support students and families in the community.

Donations of nonperishable food items may be placed in the collection bins located outside Student Services.

The collection is part of a friendly competition among all four Illinois Eastern Community Colleges campuses to see which campus can gather the most donations.

Contributions also count toward IECC's participation in the Illinois Community Colleges Feed the Need food drive. Last year, IECC finished among the Top Five participating colleges.

This year, the campuses hope to build on that success and make an even greater impact by working together to help address food needs in their communities.

Every donation makes a difference.



The OCC Student Senate is hosting its annual Food Drive. Donations of nonperishable items may be placed in the bins outside Student Services.

OCC Student Senate encourages everyone to participate and help fill the bins before the November 30 deadline.

Christian Connections Club focuses on faith and fellowship

A new student organization at Olney Central College is providing Christian students with opportunities to connect with one another, grow in their faith and serve the campus and surrounding community.

"The Christian Connections Club started out of a need for Christian students to connect with one another," said Advisor Curtis Miller. "I had three separate students ask about doing a Christian club on campus, so from those conversations, this club was formed. It really exists to connect our students to other Christians and community churches."

The club's first project is participating in Operation Christmas Child. Members collected toys and other items to fill shoeboxes for children in need around the world.

Students interested in joining the Christian Connections Club are welcome to attend the weekly meetings at 2:30 p.m. on Wednesdays in Dr. Kent L. Wattleworth Hall Room 114.



Members of OCC's newly formed Christian Connections Club came together to pack shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child, an annual project that delivers gift-filled boxes to children around the world.