

DELAWARE TECH

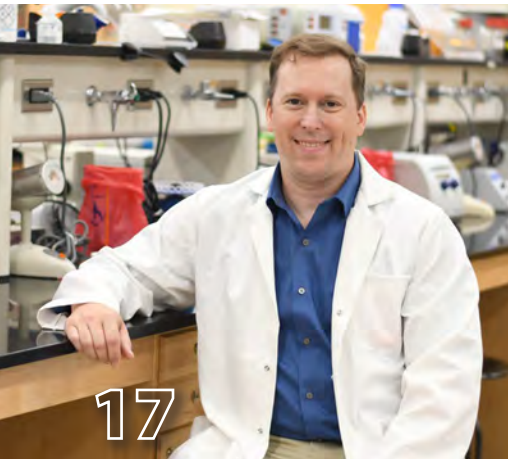
dtcc.edu

A Publication for Alumni and Friends of the College | Fall 2024



Back to School:

Del Tech and Local School Districts
Create Teacher Pipeline



17



33



43

FEATURES

- 5 **VETERINARY TECHNOLOGY EXPANDS TO OFFER LEARNING LAB AT STANTON CAMPUS**
The Delaware Tech veterinary technology program has expanded to offer a state-of-the-art learning laboratory at the Stanton Campus.
- 11 **CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2024**
Delaware Tech celebrated the 1,881 graduates in the Class of 2024 during commencement exercises in all three counties in May.
- 27 **ADVENTURES AWAIT AT DELAWARE TECH**
Delaware Tech's Outdoor Adventure Club encourages nature enthusiasts and adventure seekers to meet friends with similar interests through exciting indoor and outdoor activities.
- 41 **ALLIED HEALTH CAPITAL PROJECTS**
Delaware Tech students training for careers in the healthcare industry will benefit from two major building renovations at the College on the Dover and Wilmington campuses.
- 47 **NEWARK CAFÉ OFFERS STEPPING STONE FOR ALUMNI**
The Peach Blossom Eatery has created professional opportunities for Delaware Tech graduates pursuing careers in the restaurant industry.

COVER STORY



- 7 **BACK TO SCHOOL: DEL TECH AND LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS CREATE TEACHER PIPELINE**
The first graduates of Delaware Tech's new Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education program walked across the stage in May and will be leading their own classrooms in Delaware schools this fall.





DELAWARE TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

“Thank you to our students, alumni, faculty, staff, and community friends for your continued support of the College. We could not achieve our mission of keeping students at the center of everything we do without you.”




As we kick off a new fall semester at Delaware Technical Community College, we want to take a moment to reflect on our successes during the 2023-24 academic year. We celebrated the first class of our new Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education (BSE) program, along with all of the 1,881 graduates who completed their studies this year thanks to their hard work, grit, and determination.

Our BSE graduates have just started their teaching careers in Delaware schools, helping to address the growing teacher shortage impacting our state and the nation. Because most Delaware Tech graduates stay in Delaware, this program enables local school districts to “grow their own” teachers when they hire back former district students once they are certified to teach. This year’s BSE graduates completed a year-long residency program in some of Delaware’s public schools, providing them the opportunity to work alongside experienced teachers from their first day of the school year all the way through until the last day, preparing them for their own classrooms this fall.

In addition to our academic success stories, we have continued to make progress on some extensive renovation projects underway collegewide, thanks to funding provided as a result of Senate Substitute 2 for Senate Bill 50, passed by the General Assembly and signed by Governor John Carney in 2019. This legislation has enabled us to address longstanding deferred maintenance issues on all four campuses while also creating beautiful new spaces for our students, faculty, and staff. Our Terry Campus renovation

should be completed this fall and will create a one-stop Student Success Center to bring critical services such as advisement, admissions, financial aid, and veterans support together in one central location for our students. And at our Stanton Campus, we are working to finish a new Child Development Center (CDC), which has been a long-awaited addition, as that campus has been the only one of our four without a CDC. Another major renovation to our Stanton Campus is the expansion of our culinary arts facility, which will provide our culinary students with a state-of-the-art kitchen to prepare them for their careers after graduation.

You can learn about all of this and more in this issue of our magazine. And once again, thank you to our students, alumni, faculty, staff, and community friends for your continued support of the College. We could not achieve our mission of keeping students at the center of everything we do without you. 

Dr. Mark T. Brainard, President

 @DrMarkBrainard

 @DrMarkBrainard



DELAWARE
 TECHNICAL  COMMUNITY
COLLEGE

100 Campus Drive | Dover, DE 19904
 dtcc.edu

MISSION STATEMENT

Students are at the center of everything we do. We empower students to change their lives through comprehensive educational opportunities and holistic support services that promote equitable outcomes. As the state’s only community college, we provide quality education that responds to workforce and community needs, leverages partnerships, and strengthens Delaware’s economy. We embrace the diversity of all individuals by nurturing an inclusive culture that institutionalizes access and equity for student success.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- Nancy J. Shevock, *Chairman*
- Patti A. Grimes, *Vice Chairman*
- Robert E. Hagerty, *Secretary*
- Michael J. Hare, *Treasurer*
- Colonel Joseph A. Cooke, Jr.
- Diane F. Glenn
- Lolita A. Lopez

- John M. Maiorano
Trustee Emeritus
- ~
- Dr. Mark T. Brainard
College President

MAGAZINE PRODUCTION TEAM

Crystal L. Mintzer
Vice President for External Relations

DESIGN

Thomas W. Burn III
 Kiley Chafin • Shari Swanson

WRITERS

Kate Bailey
 Jennifer Brestel • Catherine Kempista
 John Painter • Janelle T. Shellabarger

PHOTOGRAPHY

Tamara Black • Jason Burlew
 Ben Fulton • Cherie Roberts
 Justin Taylor • Charles Uniatowski
 Joseph Wagner

PRESIDENT’S COUNCIL

- Dr. Bobbi J. Barends
*Vice President and Campus Director
 Owens Campus*
- Janis Beach
Vice President for Human Resources
- Gail Charrier
*Associate Vice President for
 Student Affairs*
- Daniel Ehmann
*Vice President and Campus Director
 Stanton Campus*
- Dr. Elizabeth Groller
*Director of Civil Rights and
 Title IX Compliance*
- Kimberly G. Holston
Executive Assistant to the President
- Michael S. Jackson
Vice President for Finance
- Cornelia Johnson
*Vice President for Diversity, Equity,
 and Inclusion*
- Dr. Lora A. Johnson
*Vice President and Campus Director
 George Campus*

- Crystal L. Mintzer
*Vice President for
 External Relations*
- Dr. Chris Moody
*Associate Vice President for Workforce
 Development and Community Education*
- Dr. Paul T. Morris, Jr.
*Vice President and Campus Director
 Terry Campus*
- Dr. Lisa Peel
*Associate Vice President for
 Academic Affairs*
- Tom Rainer, Jr.
*Vice President for
 Information Technology*
- Brian D. Shirey, Esq.
General Counsel
- John Slank
Director of Public Safety
- Dr. Justina M. Thomas
Vice President for Academic Affairs

ARE YOU AN ALUMNI OR FRIEND OF DELAWARE TECH?



Connect with us by scanning the QR code and filling out this simple form. To update your contact information, learn more about the College’s initiatives, volunteer at a campus event, share your success story – or all of the above. We want to hear from you!

Delaware Technical Community College is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender orientation, gender identity or pregnancy, or any other classifications protected by federal, state, and local law.

Reports of sexual misconduct and/or discrimination, involving any student or employee of Delaware Technical Community College should be directed to the Title IX/Civil Rights Coordinator or Section 504 Coordinator, at civilrights@dtcc.edu, (302) 857-1903. Reports may also be mailed in writing to Delaware Technical Community College, P.O. Box 897, 100 Campus Drive, Dover, Delaware 19904.



The Legacy of **Dr. Orlando J. George, Jr.** *December 14, 1945 - May 27, 2024*

Dr. Orlando J. “Lonnie” George, Jr. had a distinguished 45-year career at Delaware Tech, culminating in his leadership as the College’s fourth president, a role he held from 1995 until 2014. His tenure as president was transformative, as he structured the four-campus, multi-site statewide system into a one-college reality.

“Dr. George expanded access for our students, enhanced the quality of our programs, and built a foundation for continued growth that will benefit Delaware Tech students for many years to come,” said College President Mark T. Brainard. “Lonnie was a loyal friend, a great mentor, and a fierce advocate for Delaware Tech. He will truly be missed by many.”

While George may be most readily remembered from his time as president, his legacy at the College goes beyond those years. The first in his family to attend college, he turned education and teaching into a lifelong career that evolved into a lifelong commitment to Delaware Tech.

George started at Delaware Tech in 1969 as a math instructor. From there, he became department chair, assistant to the campus director, dean of instruction, assistant campus director, and vice president and campus director before becoming president.

To commemorate George’s dedication and contributions to Delaware Tech, the Delaware General Assembly named the College’s Wilmington campus after him upon his retirement. In addition, the Delaware Tech Board of Trustees honored him with the College’s prestigious Paul K. Weatherly Award.

Also known for his public service outside of Delaware Tech, Gov. Jack Markell presented George with the Order of the First State, Delaware’s highest accolade. George served on the

Wilmington City Council from 1972 to 1974, before being elected to the Delaware House of Representatives, where he served from 1974 to 1995. As a state representative, he held a number of leadership positions including minority leader, chairman of the Joint Finance Committee, and speaker of the House.

“Dr. George expanded access for our students, enhanced the quality of our programs, and built a foundation for continued growth that will benefit Delaware Tech students for many years to come.”

~ Dr. Mark T. Brainard

Keeping in the spirit of George’s longstanding commitment to the College and support of its students, his family contributed \$100,000 to the Delaware Technical Community College Education Foundation in his memory during a Celebration of Life event in Wilmington.

In 1995, the Dr. Orlando J. George, Jr. & Mrs. Linda K. George Scholarship Endowment was created to benefit Delaware Tech students who wanted to change their lives through higher education. Contributions honoring George’s memory can be made to the endowment by visiting dtcc.edu/makeagift. ♦



Veterinary Technology Expands with State-of-the-Art Learning Lab at Stanton Campus



Karen Cucinotta recently joined the faculty at Delaware Tech as a full-time veterinary technology instructor at the Stanton Campus.

Karen Cucinotta knew as a child that she would work with animals one day. When asked, “What do you want to be when you grow up?,” she would likely have proclaimed, “Veterinarian!” However, as she grew older and began looking closer at her options, she gravitated to a career as a veterinary technician due to the hands-on nature of the job and the ability to work closely with animal owners.

“Growing up I always had pets and a love for animals, but my interest in their health and wellbeing is what drew me to a career in veterinary medicine,” said Cucinotta, a 2011 graduate of Delaware Tech’s veterinary technology program.

After spending the past 15 years working in emergency and specialty veterinary medicine, she has returned to her alma mater as a full-time instructor and will teach in the program’s new veterinary technology learning lab at the Stanton Campus.

“As a graduate, I always hoped one day I would have the opportunity to become an instructor,” Cucinotta said. “I also enjoyed training new technicians in my specialty and sharing my passion in practice. Observing students’ progress and development as they grasp new concepts and skills and then seeing them apply what they have learned is incredibly rewarding.”

Delaware Tech’s veterinary technology program has served the entire state of Delaware since its accreditation by the American Veterinary Medicine Association (AVMA) in 2002. Primarily housed at the College’s Owens Campus in Georgetown, the addition of the instructional lab at the Stanton Campus will expand access and enrollment to the statewide program.

