First Community College in the Nation with a Virtual Laparoscopic Training Simulator

The College is the first U.S. community college to have purchased the LapSim® 2015, a cutting-edge, virtual laparoscopic training simulator. The latest addition to the state-of-the-art Simulation Lab at the Marple Campus, the simulator will help students in the College’s Perioperative Nursing, Registered Nurse First Assistant, Surgical Technology and other medical programs.

“High-quality simulation is necessary to ensure students are learning the required protocols for simple and complicated procedures,” said Sharvette Law Philmon of the College’s Allied Health, Emergency Services and Nursing division. “This controlled simulated setting affords true learning in a low-stakes environment.” The College’s LapSim has the appendectomy module software, which introduces students to one of the most frequently performed surgeries in hospitals. It is scenario-based and challenges trainees’ decision-making skills with extensive pathology variations. Funding for the College’s LapSim® was provided by the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act, administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Education’s Bureau of Career and Technical Education.

Innovative Alumna Designs One-of-a-Kind Pope Francis Rookie Commemorative Card

Melissa Maani ’94, manager of graphic design for the Philadelphia Phillies baseball team, displayed her creative genius recently when she designed the Phillies’ Pope Francis Rookie Card. The recipient of the College’s 2015 Alumni Professional Achievement Award, Maani designed the card as a one-of-a-kind commemorative keepsake. After weeks of vetting by the Vatican, the Phillies were allowed to print 70,000 cards, which were given out at the first and third base kiosks at Citizens Bank Park at the Phillies September 16 game against the Washington Nationals. The cards also were placed in the keepsake bags distributed to many of the people who attended the World Meeting of Families, the event which brought Pope Francis to Philadelphia September 26-27 for his historic visit. The rookie card includes pertinent stats, such as: “Position: 266th Pope of the Roman Catholic Church.”

Faculty Member Named 2015 Pennsylvania EMS Educator of the Year

Paramedic Education Coordinator Robert “Bubba” Hamilton ’11 was recently named the Pennsylvania Department of Health, Bureau of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) 2015 Educator of the Year. Hamilton, who received the award at the 2015 Pennsylvania Fire and Emergency Services Institute’s dinner on November 21 in Hershey, Pennsylvania, is the first Delaware County Community College educator to have received the award.

“We are constantly challenged to improve EMS education to meet the needs of our students and the communities they serve,” said Hamilton. “Receiving this award is certainly one of the highlights of my career,” Hamilton said. “I am truly blessed to have worked alongside of and learned from so many talented EMS providers and educators. I credit my success and the success of our programs to being able to surround myself and our students with great educators and doing all that I can to remain a student of EMS myself.”

Hamilton has been the College’s Paramedic Education coordinator since February 2014. He also is an EMS instructor at Drexel University’s College of Medicine. To be eligible for the Educator of the Year Award, the recipient must be a certified Pennsylvania EMS instructor, or education professional, who has advanced EMS education in the following areas: leadership in the advancement of instructional techniques; serving as an instructor in basic and/or advanced life support programs; and public information and education programs focused on health, safety, or community EMS awareness.
Khaled Alkurdi, 22, a (Delaware County Community College) business administration major who has transferred to Temple, was 18 when he and his family left Syria for the United States. Alkurdi was preparing for his final exams when the Assad regime was strengthening in his hometown of Damascus, prompting fear among himself and family, he said. “Damascus was protected by the regime but there were explosions and helicopters,” Alkurdi said. “I was afraid to leave my house because I wasn’t sure if explosions would kill me or not.”

Because homes and shops were being destroyed by the Assad regime, he said, explosions would wake Alkurdi and his family every night. According to Alkurdi, his family became more concerned about their safety when the Syrian army invaded their home. “My brother and I were hanging out on our rooftop and listening to (Syrian) anti-Assad Regime music,” Alkurdi said. “Four soldiers slammed our door open and had AK-47s. We had to hide our phones from them or we would be arrested and possibly tortured for being against the regime.”

Alkurdi said there was a torture house close to his neighborhood where Syrian spied, called the Mukhabarat, violently apprehended civilians against the regime. Methods of torture included whipping, electrocution, and death, Alkurdi said. “The army always asked for my ID and cell phone, but they were so illustrative that they had no idea what they were reading.”

His terror in Damascus grew stronger. Every day, Alkurdi received news that family and friends were being killed by the regime, including his beloved Arabic teacher’s son. “One day, my teacher came to class with red eyes and messy hair,” Alkurdi said. “I asked him if he was ok and then tears started rolling down his face. At that point I didn’t know what to say.”

Alkurdi’s professor told him his son was burned alive in an explosion in a Syrian town called Daria. “His son just finished dental school and was getting married soon,” Alkurdi said. “I broke my heart even more when my teacher told me I reminded him of his son.”

When Alkurdi came to the United States in 2011, he said he felt sad and angry that his country was falling to pieces. “I didn’t like the idea of moving because my whole life belongs in Syria,” Alkurdi said. “There’s one thing having a house, but having a home is way different.”