“We are delighted to make the veterinary technology program more accessible to students in the northern part of the state,” said Department Chairperson and Instructor Lisa Garrison. “It is so exciting to increasingly provide the northern part of the state with skilled, educated, and prepared veterinary technicians.”

To be a veterinary technician, students must successfully graduate from an AVMA-accredited veterinary technician program, pass the Veterinary Technician National Exam (VTNE), and acquire licensure in the state of their choice. In 2024, Delaware Tech saw a 100-percent pass rate for the VTNE, and 100 percent of graduates are employed in the industry.

Students in the program are exposed to small, large, and exotic animal species to prepare for a variety of career paths in the field of veterinary technology. Both the Stanton and Owens campuses are equipped with state-of-the-art veterinary medical equipment, such as digital





radiology, anesthesia monitors, and blood-lab analyzers. Through instructional time in the classroom, hands-on labs, and clinical rotations, students are exposed to the broad scope of practice for veterinary technicians.

Graduates are typically employed at veterinary hospitals under the direction of a veterinarian, but other potential career options include practicing in zoo medicine, animal welfare, and research medicine. Some graduates choose to continue their education and work toward a bachelor's degree or a veterinary technician specialty.

Garrison, who has been a full-time faculty member at Delaware Tech for 20 years, has played a role in the educational journey and success of every one of the College's veterinary technology graduates.

"I enjoy working with students and seeing them achieve their goals when they graduate from the program," she said. "I take great pride in the impact I have had on their lives."

The veterinary technology program typically accepts 20 students in the fall



semester at the Owens Campus. Ten additional students were accepted for the 2024 fall semester at the Stanton Campus.

"I am thrilled to be a part of the team and to provide more graduating, licensed veterinary technicians to veterinary facilities in the northern part of the state,"

Cucinotta said. "My hope is that it will be an exciting and excellent career option for students of northern Delaware."

Garrison and Cucinotta teach alongside fellow full-time instructor Autumn Cooper and a group of dedicated adjunct instructors. Cooper is also a graduate of the program.

"As a graduate of the veterinary technology program

and current faculty member, I have been blessed to be affiliated with Delaware Tech," Cooper said. "I believe that veterinary technicians are an integral part of the veterinary medical team. Our graduate veterinary technicians are educated medical professionals – I could not be prouder of them."

The program instructors hope students leave the program with the knowledge, technical skills, and confidence to begin their careers as veterinary technicians.

"Success as a veterinary technician will look different for every student," Cucinotta said, "but I hope it includes continued excitement, passion, and growth in the field wherever it may take them."

For more information on the veterinary technology program, visit dtcc.edu/programs. ❖



Back to School:

Del Tech and Local School Districts Create Teacher Pipeline



After Daniel Shockley graduated from Milford High School in 2019, he headed to the Pratt Institute in New York to major in construction management. But that plan didn't work out, so he returned to Milford and enrolled in the elementary education program at Delaware Technical Community College.

During the start of his second year in the associate degree program, the College announced it was adding a new Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education (BSE) program that would start the fall after Shockley's graduation.

"Such perfect timing!" he said. "I just took that as a sign that I am doing what I should be doing, which is heading into the pathway of teaching."

Shockley was one of 28 members of the first graduating class of Delaware Tech's BSE program in May 2024, and like most of his fellow graduates from the program, he has a teaching job lined up for the fall. He will teach fourth grade at Benjamin Banneker Elementary School in the same classroom where he did his yearlong teaching residency during the 2023-24 school year.

"Milford's my home, and nothing makes me happier than to give back and teach the kids in my community, seeing them grow," he said. "When I walk into my classroom, it just makes me feel happy that I chose the teaching career."

Delaware Tech introduced its BSE program in fall 2022. The program was designed at the request of Delaware's public school superintendents to create a pipeline for aspiring teachers who want to stay in Delaware, filling vacancies created by the current teacher shortage.

The BSE program is the College's second bachelor's degree program and combines coursework with immersive experiences designed for teacher candidates who have acquired an Associate of Arts in Teaching. Students in the program are required to complete a yearlong residency during their final year. Other universities in the state offer a residency option, but Delaware Tech has made it a requirement for graduation. Unlike traditional student teaching, the residency program lasts an entire school year, with residents being matched with the same teacher from beginning to end.

Students in the College's initial residency offering were placed among the participating school districts of Appoquinimink, Caesar Rodney, Cape Henlopen, Capital, Colonial, Indian River, Milford, Seaford, and Smyrna, as well as Academia Antonia Alonso Charter School in Newark.

"Instead of someone coming in and being like a guest in the classroom, they are a partner from the very beginning," said Smyrna School District Superintendent Susan Brown.

As far as students in the classroom are concerned, they have two teachers, she said.

"[Residents] really know what it is to be a teacher from pre-service to putting students on buses on the last day of school," she said.

From left to right: Kelly Holt, director of curriculum for the Smyrna School District; Susan Brown, Smyrna School District superintendent; Daniel Shockley, graduate of the Delaware Tech Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education (BSE) program; and Jill Austin, Delaware Tech's collegewide director of the BSE program.

"Milford's my home, and nothing makes me happier than to give back and teach the kids in my community, seeing them grow. When I walk into my classroom, it just makes me feel happy that I chose the teaching career."

~ Daniel Shockley

BSE graduate Amber Smithmeyer is grateful for that experience, which allowed her to attend orientation with new teachers before students started at Mispillion Elementary School in the Milford School District, where she did her residency alongside a first-grade teacher.

"We were there literally from beginning to end," she said. "It was very rewarding to see the progress with the kids I met on the very first day by the time they reached the end of the school year."

Smithmeyer was offered a first-grade teaching position at Banneker Elementary School for the fall. At the time of publication for this magazine, she was one of 27 BSE graduates to have placements in Delaware schools for the 2024-25 school year. Of those, four are returning to their home districts.

Jill Austin, collegewide director of the BSE program, said word of the new bachelor's degree program spread quickly and was welcomed by both former and current students at the College.



“I had so many students say they didn’t want to leave Delaware Tech because it was like home to them,” she said. “Now, it’s so nice because we have students coming back from other universities.”

Celeste Bunting, director of human resources for the Indian River School District, said her district is “extremely grateful” that Delaware Tech started the BSE program. Indian River was so impressed with their BSE residents that they offered teaching positions to all of them for the upcoming school year.

“We did this huge, almost like speed-dating interview with our elementary school principals,” she said. “We have placed all of our Del Tech residents. The market is so competitive right now with teaching that we knew we had to grab them early.”

Bunting considers the residency to be a “yearlong job interview.” She said the Delaware Tech students were so well prepared by the end of the residency year, “I have principals fighting over having them in their schools.”

BSE graduate Dalton Vidrine said the residency provided excellent preparation for his first teaching job at North Dover Elementary School this fall.

“We were literally co-teachers with our mentor teachers,” he said. “It wasn’t like

“Delaware Tech students were so well prepared by the end of the residency year, I have principals fighting over having them in their schools.”

*~ Celeste Bunting
Director of Human Resources for
the Indian River School District*



we were in there observing the whole time.”

Vidrine, a Dover High School graduate, started out as an accounting major before switching to elementary education. He said he’s excited to teach fourth grade using what he learned during the BSE program with his own students.

“It will definitely be cool to have students see me as someone who is not only from Dover, but a male of color who may not come from the exact same

background as them but who understands what they are going through,” he said.

Graduates like Vidrine who are returning to their home districts are helping Delaware school districts achieve their goal of bringing their own students back to their classrooms.

“We are growing our teachers,” said Kelly Holt, director of curriculum for the Smyrna School District. “It has been proven that if you’re from here you’re much more likely to stay here.”

Shockley is a perfect example. He was born and raised in Milford, and his mother was a teacher and is now a paraprofessional at Lulu M. Ross Elementary School. He describes his father, a minister, as a “teacher of the Bible,” and doesn’t think it’s a coincidence that he decided to become a teacher, too. He believes teaching in the same district in which he grew up helps him better relate to his students.

“I tell them all the time, ‘Listen, I was in fourth grade once, too,’” he said.

Shockley was paired with a teacher at Banneker Elementary School who left her position in the spring, a few months before the end of the school year, at which point, he took over teaching the class himself as a substitute teacher. The class had 23 students, seven of whom had



“We were there literally from beginning to end. It was very rewarding to see the progress with the kids I met on the very first day by the time they reached the end of the school year.”

~ Amber Smithmeyer



Daniel Shockley graduated from the Delaware Tech Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education program in May and is leading his own classroom this fall.

an Individualized Education Program (IEP), nine of whom were multi-language learners, and three of whom had a 504 plan. (Both IEPs and 504 plans are designed to provide accommodations for students who have physical, medical, and/or cognitive conditions that affect their ability to learn.)

“To do that on your own, whether a veteran teacher or not, it’s a lot,” he said.

But the challenge also helped to prepare him to teach in that very same

fourth-grade classroom this fall. And his students learned right along with him.

“My favorite thing to see is when a kid doesn’t know something, or they tell me they don’t know how to do it and then after you teach it, not only do they display that they can do it, but they teach others how to do it,” he said.

Shockley’s experience has him looking forward to starting his first official teaching job in the fall, especially after seeing the impact he had on his students during his

residency year.

“On the last day, students gave me hugs and high fives, and some of them were crying saying they’re going to miss me,” he said. “I had to hold back some tears.”

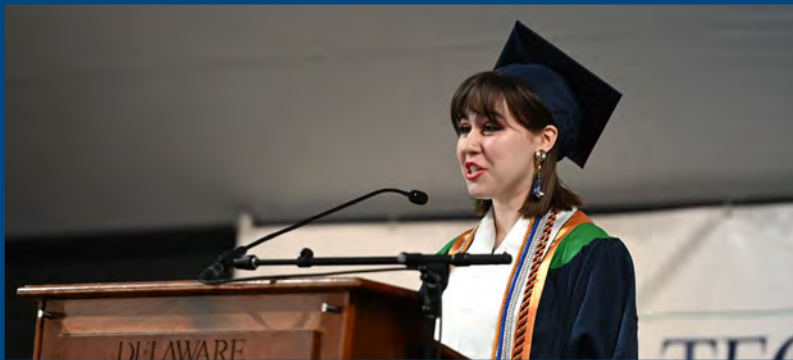
For information on the College’s Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education program, visit go.dtcc.edu/bse. ❖

Congratulations

to the Class of

2024





Delaware Tech celebrated 1,881 graduates at commencement exercises for the Class of 2024 in all three counties. The Terry Campus graduation in Dover featured guest speaker Tammy Ordway, a Delaware Tech alumna who is a partner with the Faw Casson accounting firm. Born on Dover Air Force Base (DAFB) and raised in Delaware, Ordway cultivated a deep bond with the community. After earning her degree from Delaware Tech, she went on to graduate summa cum laude from Wilmington University. She launched her career in public accounting in 1990, dedicating her expertise to the Kent County area and its residents ever since. In addition to her position as partner in the Faw Casson accounting firm, Tammy is vice-chair at the CenDel Foundation, has previously served as chair of the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce, and continues as chair of its Finance Committee. Her past roles include key spouse for the DAFB 512th, board member at Dover Federal Credit Union and Girl Scouts of the Chesapeake Bay, Sunday School teacher, and Girl Scout leader.



Scott Meyer, president and chief executive officer of ALOFT AeroArchitects, was the guest speaker for the Owens Campus in Georgetown. He is an accomplished aerospace and business aviation executive with more than 30 years of experience leading large organizations. After earning his Bachelor of Science in Aerospace and Aeronautical Engineering from Purdue University, Meyer's early career focused on leading-edge technologies such as solid rocket motor design, advanced material applications for launch vehicles, and aerospace technology-based operations. In the mid-90s, he transitioned to the transport category business aviation sector where he spent almost 20 years in senior leadership roles, including at the startup of Comlux Aviation AG. There, he served as vice president of engineering, vice president of operations, and chief operating officer before being appointed to chief executive officer in 2015. Prior to starting his current position, Meyer was chief operating officer for North America operations at Flying Colours Corporation, where he also served on the Board of Managers.





The guest speaker for the Stanton and Wilmington campus graduation ceremony at the University of Delaware's Bob Carpenter Center was Col. Joseph A. Cooke, Jr., Joint Staff, vice chief of staff, and commander, 261st Theater Tactical Signal Brigade and the newest member of the College's Board of Trustees. Cooke entered the Delaware Army National Guard in 1989 as a private and received his commission from Delaware's Army National Guard Officer Candidate School in 1996, graduating as the Distinguished Honor Graduate. Prior to his current assignment, he served in a number of leadership positions, including Joint Staff vice chief of staff, recruiting and retention commander, and deputy chief of staff for information management. Col. Cooke holds a Bachelor of Science in Physics, with Engineering Emphasis, and Mathematics from Delaware State University, a Master of Science in Geophysics from Stony Brook University, and a Master of Strategic Studies from the United States Army War College.



Congratulations N



Nursing Graduates!



Delaware Tech prepares a diverse and skilled group of nursing graduates who address the needs of the state's healthcare workforce. The College offers three levels of nursing programs—practical nursing studies, associate degree, and bachelor's degree—and 430 students graduated from these programs during the 2023-24 academic year. ❖



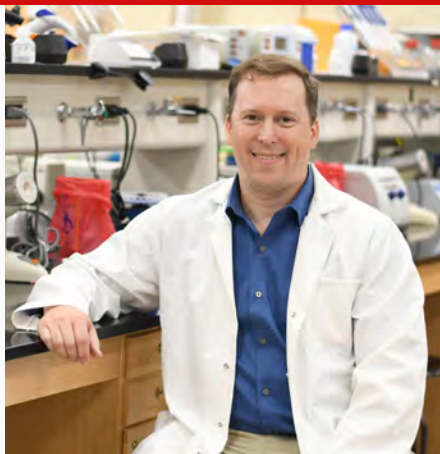
DELAWARE TECH

A National Leader in Gene-Editing Research

Zaina Punter was 17 years old when she started taking classes as a biological sciences major at Delaware Tech more than two years ago. At the end of her first semester, she was introduced to Dr. John McDowell, biology instructor at the Stanton Campus, who suggested she get involved with gene-editing research.

“I would get to be in the lab. I would get some research experience. I would get paid, and I would get to work with a green protein that glows,” she said. “Amazing! I’ve stuck with it ever since.”

As a result of a \$1 million grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF), Delaware Tech and the ChristianaCare Health System’s Gene Editing Institute began collaborating in 2018 to develop a unique gene editing curriculum now in place not only at Delaware Tech, but also in many other college classrooms across the country.



Dr. John McDowell, biology instructor at the Stanton Campus.

As part of the grant, which was funded again in 2021 for another three years (ending in June 2024), Delaware Tech also held a series of workshops to teach gene-editing techniques to community college faculty nationwide so they can develop their own curricula. The training students receive in gene editing in bioscience and

biomedical research as part of this program matches the development of therapies for diseases such as cancer and sickle cell anemia.

Punter’s work involved using CRISPR technology to edit a gene sequence from a gene that makes a green protein to a gene that makes a blue protein. This might not seem like a big deal to a person without a science background, but this successful edit marked a huge milestone for Punter and Delaware Tech.

“The power of it is that it shows you that out of 3,000 bits of DNA, you can specifically change one,” McDowell said. “The change impacts what that protein does.”

And the ultimate result of that research could be life-changing.

“A lot of diseases, like sickle cell anemia, are caused by a single [gene] mutation,” Punter said. “We’re doing a cool green to blue, but this is a low-stakes way of showing the CRISPR is making



Dr. John McDowell, biology instructor, talks with Delaware Tech graduate Zaina Punter about her gene-editing research in the Stanton Campus lab.

point mutations. ... Maybe at some point, it could be part of a cure for genetic disorders.”

As part of the original NSF grant, a “CRISPR in a Box™” educational tool kit was developed through a partnership with ChristianaCare and Rockland Immunochemicals. Those tool kits help to instruct students in the ways CRISPR gene editing works, but health care is only one area in which genetics plays a role. To cite just one example, gene-editing is also used in agriculture with the study of increased resistance to herbicides and pesticides.

Delaware Tech alumna Kristen Pisarcik was able to use the CRISPR tool kit “to bring us new, creative ways to teach CRISPR in the classroom,” said Dr. Eric B. Kmiec, executive director and chief scientific officer for the Gene Editing Institute.

“Her remarkable skills ensured that this kit became the foundation of our education program, which has now reached over 1,000 students across Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Delaware,” Kmiec said.

The majority of Delaware Tech students involved in gene-editing training are those majoring in biological sciences, such as genetics and molecular biology, at either the Stanton Campus or the Owens Campus in Georgetown. As part of their training, they learn about the ethical considerations for gene-editing.

“Bioethics is an important part of what

they learn in the coursework,” McDowell said.

Much of the gene-editing research at ChristianaCare has been focused on cancer therapeutics, such as increasing the effectiveness of chemotherapy treatments, he said.

“We are enhancing the reputation of Del Tech as an innovator in incorporating education in developing fields,” McDowell said. “We are seen as national leaders.”

Even with the end of this NSF grant, the gene-editing work is continuing.

“It is an important part of our curriculum,” McDowell said.

Punter’s work will also be used to teach other students, which she hopes to be a

part of. She presented her findings to the Gene Editing Institute at ChristianaCare and presented a poster on her work at a national scientific conference.

“It was amazing to watch her give a talk to others who know about this work at a very high level,” he said.

Punter was so proud of her work that she took lots of photos of the edited proteins, which look like “glowing” blue and green dots in a petri dish against a black background. She even used one as the lock screen photo on her cell phone.

“Zaina is committed to science,” McDowell said. “It is a passion of hers.”

After her graduation from Delaware Tech this year, Punter spent the summer working as an INBRE (Idea Network of Biomedical Research Excellence) scholar in the viral ecology and informatics laboratory at the University of Delaware, where she is pursuing a bachelor’s degree in applied molecular biology and biotechnology.

She said her Delaware Tech experience was “amazing” even though her first two semesters were done overseas from Saudi Arabia, where her family was living at the time. She said she would love the opportunity to return to the College to help teach other students in the field she loves so much.

“I would do it,” she said. “I feel like it would be a good way to give back.”

For more information on the biological sciences program, visit dtcc.edu/programs. ♦



Delaware Tech graduate Zaina Punter works on her gene-editing research in the Stanton Campus lab.



SEE • LEARN • EXPLORE

FALL CAMPUS VISIT DAY

Saturday, Nov. 2, 2024
9 - 11:30 a.m.

Registration for spring semester begins on Wednesday, Oct. 30.

Join us for Fall Campus Visit Day at Delaware Tech. Explore our campuses throughout the state. Tour our hands-on learning labs. Attend a quick admissions and financial aid presentation. Meet our friendly faculty and staff. Bring your friends and family.

FREE PARKING ON-SITE AT ALL CAMPUS LOCATIONS!

DOVER

100 Campus Dr.
Dover, DE

GEORGETOWN

21179 College Dr.
Georgetown, DE

STANTON

400 Stanton-Christiana Rd.
Newark, DE

WILMINGTON

300 North Orange St.
Wilmington, DE



Take a look at our **Programs of Study** pages so you can be sure you're visiting the campus where your preferred program is offered!

Scan to register and to
learn more about Fall
Campus Visit Day!



DELAWARE
TECHNICAL  COMMUNITY
COLLEGE



Automotive Technician Graduate Qualifies for World Technical Competition

Also Named Subaru/ASE Master Technician of the Year

Jim Pedicone, a senior master service technician and graduate of the Delaware Tech automotive technician studies program, is headed to Japan this November

to represent the United States in the Subaru World Technical Competition. He qualified for the world competition after winning the 2023 American National Technician Competition (ANTC), which recognizes the best Subaru retailer techs in the country.

During the ANTC awards ceremony, Pedicone also learned that he was selected Subaru/ASE Master Technician of the Year. He accepted that award in December 2023 at the ASE Service Professionals Recognition Awards event in Clearwater, Florida.

Pedicone, who graduated summa cum laude in 2004, works at Chilson Subaru in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, where he holds a few job titles, including senior master technician, shop foreman, and lead technician. He is passionate about his work, and his customer service ratings are proof that he loves what he does.

After serving in the United States Army as an M1 Abrams tank mechanic, Pedicone sought to continue his education. He explored many options and chose Delaware Tech for the affordability, personalized experience, and small class size.

When Pedicone was a student in the automotive program, “he was goal-oriented,” according to Mark Swarbrick, automotive instructor at the Owens Campus.

While enrolled at Del Tech, Pedicone earned his first Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certification. He also worked at a local General Motors dealership, but after graduation, he moved to Wisconsin and has worked in the industry for 20 years and remains passionate about his job.

“When a customer brings in a car with a concern, it really is just a puzzle to figure out,” said Pedicone, who likes to diagnose the root cause of the customer’s concern, and then find the best way to solve the problem.

“Sometimes it’s as easy as the customer not understanding the features of a new car, and other times it can be as complicated as a loose pin in a connector in a wiring harness that’s very deep under



Jim Pedicone (center) poses with the first-place trophy as the winner of the 2023 Subaru American National Technician Competition.

the trim and seats in the car,” he said. “That troubleshooting is really rewarding.”

Pedicone made the ANTC field when he was selected to represent the Minneapolis Zone (which included the western half of Wisconsin, part of North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota) after completing a written test and an evaluation of his customer services scores, training levels, and other objective metrics. He joined 13 other zone representatives for the competition at Subaru Headquarters in Camden, New Jersey.

The competition included challenges in three vehicle skill groups, where all of the technicians were given an automobile with identical, planted problems to identify and fix. They were scored for accuracy, speed, and service quality. In a designated amount of time, the competitors had to show how many problems they could repair.

Pedicone recorded the highest score and earned a spot in the Subaru World Technical Competition.

“My education at Delaware Tech set me up to excel among my peers in the industry,” he said.

“I didn’t just learn facts, how to turn a wrench, or fix a certain job,” Pedicone said of his time at the College where he learned from Swarbrick and Huey West, retired department chair. “The instructors did a spectacular job of building a really strong foundation that I needed for my career in the automotive industry.” ❖



Alex Tran's Passion for Service Results in Presidential Recognition

Alex Tran outside Wayne National Forest in Ohio bucking a log during the rerouting of a section of the Buckeye Trail.

Like many individuals impacted by the restrictions and devastation of COVID-19, Alex Tran was transformed by the experience. For Tran, it awakened a sense of wanderlust. But he wasn't simply focused on traveling across the United States. He wanted to make the country a better place, so he embarked on a journey of what he calls national service.

Inspired, Tran found AmeriCorps and embraced the service model and leadership opportunities he found within the organization's three programs, AmeriCorps VISTA, AmeriCorps NCCC, and AmeriCorps State and National.

"I just found a love and passion to give back," said Tran, who has recorded more than 4,200 hours of service since joining AmeriCorps. "It allowed me to do something good for society, and I just fell in love with it."

His service has taken him from Louisiana during hurricane season to the Flint Hills of Kansas and to building houses in Sussex County, building houses through Habitat for Humanity. He is currently located in Asheville, North Carolina, serving as a crew member with American Conservation Experience (ACE).

"I wanted to explore and I wanted to learn more about the environment. I knew trees were good and you shouldn't litter, but I wanted a deeper understanding of

"I just found a love and passion to give back. It allowed me to do something good for society, and I just fell in love with it."

~ Alex Tran

that," Tran said. "I have two good hands, and I will work with that because I want to spend some part of my life giving back."

Tran's awe-inspiring commitment was acknowledged and commemorated in May 2023 in New Castle, Delaware, when AmeriCorps CEO Michael D. Smith presented Tran the President's Volunteer Service Lifetime Achievement Award issued by the Office of the President of the United States and AmeriCorps.

"The President's Volunteer Service Award continues to highlight the enduring spirit of service that unites Americans and transforms lives," Smith said during the award presentation. "I am honored to present Alex with the Presidential Volunteer Service Lifetime Achievement Award and recognize the tremendous work he does for students and the local community."

Additional accolades Tran has received

include AmeriCorps Delaware Member of the Year (2022-23), AmeriCorps VISTA Delaware Member of the Year (2022-23), and the President's Volunteer Service Award - Gold Tier (2021).

Tran's approach to education runs at almost the same pace as his passion for service. At Delaware Tech, he has earned six associate degrees (business administration transfer option, marketing, general business, management, office administration, and general studies) and a certificate in entrepreneurship. He also holds a Bachelor of Science in Marketing & International Business Studies, as well as a Bachelor of Arts in Asian Studies from University of Delaware.

"I am fairly well known in the Del Tech world because I'm a continuous lifelong learner," said Tran, who started at Delaware Tech in 2014. He earned his first degrees in 2017 and earned his most recent degree in December 2023, the same year he also completed the College's Presidential Student Leadership Academy.

In addition to dealing with personal issues at the time, Tran admits that he wasn't in the best shape academically when he started at Delaware Tech, but the people he encountered and the overall experience put him at ease so he could thrive.

"At that point in my life, I needed to be in a more nurturing environment, and



Alex Tran shows off his Presidential Volunteer Service Lifetime Achievement Award. (Photos provided by AmeriCorps.)



From left, Reading Assist CEO Caroline O'Neal, Delaware Secretary of Education Mark Holodick, U.S. Senator Chris Coons, Alex Tran, AmeriCorps CEO Michael D. Smith, and Governor John Carney when Tran was presented his Presidential Volunteer Service Lifetime Achievement Award.

Delaware Tech offered that and gave me an opportunity to explore my own passions, interests, and connect with people,” he said. “It’s just the culture of the College. Everyone I met there was friendly and kind.”

In particular, his experiences with Richard Rexrode, instructional coordinator for the business program, and general life discussions with Public Safety Manager Mike Snead stand out to Tran.

“Mr. Rexrode was my first academic advisor, and he was really good,” said Tran. “He is a mentor who has helped guide me a lot, as have many faculty members at the College.

“I like to believe that college should be for everybody, for all different types of backgrounds, but there are a lot of barriers to many universities,” said Tran. “From my experience, Delaware Tech was very open, very inclusive, and welcoming. You can

shape your own destiny, and it’s affordable. Delaware Tech is a great school.

“There’s a saying that all of the actions you have done in the past have led you to this very moment, so in a philosophical way, I would be nothing without Delaware Tech,” he said. “That’s the truth, because at that time I needed nurturing and development and now I’m here in North Carolina doing the work that needs to be done.” ♦



Alex Tran in the Croatan National Forest in North Carolina planting longleaf pine trees after the Forest Service performed prescribed burns.



Delaware Tech Alum Extends a Hand to Survivors of Suicide Loss

Jennifer Antonik was eight months pregnant with her third child when she walked across the stage to receive her associate degree in communications technology from Delaware Tech in 2014.

That was about five years after she married her best friend and high school crush, Ben, also a Delaware Tech alum.

The two were both working and raising their family together when suddenly, in September 2021, Ben took his own life, leaving Jennifer on her own with their children, then ages 11, 10, and 7.

“I didn’t know how to feed the kids,” said Antonik, who was working just 10 hours a week while her husband was the primary breadwinner. “I didn’t know how to pay the bills.”

But she was unable to find the type of help she needed, and that’s when she knew Delaware needed a resource for people like her and her children. And once she was able to make it happen, Antonik created DJ’s Alliance, a non-profit organization that describes itself as “bridging the gap between suicide loss and healing survivors in Delaware by offering postvention support, resources, and connections.” (Postvention refers to an intervention after a suicide that involves support for the family and friends left behind.)

“Suicide presents a unique grief,” Antonik said. “Part of the problem when you’re grieving is that you don’t know what you need.”

DJ’s Alliance was created to help people figure out what they need and to then help them find it. The non-profit was named using the initials of all three of Antonik’s children, and more than half of its leadership, which includes nine board members, have suffered from a suicide loss, including Board Chair Kasey Gonzalez-Cruz.

“My family has been greatly impacted by suicide over



Jennifer Antonik '14

the years - losing my little brother in 2013, my mother in 2014, my stepmother in 2020, and most recently my youngest first cousin on Christmas of 2022,” Gonzalez-Cruz said. “My ultimate goal is to reach as many souls as possible and touch the hearts of every loss survivor.”

According to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, suicide is the 11th leading cause of death in the United States, and almost 49,500 people in the country died from suicide in 2022, the latest year for which statistics are available. Suicide was the second leading cause of death among people between the ages of 10-14 and 25-34, the third leading cause of death among people between the ages of 15-24, and the fifth leading cause of death for people

between 35 and 44, according to the National Institute of Mental Health. Delaware recorded 130 suicide deaths in 2022, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

And those who lose a loved one to suicide are at increased risk.

“Unfortunately, we know that suicide loss survivors have a one in 10 chance of attempting suicide themselves,” Antonik said. “If that’s not bad enough, we are at a 65 percent greater chance of dying by suicide compared to our peers who are grieving other kinds of losses and we have to ask ourselves – why? What do we need to do to better support our community members in their greatest hours of need?”

The creation of DJ’s Alliance brought the first (and only) L.O.S.S. (Local Outreach to Suicide Survivors) Team to Delaware. L.O.S.S. Teams provide trained volunteers to offer immediate support to those left behind after a suicide, and at least one of those volunteers is a suicide loss survivor themselves. The volunteers provide “support, resources, and understanding,” according to the national L.O.S.S. Team website.



Jennifer Antonik and her children joined the Chamber of Commerce for Greater Milford for a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Milford Police Department in April 2024 to welcome DJ's Alliance to the Milford community.

Antonik and her children were fortunate to have immediate support from their family, community, and church after Ben's death.

"Everybody helped us out," she said. "We were so grateful that our community lingered around us as long as they did. ... What we found is that none of them really knew how to process it. You need suicide loss-specific healing."

The Chamber of Commerce for Greater Milford held a ribbon-cutting for DJ's Alliance at the Milford Police Department in April 2024. While the organization doesn't have a physical office space, their website offers contact information for those needing assistance, as well as details about making donations. The Alliance has also hosted outreach events and is developing collaborative programming for youth and veterans. In addition, the Alliance is raising funds and awareness for a statewide postvention planning training for community leaders through the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI), which is a first for Delaware.

Ultimately, Antonik would love to be able to assist suicide loss survivors

with help addressing expenses they incur upon the death of their loved one. She would also like to provide more training opportunities for volunteers in Delaware. In fact, the Alliance has already started the state's first peer-to-peer mentor program for loss survivors to connect them with trained peers who have suffered similar losses and who will stay connected for at least a year.

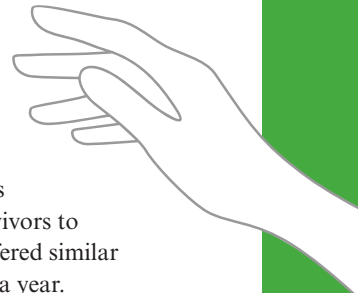
For now, she wants DJ's Alliance to provide support for those who need it, especially children who have lost family members to suicide. Her children were top of mind for her when she created the organization.

"I like to say this is their alliance," she said. "I think Ben would have wanted it that way, too."

For more information about DJ's Alliance, visit the organization's website at djsalliance.com. If you or a loved one needs crisis support, please call or text 988 or chat via 988lifeline.org. ❖

130
RECORDED
SUICIDE DEATHS IN
DELAWARE IN 2022

*According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC)





Cristina Urban '00

A Springboard to Success: Occupational Therapy Alumna Found Footing at Delaware Tech

Cristina Urban never saw herself as an occupational therapist. In fact, she didn't know the career field existed until enrolling at Delaware Technical Community College. Now, more than 25 years later, she credits the College with introducing her to her passion and inspiring a lifelong pursuit of learning. It was that pursuit that recently culminated in the completion of her Occupational Therapy Doctorate Degree.

"I have always thought that Delaware Tech gave me my future," Urban said. "It was a springboard for me – for the rest of my career and my profession, and even for my journey as a mother. I really can't

speak highly enough about my experience. It helped me discover who I was meant to be."

A Wilmington native, Urban graduated from Brandywine High School and attended her freshman year of college at the University of Delaware, where she studied biology. While she loved science, she remembers struggling to balance both the social and academic aspects of college life and the time management needed for her classes. After a year-and-a-half, she decided to take a different path.

"Coming home from UD was tough," she said. "I kind of felt frustrated with myself that I didn't succeed as well

academically. I just wasn't thriving. It was a tough pill to swallow. Looking back on it, I was just kind of a young student. I just needed a bit of time."

While trying to figure out her next step, Urban learned about the occupational therapy assistant (OTA) program at Delaware Tech. While she wasn't aware of the full scope of the career path, Urban enjoyed the volunteer opportunities she had in high school when she worked as a counselor at a camp for children with physical and cognitive disabilities.

"I fell in love with that," she said. "It was a really powerful experience in my life."

Urban enrolled in Delaware Tech's OTA program in January 1998, and knew immediately it was a match. "It fit like a glove," she said. It was the support and encouragement she received from Jan Gorecki, the program's department chair at the time, that inspired her the most.

"Jan was amazing," Urban said. "Still to this day, I credit a lot of my success to her. She just really took me under her wing. She was very empathetic, compassionate, and intelligent.

"Right around graduation, Jan said to me, 'You have exceptional gifts that were meant to be utilized in this field and I want you to go as far as you can possibly go.' That never left me, which is part of the reason why I pursued a doctoral degree."

Urban graduated with her associate degree in 2000, took her board exam the following spring, and started her first job as a certified occupational therapy assistant in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Not long into her career, she decided to continue her education. In 2007, she graduated with a master's degree from Towson University, which offered a four-year combined bachelor's and master's program.

Following her marriage, she moved to Reading, Pennsylvania, where she worked as a school-based contract occupational therapist, providing services for children with developmental disabilities or delays. When her first son was born in 2009, she made the transition to early intervention, which offers services for children birth to age 3.

"Having had an infant at home, I decided this was an ideal opportunity to try my hand at toddler services, which I had never done before," she said. In 2010, she joined the team at Reading-based WeeTalk, which specializes in early intervention services, and has been working with the company ever since.

While Urban spent her entire career helping to support children and their families through developmental challenges, she did not realize the important role her occupational therapy background would play in her own family.

In 2015, Urban's oldest son was diagnosed with severe attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and was

later identified as being twice exceptional, which refers to intellectually gifted children who have multiple learning disabilities such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, and/or dyscalculia.

"I had to put my OT hat on as a mom," she said. "I feel like the professional knowledge and skills that I gained as an occupational therapist really came into play when I began this journey."

A few years later, her youngest son started demonstrating a speech delay and similar ADHD characteristics. He was eventually diagnosed with Level I autism and ADHD.

"I have always thought that Delaware Tech gave me my future. It was a springboard for me – for the rest of my career and my profession, and even for my journey as a mother. I really can't speak highly enough about my experience. It helped me discover who I was meant to be."

~ Cristina Urban



Through her own experience, Urban became a passionate advocate for parents. She developed a Facebook group for parents of children with ADHD as a way to share resources and offer a sense of community.

"I've always loved supporting kids, but it drove me into this part of wanting to support parents, as well," she said.

It was this desire to better support parents and children that led her to a new educational pursuit. In 2023, she enrolled in the occupational therapy doctorate program at Chatham University in Pittsburgh. Her capstone project focused on co-regulation in early intervention, specifically the practice of using a coaching model to teach parents how to help their children regulate. After summarizing her data and presenting her project, she graduated with her clinical doctorate in April.

"It's really exciting to have been working on this project," Urban said. "If I were to describe regulation in layman's terms in a very brief sentence, I would say that it is learning how to manage and modulate your attention, your emotions, your activity level, and thoughts in order to be able to participate in a task at hand – a task that you have to do."

Although Urban pursued her doctorate at a Pittsburgh-based university, she found a Delaware Tech connection along the way. Her capstone adviser at Chatham was Dr. Heidi Baist, current department chair of the occupational therapy assistant program at Delaware Tech's George Campus in Wilmington.

"It was a full-circle moment," Urban said. "My passion for OT began in the rooms of the OTA program at Delaware Tech, and it has been a fantastic journey and experience ever since. I honestly couldn't imagine doing anything else."

Looking ahead, Urban is considering several potential paths, which include opening her own practice or shifting to a teaching role.

"I definitely would like to continue on a path to academia in some way, shape, or form," she said. "But I have no plans of leaving early intervention soon. I still love it and it's still my home." ♦



Adventures Await at Delaware Tech



Delaware Tech's Outdoor Adventure Club is an opportunity for nature enthusiasts and adventure seekers to meet friends with similar interests through exciting indoor and outdoor activities. The club is not affiliated with a specific program, so all students at the College are welcome to join.

Nicole Truitt, an English instructor at the Owens Campus in Georgetown, revived the club in 2019. As a thrill-seeker, Truitt is always excited to try something new and loves sharing that excitement with students. Truitt co-chairs the club with Karianne Sparks, a social sciences instructor at the Owens Campus.

"The most fulfilling aspect of the Outdoor Adventure Club is helping students venture into new territory and push themselves to try new things. Watching their self-confidence grow as a result is a gift," said Truitt. "At the top of a zipline, halfway up a rock wall, or balanced on ice skates, students get the chance to learn in real time that they can do something they didn't think possible, which is a truly powerful lesson."

Truitt hopes that when students look back on their time at Delaware Tech, it's adventures like these that will help define their college years as a time of possibility and growth.



Outdoor Adventure Club advisors and members pose after canoeing at Abbott's Pond, part of Abbot's Mill Nature Center in Milford.

Austin Truitt, an information technology and networking student and club member, spends a lot of time inside working on computers so he enjoys the outdoors aspect of the club.

"I appreciate the opportunity to do things outside and out of my comfort zone," he said.

Sparks believes the Outdoor Adventure Club "is an opportunity for students to do something they have never done before, whether it is canoeing, ziplining, or indoor rock climbing."

Often a little nervous at the start of each activity, Sparks shares that by the end of the event the students are high-fiving, laughing, and ready for more adventure.

One of Sparks' favorite memories was when the club took a



Students brave the heights and conquer their fears at Go Ape! in Bear.

“The most fulfilling aspect of the Outdoor Adventure Club is helping students venture into new territory and push themselves to try new things. Watching their self-confidence grow as a result is a gift.”

~ Nicole Truitt, Outdoor Adventure Club Co-chair

“first day of spring” nature hike this year at Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge.

“It really warmed my heart to see students from all walks of life, who had not met until that day, exploring the refuge for two hours with no phones or other devices,” she said. “They were talking with each other and enjoying nature.”

This resonated with Sparks because sometimes community college students lack opportunities to socialize with each other because they do not reside on campus. These types of events give students a chance to build community.

Through the College’s Outdoor Adventure Club, every semester is full of new adventures waiting to be discovered. ❖



Club members soak up the sun during a hike at Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge in Milton.



BLACK STUDENT ALLIANCE

Prioritizes Safe Space for Students



The Black Student Alliance (BSA), Delaware Technical

Community College's newest student organization, was initially born from student listening sessions with College administrators not long after the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis,

Minnesota. The events in Minneapolis sparked a nationwide call for action to improve diversity and equity issues in the United States. The club's mission aligns closely with Delaware Tech's commitment to student success, but BSA members hope the group will one day have an impact that spreads beyond campus walls.

"The goal of the Black Student Alliance is to empower students of color, to motivate them, to support them, and to hear them," said Education Instructor Germaine Smith-Solomon, who serves as BSA co-adviser at the Wilmington campus alongside Social Sciences Instructor Lisa Lancaster. "Many times, our voices are lost, so the idea was to rally support.

"We always focus on the word 'alliance,' because this work cannot be done alone, and we do have people who support Black and Brown students who don't identify as such," Solomon

continued. "But that support is there, that adoration is there. The willingness to be part of something great—something big—is going to move students of color forward."

Each campus has a BSA chapter with membership open to all students. Faculty and staff who would like to support the group are also welcome. While the advisers and student leaders at each campus coordinate collegewide, each campus chapter develops programming that serves the individual needs and wishes of the students in those communities.

Clarence Patterson, program manager for the Out of School Youth and Adult Basic Education programs at the Terry Campus in Dover, previously served as an adviser to the College's Vanguard Society, which operated for several years and aimed to meet the holistic needs of minority male students and increase college completion rates. Patterson said BSA is similar but with an expanded mission to serve all students of color and their allies.

"The overarching goal is for the students at this campus to feel like their voice is heard and that they are more than just the melanin in their skin," said Patterson, who serves as a BSA adviser alongside Dottie Denegal, allied health program manager at the Terry Campus. "We want the safe space that's created through BSA to also become the platform from which they can launch to academically pursue greatness, emotionally heal or find resilience, and mentally recover from any trauma they've experienced."

For Denegal, it's important that BSA offer an authentic, welcoming space where students can design the club to fit their needs, whether for social engagement, dialogue and learning, volunteerism, or all of the above.

"I want the students to really feel like they're a part of the College, that they're cared for, and that they're important," she said. "I want them to know their experience is important to the College."



Maurice Davis, former Black Student Alliance president and current Student Government Association president at the College's Wilmington campus

Maurice Davis, an elementary education student at the College's Wilmington campus, did not initially see himself as a leader. He had an interest in volunteering on campus and wanted to see the Black Student Alliance succeed, but it was the support and encouragement from Lancaster and Solomon that drove him to take on a more prominent role as BSA president during the 2023-24 academic year.

"I appreciate their faith in me," Davis said. "I still do, as we work closely together to try and make the BSA's vision come to fruition."

Davis, who recently shifted roles within BSA to become president of the Student Government Association at the Wilmington campus, has maintained a clear vision for the Black Student Alliance.

"I want participants of BSA to take from their

experience community and pride," he said. "I want the BSA to generate students who have made a change at Delaware Tech and then to go on to make changes in the community that they live in, and then the world around them."

Davis echoed his advisers in his desire to create a community where students can feel comfortable to be themselves and speak their minds.

"I want the BSA to always be a safe space for students of color to voice their problems and opinions, and to boast about their accomplishments," he said. "I want the BSA to be a safe space for uncomfortable conversations between the students of color, their allies, the community, and faculty. Above all, I want the BSA to be a safe space for students of color to be themselves—no need for code-switching or walking



"The Black Student Alliance highlights our dedication to supporting our students of color. My top priority is to diversify our workforce, ensuring our community reflects the vibrant, multicultural fabric of our student body. Together, we are building a future where every individual can thrive."

~ Cornelia Johnson

Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Delaware Tech

on eggshells. It's all love and respect in our space."

The Black Student Alliance held its first campus events during the fall 2023 semester, including a Game Day, which offered a casual environment where students, faculty, and staff played a mix of board games and video games and enjoyed snacks with one another. The club also held a successful Open Mic Night at the Wilmington campus, which drew participants and spectators from across the campus and beyond.

"There was a sense of unity at Open Mic Night," Solomon said. "From the setup to the very last performance, it was amazing. There was so much diversity in the room—different shades, different colors, different ethnicities. Everyone enjoyed it. People wanted to watch our students and our faculty and staff perform. The campus administrators were there and engaged. It was a huge success."

The events were also supported across campuses, as members of the Dover BSA chapter attended the Wilmington campus events, and vice versa. The club advisers say it's just the beginning, with more programming in the works.

"I am proud of our College's commitment to creating an inclusive environment where every student feels valued and empowered," said Cornelia Johnson, vice president for diversity, equity, and inclusion at Delaware Tech. "The Black Student Alliance highlights our dedication to supporting our students of color. My top priority is to diversify our workforce, ensuring our community reflects the vibrant, multicultural fabric of our student body. Together, we are building a future where every individual can thrive."

The club's events have shared a common trait of organically bringing students and staff together.

"The whole goal is to remove barriers so we can create those touch points and have those open, honest conversations when



Participants enjoy the Black Student Alliance Game Day event.

needed," Patterson said. "So that at the end of the day, if I am in crisis or I'm having a challenging day or dealing with some issues, you may be the one I can come to today even though you may not be of my same ethnicity.

"You might just be the person I feel most comfortable with because I remember you from the Game Day, and we were laughing and you had a similar experience that you shared while we were playing, and you can empathize with me," he continued. "That's how I think barriers can be removed."

Natascha Hughes and Co-adviser Malinda Hudson, both faculty members in the Human Services Department at the Owens Campus, are working to set up a BSA chapter in Georgetown this fall. Hughes said part of that effort will be engaging students to determine what they want BSA to look like on campus.

"We want to start with a listening session to see if this is still something the students would be interested in, then listen to what a Black Student Alliance means to them and hear their definition," Hughes said. "My intention is to give them a foundation to decide what this is and then an opportunity to bounce ideas and concerns off of each other. The foundation is the safe space to be able to do that."

As the Black Student Alliance moves forward in different forms on each campus, the advisers, above all else, want to ensure students find value in the activities and programs they receive from BSA.

"The clubs are a way to show students we're truly invested in them," Hudson said. "It needs to be more than just a formal structure. It needs to be something they can buy into. That's not just with BSA, that's every organization and entity. It needs to be something the students have confidence in and know it's real."

For more information on Student Clubs and Organizations visit dtcc.edu/campus-life/clubs-organizations. ♦



Guests play a tower building game at a Game Day event hosted by the Black Student Alliance.



DELAWARE TECH ATHLETICS

Offer Successful Programs and Positive Student-Athlete Experience

Delaware Tech Athletics compete in Region 19 of the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) and the College fields teams in baseball, men's and women's basketball, men's and women's cross country, men's lacrosse, softball, and women's volleyball. The College is also a member of the Eastern Pennsylvania Athletic Conference (EPAC) within Region 19, providing the opportunity to compete in conference-level championship tournaments.

When building their rosters,

Delaware Tech coaches are focused on the recruitment of student-athletes from Delaware who will be successful in the classroom, as well as in their athletic performance. That philosophy, coupled with a strong support group of coaches, faculty, and staff who help the College's student-athletes balance the demands of athletics and academics to promote overall personal growth, has proven to be highly successful.

Since the 2021-22 academic year, which marked the full return to athletics

competition following COVID-19 and the first full season the College was part of EPAC, 65 Delaware Tech student-athletes have received NJCAA All-Academic honors.

In addition, Delaware Tech has claimed 10 Region 19 team titles, produced four individual cross country champions, and generated numerous Coach of the Year, Player of the Year, and All-Region honorees, as well as three NJCAA All-America award winners.

A look at each team's highlights during that four-year period:



Carly Collins

SOFTBALL

Softball has been a flagship program, winning four straight Region 19 Division II titles and qualifying for three NJCAA national championship tournaments (2021, 2022, and 2023). Head coach Guy Wilkins has been presented Region 19 Coach of the Year honors the past four seasons and has twice been tabbed District Coach of the Year (2022 and 2023). During this historic

run, 31 softball players have earned All-Region accolades, including Pitcher of the Year awards for Lauren Smith (2021) and Carly Collins (2023). In 2022, Macey Myers was named conference Player of the Year and was also named to the NJCAA Division II Softball All-America Third Team. In 2024, the program was named the NJCAA National Academic Softball Team of the Year with a cumulative 3.11 team grade point average (GPA).

MEN'S LACROSSE

Men's lacrosse has claimed two region titles over the past four seasons, including the most recent 2024 campaign, when the team also advanced to the semifinals of the North Atlantic District Tournament. In addition, Gabe Smith was named Region 19 Defensive Player of the Year, and Dan Yearick, in his first season guiding the team, was named the region's Coach of the Year.

The other region title came in 2022, when the team set a school record for most goals scored, and Jack Dennis and Conor Christie were named to the NJCAA All-America Second Team. Dennis was also tabbed Region 19 Player of the Year and Offensive Player of the Year, and Sean Tischler was selected Coach of the Year.

In 2023, Blake Gipko won Region 19 Defensive Player of the Year honors and was also named Co-Player of the Year.

The 2021 squad finished as runner-up in the regional championship tournament and was named the NJCAA National Academic Lacrosse Team of the Year by finishing the year with a 3.22 GPA.

CROSS COUNTRY

In cross country, the men's team has captured the past two region titles (2022 and 2023) and gone on to compete in the NJCAA National Cross Country Championship both of those seasons. The women's team also qualified for the 2022 national championship, paced by Region 19 individual champion Kaitlyn Cavallucci.

In 2021, Cavallucci won the Women's EPAC Championship Meet, and finished third at the Region 19 Championship Meet to qualify for the national meet. Based on their performance at regionals that year, Lizzy Masci also qualified for women's nationals, and Joe Volk and Jacob Gordon qualified to compete in the men's national meet.

Volk won the Region 19 individual title the following season, and in 2023, Brayden Fosty won the individual men's regional title and Hannah Lensico won the individual women's title.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Women's basketball made the Region 19 tournament in 2021-22, and Daqira Lancaster-Navarro earned Second Team All-Region honors. Lancaster-Navarro also earned national accolades when she was named NJCAA Division II Women's Basketball Player of the Week on Dec. 1, 2021.

MEN'S BASKETBALL

In the 2021-22 season, men's basketball won the Region 19 Tournament championship, Rashaan Butler was the region's Player of the Year, and Richard Rago was Coach of the Year. In 2022-23, Syed Myles surpassed 1,000 career points at Delaware Tech and was named Region 19 Division II First Team All-Region as well as EPAC Division II First Team All-Conference.



The 2021-22 men's basketball team won the Region 19 Tournament championship.



Kaitlyn Cavallucci

BASEBALL

The baseball team finished as runner-up in the 2021 and 2023 Region 19 Division II Baseball Championship Tournaments and qualified for the NJCAA Division II Northeast District Baseball Championship Tournament in 2023. Since the 2021 season, 18 players have earned All-Region honors, and Zach Hart was named Region 19 Pitcher of the Year in 2023.

WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

The women's volleyball 2022 squad won the Region 19 Division II Championship Tournament, Alexcia Sutton was named Player of the Year, and Leigh DeSantis was honored as Coach of the Year. In 2023, DeSantis was named EPAC Co-Coach of the Year.



The 2022 volleyball team that won the Region 19 Division II tournament.

Delaware Tech is proud to offer a quality athletics experience for its student-athletes and encourages those interested in learning more to visit dtcc.edu/athletics or contact one of the College's Athletics program managers listed on page 37. ♦

“Ron was a disciplinarian. He was a father figure to a lot of us, and he cared about us. If it wasn’t for Ron, I probably never would have coached myself.”

*~ Steve Perry
Former Student-Athlete*



Former Athletic Director Ron Burgess Inducted into Region 19 Hall of Fame

Delaware Tech’s former men’s basketball coach and athletic director Ron Burgess was inducted into the inaugural class of the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Region 19 Hall of Fame this year. This recognition tops off his 35-year career at the College’s Stanton Campus, where he served as athletic director, coach, and academic counselor until his retirement in 2012.

“I’ve had the pleasure of knowing Ron for over 30 years, and his approach to coaching was never about how many games he could win – although he won more games than any coach in Delaware Tech’s history in any sport,” said Dan Ehmann, vice president and Stanton Campus director. “It was more about the work he would do outside the gym, shaping his student-athletes to be champions in life and inspiring young men to reach their full potential off the court.”

A Virginia native, Burgess first came to Delaware on a basketball scholarship to play for Brandywine College, now Widener University. While he was more passionate about football in high school, he received scholarship opportunities for his all-state talents in basketball. He joined Brandywine College’s team as a shooting guard and pursued his degree in business administration, eventually attending Wilmington College and



Inductee Ron Burgess (4th from left) standing with the members of the NJCAA Region XIX Hall of Fame Committee.

completing his degree in criminal justice.

After college, Burgess had been selected for a position with the Delaware State Police, fulfilling a longtime career dream. Tragically, two troopers were killed in the line of duty at about the same time, which ultimately caused him to reconsider his career path. Subsequently, he started working in the personnel department for the city of Wilmington while also serving as the assistant basketball coach at Brandywine College.

“We used to play Del Tech all the time,” said Burgess. “John Shew, who was the athletic director, asked me if I would consider coming to Del Tech to coach, and I said ‘Sure.’”

In 1977, Burgess joined Delaware Tech as the head coach of the men’s basketball team, and in 1978 he joined the College full-time as an academic counselor, working directly with students in the criminal justice and mechanical engineering programs.

“I loved the game, and I just stumbled into coaching basketball,” said Burgess. “[Coaching] helped me reach into the community and bring some of those kids in and help them get ready for college.”

When Delaware Tech temporarily dropped its athletics program in 1981, he stayed in his full-time counselor role with the College but rejoined Brandywine College’s men’s basketball team as head coach until 1985, when Delaware Tech reinstated its sports program. In 1987, Burgess became assistant athletic director for the Stanton Campus and was named athletic director in 2001, the role in which he served until retirement. He was the men’s basketball head coach until 2010. During the 2009-2010 season, Burgess recorded his 500th win as a head coach in Region 19, and he holds an overall coaching record of 503-312 for a .617 winning percentage.

Under his leadership, the men’s basketball team advanced to the Region 19 semifinals 16 times while winning the championship game twice, and he led the College to one NJCAA national tournament appearance. Burgess was named NJCAA Region 19 Coach of the Year twice during his career. In 2009, he was named District 9 Coach of the Year and received the NJCAA Division II Coach of the Year award.

But to those he worked with and coached, the accolades aren’t what define him as a legend; it is the respect he gave to his players and, in turn, the respect he demanded from them in both their on-court performance and off-court behavior.

“I met Coach Burgess in the mid-1990s while serving as the men’s basketball coach at Lackawanna Junior College,” said Eric Grundman, director of athletics, recreation & fitness at Mercer County Community College. “You could tell that while he was a fierce competitor, winning at all costs was not his agenda. He would not sacrifice his values to win games. His demeanor was always positive even in times of difficulty and stress, and because he carried himself in this manner, his teams did, as well.”

Burgess had high expectations for the men who came to play for him, many of whom he personally recruited from Kent and Sussex counties. He would provide them with the opportunity to go to college and succeed, as long as they worked hard, kept their grades up, and met his demanding standards. For many of his players, these expectations were the key to their success off the court.

“Ron was a disciplinarian,” said Steve Perry, who played basketball under Burgess in the ‘70s and has coached boys’ basketball for more than 15 years. “He was like a father figure to a lot of us, and he cared about us. If it wasn’t for Ron, I probably never would have coached myself.”

Burgess stays in contact with many of his former student-athletes, who are incredibly grateful for his role in their lives.

“I get those calls all the time about, ‘Hey Coach, you know, I want to thank you for what you did for me when I was in college,’” said Burgess. “There’s quite a few kids from downstate that have made it, and they always call me. Matter of fact, the week before we went to the Hall of Fame dinner, a bunch of my basketball kids had a surprise birthday party for me.”



Pictured (left to right): Evan Burgess (son), Ron Burgess (honoree), Joan Burgess (wife), and Adam Burgess (son) at the NJCAA Region XIX Hall of Fame induction

While his record-setting achievements on the court tell the story of a legendary basketball coach deserving of a Hall of Fame appointment, it is his character and commitment to his student-athletes that defines his legacy.

According to Donald Polk, who played basketball under Burgess in the early ‘90s, “He’s just a great guy, but more than anything, besides basketball, he cared about us and wanted us to be better men in life.” ♦

ARE YOU NEXT?


DELAWARE TECH
CROSS COUNTRY


DELAWARE TECH
VOLLEYBALL


DELAWARE TECH
BASKETBALL



KAYLA FROMAL
KFROMAL@DTCC.EDU
(302) 454-3971


DELAWARE TECH
BASEBALL


DELAWARE TECH
SOFTBALL



CJ HUNTINGTON
CHARLES.HUNTINGTON@DTCC.EDU
(302) 259-6047


DELAWARE TECH
CROSS COUNTRY


DELAWARE TECH
LACROSSE



FRANC COOK
FCOOK4@DTCC.EDU
(302) 857-1052





DON'T WAIT. SOAR.

YOUR FUTURE IS IN YOUR HANDS.

Cost doesn't have to keep you from going to college. Delaware's Student Excellence Equals Degree (SEED) Scholarship provides FREE tuition for Delaware high school graduates of any age to attend Delaware Tech.* The scholarship applies to associate degree, diploma, credit certificate, and workforce training programs.

Learn more at dtcc.edu/seed.



*Students must meet eligibility requirements. Course fees and books are not covered by the SEED Scholarship.

Critical Capital Updates Continue at all Four Campuses

Students, employees, and visitors to Delaware Tech's campuses have seen significant renovations to rejuvenate the College's facilities over the past several years, and the latest projects underway will continue those efforts to bring needed upgrades to promote student success.

The Terry Building on the Dover campus will be the next major renovation project to be completed, with work expected to wrap up this fall. That project not only included an upgrade to the main building entrance, but it also creates a one-stop Student Success Center, bringing together critical student services such as advisement, admissions, financial aid, and veterans support. Similar projects have recently been completed in the East Building of the George Campus in Wilmington and in the B-Wing of the Stanton Campus. All of these projects were made possible thanks to funding provided through Senate Substitute 2 for Senate Bill 50, passed by the General Assembly and signed by Governor John Carney in 2019.

"We greatly appreciate the ongoing support from our governor and General Assembly that has enabled us to address longstanding deferred maintenance issues and ensure that our students have access to state-of-the-art facilities that prepare them for successful careers," said Dr. Mark T. Brainard, president of Delaware Tech.

The Terry Building renovation also includes a kitchen upgrade and new café for students, new restrooms, improvements to the Learning Commons, and a new roof and HVAC system.

On the Stanton Campus, two major projects are underway simultaneously. The first is the new Child Development Center that will offer childcare to students, employees, and community members. This project was funded through the American Rescue Plan and includes an 11,000-square-foot facility that will offer five classrooms for infants through pre-kindergarten children. The classrooms will surround a multi-purpose room, and the center will have three outdoor playgrounds.



Rendering of the Stanton Campus Child Development Center



Rendering of the Stanton Campus culinary arts expansion project



Rendering of the Terry Campus Terry Building



Rendering of the Stanton Campus culinary arts expansion project

“We have wanted to build a child development center in Stanton for a long time, but it was not until receiving this federal funding that we were able to make it happen,” Brainard said. “We look forward to welcoming children to this new center, which will provide a convenient and high-quality childcare option for our students, employees, and members of the community.”

Also under construction at the Stanton Campus is the new culinary arts expansion project, a 9,000-square-foot facility that will include a new, state-of-the-art kitchen, new dining room, and offices for culinary arts faculty and staff. This project, which is on track to be completed by the end of 2024, will enable the

And at the Owens Campus in Georgetown, two phases of a three-phase project to update the central cooling plant are complete. The cooling plant serves five buildings on the campus— Jason Technology Center, Arts & Science Center, Student Services Center, Stephen J. Betze Library, and Carter Partnership Center. This project was much needed to address the aging system responsible for cooling these buildings on the campus. The softball fields at the Owens Campus have also undergone an upgrade that was completed this summer.

“We are incredibly grateful for the support from our state and federal officials who have made the funding for these critical projects possible,” Brainard said. “These renovations to our campuses will make a tremendous difference for our students as we ensure they leave the College with all the skills they need to succeed in the workforce.” ♦

“These renovations to our campuses will make a tremendous difference for our students as we ensure they leave the College with all the skills they need to succeed in the workforce.”

~ Dr. Mark T. Brainard

College to increase its enrollment in the culinary arts program by 80 percent, from 125 students to 225. The additional seats will help to accommodate recent graduates of Delaware’s Pathways to Prosperity ProStart high school culinary programs. This expansion also would allow the College to increase the number of immediate Delaware high school graduates accepted into the culinary arts program in Stanton by 200 percent from academic year 2019-20 to academic year 2025-26. The College plans to have students using the new space by the spring 2025 semester.



An American flag is raised to commemorate the final beam being placed atop the Stanton Campus culinary arts expansion project.

New CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE

Support Allied Health Programs

Delaware Tech students training for careers in the healthcare industry will benefit greatly from two major building renovations at the College, one that was just completed on the Terry Campus in Dover and another that is soon to be completed at the George Campus in Wilmington.

TERRY CAMPUS

The Highmark Healthcare Center of Excellence on the Terry Campus was completed this summer, and students are now using the state-of-the-art classrooms, labs, and collaborative spaces in Building 200, which is highly visible from U.S. 13. Created through extensive renovation of a nearly 50-year-old building, the 8,700-square-foot facility has been transitioned into a learning environment for a variety of short-term allied health certificate programs.

Programs using the center are offered through the College's division of Workforce Development and Community Education and include certified central service technician, certified clinical medical administrative assistant (CCMAA), certified clinical medical assistant (CCMA) with phlebotomy, EKG technician, home dialysis technician, certified nursing assistant (CNA), pharmacy technician,



The exterior of the Highmark Healthcare Center of Excellence on the Terry Campus in Dover (top image) and the building's dental lab (left) and certified nursing assistant classroom (above).



Renderings of the patient care simulation classroom (top left), paramedic lab (left), and surgical technology operating room (above) in the Allied Health Center of Excellence on the George Campus in Wilmington.

phlebotomy technician, patient care technician, polysomnographer, emergency medical technician, and community health worker.

Graduates from these programs will support the state’s healthcare industry by filling some of the highest demand labor market needs.

The project, which cost \$2.1 million, was enhanced with an additional \$1 million from Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield Delaware’s BluePrints for the Community.

“We are excited for the next phase of this exciting investment with Delaware Tech, which supports the health career goals of Delawareans while also increasing access to quality healthcare in our communities,” said Nick Moriello, president of Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield Delaware. “This is part of Highmark’s longstanding commitment to the healthcare workforce in Delaware, which totals more than \$10 million since 2007.”

GEORGE CAMPUS

At the George Campus in Wilmington, the Allied Health Center of Excellence is close to completion. This major renovation

of the campus’s 25-year-old Southeast Building will enable the College to expand the paramedic and surgical technology degree programs to the Wilmington campus. Both are currently offered only at the Terry Campus in Dover.

In addition, the Allied Health Center of Excellence will serve as a resource for graduates who would like to obtain continuing education credits. The building’s conference center will be updated to include high-tech audio-visual equipment and systems similar to what was recently installed in the Del-One Conference Center at the College’s Dover campus, and all bathrooms and locker rooms in the building also will be renovated.

Both renovations will help the College’s students have access to the most up-to-date equipment to ensure they enter the workforce with all the skills they need to meet the demands of our state’s employers.

For more information on the allied health programs, visit dtcc.edu/programs. ♦



BUILDING FUTURES: Pathway Program Preps High School Students for Careers in Construction



Learning to maneuver bulldozers and backhoes is part of the daily curriculum for high school students in the Appoquinimink School District’s Construction Machinery Operator Pathway. Through a partnership with Delaware Technical Community College, students from the district’s three high schools receive hands-on training and a head start in a career field known for its high demand and competitive wages.

The four-course instructional pathway is designed to provide high school students with the knowledge and skills necessary to begin a career in the construction industry. In addition to classroom instruction at their respective schools, the students receive a large portion of their training at Delaware Tech’s Middletown Center, where they learn to use power tools, measure and cut material, use simulators to train on how to operate heavy equipment, and eventually take the driver’s seat of a fully functioning skid-steer, backhoe, excavator, bulldozer, and forklift.

The Middletown Center is home to high-quality training equipment fit for a wide variety of career paths in diesel mechanic technology, heavy equipment operation, and construction management.

This hands-on experience prepares students for immediate employment, said Dr. Paul Morris, former associate vice president for workforce development and community education at Delaware Tech. (Morris was recently appointed as vice president and campus

director of the College’s Terry Campus in Dover.)

“The pathways provide students at non-vocational public high schools with additional options,” Morris said. “We have always pushed for these students to be college-ready and career-ready. These programs provide opportunities to receive a college-prep curriculum but also a path parallel to that where they can earn a skill and gain experience while in high school.”

While the Delaware Pathways Program originated in 2014 under the administration of then-Governor Jack Markell, the

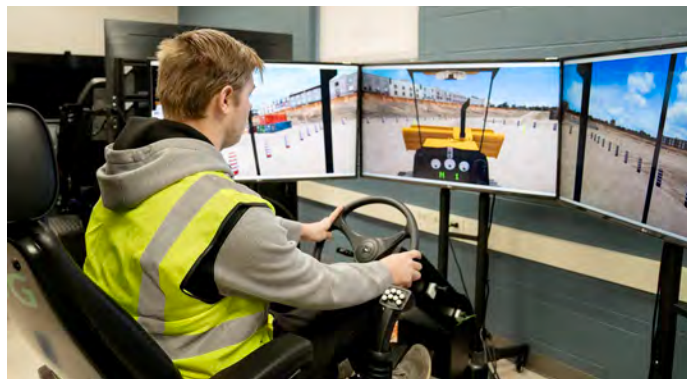


Reyna Reyes, an Odessa High School student and aspiring electrician, works on a project at Delaware Tech’s Middletown Center. (Photos courtesy of Appoquinimink School District.)



construction program started at Appoquinimink School District during the 2019-20 school year. In addition to high school credit, students earn college credits from Delaware Tech and the option for advanced standing in the State of Delaware Registered Apprenticeship Program.

“It is a unique and forward-thinking collaboration designed to bridge the gap between education and industry,” said Mike Trego, supervisor of college and career readiness in the Office of Workforce Development at Appoquinimink School District. “The pathway provides students with practical, real-world experience in the construction field, giving them the skills and certification needed for employability at an advanced starting level.”



“The pathway provides students with practical, real-world experience in the construction field, giving them the skills and certification needed for employability at an advanced starting level.”

~ Mike Trego, Appoquinimink School District

Students may enter the construction industry immediately following high school or after obtaining a college degree. In addition to the heavy equipment operation, students have the opportunity to receive several credentials including flagger and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) construction safety certifications.

Hayden Argoe, a graduate of Middletown High School, earned multiple industry certifications while participating in the construction pathway. He also received nine college credits from Delaware Tech and gained an internship with A-Del Construction, a local construction company in Delaware. Upon his graduation, his internship turned into full-time employment.

“The construction pathway was perfect for a student like me who wanted to learn a trade instead of focusing on college prep classes,” Argoe said. “I was able to go offsite to touch, feel, and actually work the equipment over there. After showing us the functions of the equipment, they let us be the operators. It was so much fun. I wouldn’t be where I am today if it wasn’t for this program.”

Trego ultimately wants all students to have the same experience upon completing the program.

“Hayden’s journey exemplifies the high standards of the construction pathway program in the Appoquinimink School District,” he said, “and serves as an inspiration to future students pursuing similar career paths.” ♦





The Mozee family joined Delaware Tech administrators and staff to honor Bill Mozee and his impact at the College. Pictured (from left): Danny Mozee, Sheila Mozee, Nicole Mozee, Kelly Bowen, and James Mozee

Delaware Tech Dedicates Innovation and Technology Center Lab in Memory of Beloved Welding Instructor

For more than 20 years, William “Bill” Mozee led the welding program at Delaware Tech’s Stanton Campus and managed the state-of-the-art welding lab at the Innovation and Technology Center (ITC) in New Castle.

Remembered for his charismatic personality and steadfast commitment, Mozee was an advocate of the welding industry and the College. He strived to ensure his students had access to the highest quality equipment and was instrumental in the design of the ITC welding lab when it was built in 2010.

“The College was so fortunate to have such a highly skilled craftsman who had the incredible ability to convert his technical knowledge into instruction that translated into the classroom with his students,” said Dan Ehmann, vice president and campus director of the Stanton Campus.

After Mozee unexpectedly passed away in July 2022, Delaware Tech’s leaders sought to honor the lifelong welder’s memory and pay tribute to his tremendous impact on the College. In October 2023, College administrators joined faculty, staff, former students, and the Mozee family for an intimate ceremony to dedicate the William O. Mozee Welding Lab at the Innovation and Technology Center.

“We’re going to dedicate the lab in his name because it’s the right thing to do. We’re going to create a scholarship because it’s the right thing to do. But as far as I’m concerned, the legacy of this building and his memory, he did all on his own by generating some of the finest welders this state will ever see.”

~ Dr. Mark T. Brainard





William "Bill" Mozee provides a tour of the welding lab at the Innovation and Technology Center to U.S. Senator Chris Coons.

Delaware Tech also established the Bill Mozee Memorial Scholarship. The \$2,500 scholarship will be awarded annually to offset the cost of tuition for one student enrolled in a fall semester welding technician certificate course at the ITC.

“Bill left his fingerprints on this building,” said Delaware Tech President Mark Brainard. “We’re going to dedicate the lab in his name because it’s the right thing to do. We’re going to create a scholarship because it’s the right thing to do. But as far as I’m concerned, the legacy of this building and his memory, he did all on his own by generating some of the finest welders this state will ever see.”

Brainard reflected on his previous visits to the New Castle training center, many of which included state and local dignitaries who wanted to learn more about the critical role the College plays in building a job-ready workforce and preparing individuals for high-wage, high-skill jobs in our state’s industries.

“Without exception,

I can’t remember a tour where Bill did not steal the show,” he said. “Every governor, every legislator, every business leader left here remembering him. He could charm the heck out of you, but he knew that world and he was so committed to his students that when he talked, they hung onto every word.”

Katheryn Walker was among the last group of students Mozee taught at Delaware Tech. Upon completing her welding certification in 2022, she secured a position as a pipe fitter with a union shop and plans to further her training, continuing to hone her skills.

“Mr. Mozee was a great man,” Walker said. “He was very sweet, but also firm. He made his students want to succeed and strive to be their best.”

Mozee left an impact on each of his students, most of whom entered the workforce immediately upon graduating and receiving their welding technician certification.

“I once went on a tour with Bill to the Philadelphia Shipyards,” said Rodney Bailey, technical training operations manager at the Innovation and Technology Center. “As we’re walking around, people are yelling, ‘Hey, Mr. Mozee!’ He had about 10 or 15 former students who had jobs there. The reach he had in our community was amazing.”

No one understood Mozee’s heart and the love he had for his trade quite like his wife, Sheila Mozee, and his three children – Kelly Bowen, Marcus Mozee, and Nicole Mozee.

“William was truly dedicated to this school and his students. For it was this very building where he took his last breath,” Sheila Mozee said. “That speaks volumes for his tenacity. He was always willing and ready to help anyone, and he felt it was his duty to reach back and pull someone forward to better their life. Teaching gave him that opportunity. He loved his job.” ♦



Longtime welding instructor Bill Mozee was beloved by his Delaware Tech students.



Michelle Kelly, a Delaware Tech graduate, pours a latte for a customer at the Peach Blossom Eatery.



NEWARK CAFÉ OFFERS STEPPING STONE FOR ALUMNI

The Peach Blossom Eatery in downtown Newark is known for offering customers a variety of unique and flavorful dishes featuring fresh, locally sourced ingredients. The restaurant does more than that, though. Founded by Olivia Brinton and Samantha Ross, the popular brunch spot also creates professional opportunities for Delaware Tech graduates aspiring to enter the restaurant industry.

Since its opening in 2021, the restaurant's staff, working both in the

kitchen and front of house, have included several alumni of Delaware Technical Community College. Some joined the team as they were completing the College's culinary program, while others graduated with a degree in business administration.

Brinton and Ross aim to foster a culture at Peach Blossom that encourages diversity and self-expression, which applies to both the food they serve and the employees who work there. As part of that mission, they have sought to create a safe learning environment for new chefs to hone

their skills, experiment with a variety of ingredients, and offer a stepping stone to other opportunities.

"These young chefs come in with so much excitement and a thirst for learning," said Ross, the restaurant's executive chef. "They want to do anything and everything. It makes us excited and inspires us to keep challenging ourselves."

The seasonal menu at the Peach Blossom Eatery often encompasses a mix of sweet and savory bites incorporating farm-fresh produce and proteins in



Alivia "Liv" Alessandrini, a 2024 graduate of Delaware Tech's culinary arts program, prepares a dish in the kitchen at the Peach Blossom Eatery.



Since its opening in 2021, the Peach Blossom Eatery has employed several graduates from Delaware Technical Community College. Pictured (from left): Michelle Kelly, Peach Blossom Eatery Co-Owner Olivia Brinton, Dillon Reburn, and Chaad Dismukes-Scott

addition to freshly baked pastries made daily and an assortment of beverages from teas, juices, and sodas to drip coffee, espresso, and lattes or even cocktails.

Because of the people-first approach that Ross and Brinton take in their business, an emphasis is put on building the skills of their culinary staff. One way they do this is by allowing their staff to focus on specific areas they are interested in and letting them come up with their own dishes for menu consideration.

"Our baseline menu is really good, but then we get to showcase these signature or seasonal dishes created by our staff, giving them creative freedom to add items to the menu that they're excited about," Brinton said. "It keeps our menu from becoming stale and it's a lot of fun."

Delaware Tech alum Dillon Reburn started working at the Peach Blossom while finishing his culinary degree at the College. He has since taken his newfound knowledge to the Culinary Institute of America.

"Dillon came in with a really strong base of the fundamentals, and he was able to grow his skills further," Brinton said. "He is now getting to cut his teeth in higher end fine dining and he's thriving."

Success stories like Reburn's are what

"Del Tech was great. The school does a great job of preparing you for the real world beyond the classroom. It sets you up for success."

~ Michelle Kelly '17

inspire the restaurant's owners to seek out new chefs who want to break into the industry.

"There's a huge sense of pride getting to watch our young chefs grow, accomplish their goals, and get where they want to go," said Ross.

Delaware Tech graduate Michelle Kelly can typically be found slinging out coffee and cocktails from behind the beverage bar at the back of the restaurant. She has been working at the Peach Blossom Eatery since 2022 and has eyes on one day opening her own coffee shop. She enjoys learning under the mentorship of Brinton, who also owns Little Goat Coffee Roasting Co.

"I don't know a lot of people who are as self-driven like [Brinton and Ross] are,"

Kelly said. "Everyone that works here is passionate about what they do. It makes it enjoyable to come to work."

Kelly, a SEED Scholarship recipient, credits Delaware Tech's business administration program with giving her a strong foundation for business analytics and an understanding of what's needed to be an entrepreneur.

"Del Tech was great," she said. "The school does a great job of preparing you for the real world beyond the classroom. It sets you up for success."

Like Kelly, Alivia Alessandrini also aspires to one day own her own business. The Delaware Tech alumna graduated from the College's culinary arts program and brought her passion for cooking and feeding others to the kitchen at Peach Blossom. Growing up in an Italian home where cooking was a staple in her life, Alessandrini likes to experiment with ingredients and put her own spin on classic dishes. At Peach Blossom Eatery, she gets to do that.

"This is the best restaurant I've ever worked at," she said. "People are here because they love it. The passion from Sam and Olivia inspires you to become better. It makes me feel like I can do anything." ♦

Changing Lives Through Endowed Scholarships

After seeing the success their son, Michael, and daughter-in-law, Jacqie Thompson, had as Delaware Tech students, Paul and Pam Baumbach wanted to give back to the institution that had done so much for their family in a meaningful way.

“We were very pleased with the quality education they received, the growth they both had while attending Delaware Tech,” said Rep. Paul Baumbach. “We wanted to give back to Del Tech and the community and felt that scholarships would be a good avenue.”

In 2018, the Baumbachs approached the College to create not just one, but two, endowed scholarships to reduce the financial burden for Delaware Tech students in need. These scholarships honor the educational paths of Michael, a 2015 graduate of the biological sciences program, and Jacqie, a 2015 graduate of the accounting program.

“Creating an endowed scholarship is a tremendous benefit to our students who come to us because they want to change their lives with a college degree,” said Dr. Mark T. Brainard, Delaware Tech president. “The Baumbach family’s generosity in creating these two scholarship endowments will have a lasting legacy for the College and our students.”

The Thompson & Schmidgall Business Scholarship, named in honor of the Baumbachs’ daughter-in-law, Jacqie, and Pam Baumbach’s mother, Sandra Schmidgall, is available to any Delaware Tech business major with financial need. The Baumbach Family Science Scholarship, named in honor of their son, Michael,



“While Del Tech offers great value, there are many Delawareans who are just getting by and can’t afford the tuition while also keeping a roof over their head and food on their table. That is why we established these scholarships.”

~ Rep. Paul Baumbach

and Paul’s mother, Jean Baumbach, is available to students with financial need who are enrolled at the Stanton Campus in the biology or chemistry programs. For Paul Baumbach, these scholarships are a fitting tribute to the tradition established by his mother, Jean, who created an endowed scholarship of her own at Towson University. A former professor at Towson and supervisor for Harford County schools, Jean Baumbach passed away in 2019.

Through the endowed scholarships, the Baumbach family has contributed more than \$66,000 to Delaware Tech, including \$42,000 that served as seed funding for the

endowments and the initial student awards.

“While Del Tech offers great value, there are many Delawareans who are just getting by and can’t afford the tuition while also keeping a roof over their head and food on their table,” said Rep. Baumbach. “That is why we established these scholarships.”

Because of the Baumbachs’ generosity, 12 students have benefitted from both the Thompson & Schmidgall Business Scholarship and the Baumbach Family Science Scholarship, which are awarded annually. The scholarship funds can be applied to tuition and other costs, including books, fees, and materials.

“The Baumbach family has been a great supporter of Delaware Tech and our students,” Brainard said. “As a state representative, Paul is always one of the first legislators to step up when we need help, and now these scholarships provide direct support to some of our students who most need the help. We are extremely grateful for all they have done.” ❖

SUPPORT DELAWARE TECH, STRENGTHEN DELAWARE

Delaware Tech is a critical partner in strengthening the economic vitality of the state by providing qualified employees to fill in-demand jobs. Visit dtcc.edu/giving to learn more about ways to give.

\$2.8 M

Since 2019-20, Delaware Tech’s Educational Foundation has awarded \$2.8 million in scholarships

650+

More than 650 Delaware businesses and organizations hired our graduates in 2022

58%

Delaware Tech has a diverse student population; 58 percent are students of color

96%

Ninety-six percent of Delaware Tech students are Delawareans



Delaware Tech Launches Patient Care Technician/Nursing Pathway Thanks to Neighborhood Builders® Award from Bank of America

Thanks to a generous Neighborhood Builders® Award from Bank of America, Delaware Tech was able to partner with Colonial School District to launch a new accelerated patient care technician/nursing pathway program that will increase the pipeline of allied health and nursing students.

Bank of America's 2023 Neighborhood Builders® Award includes grant funding of \$200,000 over two years, as well as workforce development leadership training. A portion of this funding is being used for the patient care technician/nursing pathway program at William Penn High School.

Delaware Tech was one of just two organizations in the state to receive the Bank of America award, which was created to help meet community needs through programs and services addressing secondary education, job readiness, and workforce development.

"Students who complete courses in this pathway program will not only graduate high school with 12 college credits, but they will also be prepared to enter highly competitive academic programs in health care," said Delaware Tech President Mark T. Brainard. "And we know that dual enrollment programs provide students with the incentive they need

to graduate from high school, enroll in college, and earn their degrees."

The program will allow 15 high school juniors and seniors to earn industry-recognized credentials and complete three college credit courses for free, kickstarting their pathway to an associate degree in nursing while in high school. Delaware Tech will also use the grant funds to purchase laptops and textbooks for participating students.

"As Delaware's only community college, we recognize the importance of having programs in place that address both the needs and goals of our students, community, and state," said Brainard. "This support furthers our partnership with Bank of America and will help develop our staff to shape curriculum and inform educational offerings at the College.



In addition, this will help students gain access to a quality education and assist students from underserved communities who are seeking a position in the health sector early in their academic careers."

The College's Neighborhood Builders® Award went to the Delaware Tech Educational Foundation, which raises funds for Delaware Tech students to ensure an accessible education for all who wish to attend.

"The partnership between Delaware Tech and William Penn High School addresses significant needs throughout Delaware," said Chip Rossi, president, Bank of America Delaware. "Providing Delaware Tech with flexible funding and leadership training not only supports this innovative academic program but creates career opportunities for many young students in Delaware now and in the future."

The invitation-only Neighborhood Builders® program is highly competitive. Non-profit organizations are selected by a committee comprised of community leaders and past Builders Award winners. Since 2006, Bank of America has invested more than \$5.4 million in the 29 non-profit organizations in Delaware that have been selected as Neighborhood Builders® awardees. ❖



DELAWARE TECH

***MAKES IT
WORK.***

WORK WHILE EARNING A DEGREE.

With more than 100 degree, diploma,
and certificate programs, Delaware Tech
will lift you up to high-demand jobs.

MAKE YOUR MOVE.

VISIT DTCC.EDU
TO VIEW PROGRAMS