Alkurdi said he saw a graphic picture of a good friend on his Facebook, whose body was burned in an explosion. “Seeing a person die in pain is hard but why did she, or any of the other people, deserve to die?” Alkurdi said. “The regime wanted their people to live, not us, meaning the people against the regime. I’ve lost my friend, my family, my life, and my home—Syria.”

Alkurdi is not alone in his fears about his country being destroyed. According to the United Nations, 12 million Syrians have fled from their homes, since the outbreak of civil war in 2011. The humanitarian organization Mercy Corps reports Syria’s civil war is the worst humanitarian disaster of our time, with more than 12 million Syrians displaced and 240,000 killed.

In March of 2011, anti-government demonstrations began as a part of the Arab Spring. Syrians experienced violent crackdowns from the Assad regime, according to World Vision, an organization that is helping 2 million displaced refugees. According to Mercy Corps, the Free Syrian Army and other Syrian civilians, took up arms to join the opposition. Division between ethnic and political groups created more complications in Syria.

Now, ISIS has stirred more trouble in Syria, killing minority groups such as the Kurdish and Yazidi, the United Nations reports. According to the U.N., ISIS has killed 24,000 Syrians and has taken control of dozens of towns. The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the U.N.’s Refugee Agency, and the Government of Turkey state that only 2.1 million refugees have registered with UNHCR in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon. Nearly 2 million Syrians registered in Turkey and 26,700 in North Africa.

According to UNHCR Australia, 440,000 refugees have dangerously crossed the Mediterranean to tiny islands in Greece and Italy. Three thousand men, women, and children have been drowned or lost by crossing the Mediterranean. Syrian refugees have also fled to Hungary, Austria and Germany. According to the European Commission, Germany, which has been a popular destination for Syrians, will accept 800,000 refugees.

Alkurdi said he was tired of hearing his fellow Syrians suffering from the crisis. “Every day, I receive depressing phone calls,” Alkurdi said. “Someone dying, someone’s home destroyed, someone starving.” Alkurdi said he was motivated to take action about the crisis. He decided to be a member of various organizations that send food and clothing to refugees. “I am a part of many organizations, including the Syrian American Council and Sawia,” Alkurdi said.

Alkurdi added he was mostly active in the Nareen Tree Foundation where his uncle Nizar Alkurdi is the founder and president. “We’ve sent 12 containers of goods to Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan,” Alkurdi said. “We don’t send any to Syria because you can’t guarantee that it’s going to happen to the container.”

Luis Lopez, 19, an engineering major at the College, helps Alkurdi collect food and clothing. “We collect canned goods, and dry beans,” Lopez said. “We also personally go to people’s homes to collect goods.”

Alkurdi said that his uncle opened a warehouse in Norristown where he stores donated goods. “We collect donations every Saturday from 10 to 2,” Alkurdi said. “Once containers are full, we will send them immediately. I also went to an event in New York City, called NYC Solidarity with Syrian Refugees, on September 12, to get our government to bring in refugees.”

Alkurdi said he urges everyone to sign the petition to resettle 65,000 Syrian refugees in the United States. The petition requires 100,000 signatures by 2016 and 101,506 have already signed the petition. “It’s really not about the politics anymore,” Alkurdi said. “We’re just doing it for peace.”
recently, at the invitation of assistant professor of communication studies tanya gardner, i took part in a diversity/communication/science initiative called the dna discussion project.

created by west chester university communication studies professor dr. anita foeman, the dna discussion project asks participants what they think their ethnic background is, and then has them take a dna test. participants provide saliva samples, which are sent to a laboratory, compared with other regional dna samples and used to deduce from which regions the world the participant’s ancestors most likely originated.

alyssa masarella, a communications studies major, tanya and i met in my office and each of us provided saliva samples for the dna discussion project, a wonderful way to engage students, faculty and staff in discussions about the important roles culture, diversity and science play in our everyday lives. but little did i know how popular the topic might be for our college family.

on october 27, more than 130 people packed a panel discussion in the college’s stem center titled, “unraveling the tapestry of your dna: what are your origins,” an event which combined the dna discussion project with the college’s ongoing boeing stem speaker series. participants in the panel discussion included: dr. foeman; alyssa; our college’s adjunct instructor of communication studies tyler daniels and assistant professor of biology dr. robert suran; and me. sally kobas, assistant professor of mathematics, who founded the stem speaker series, moderated the discussion. (note: see page 7 for more information about boeing-sponsored events and activities at the college).

what ensued during the panel discussion was a thoughtful, frank dialogue about race, culture, communication, science and human expectations. congratulations are in order for all who made the event a success, particularly to tanya and dr. foeman, who teaches intercultural communication at west chester university.

while my dna test results did not surprise me—predominantly european with some african—the panel discussion was a lively, engaging way to help students, faculty and staff understand the influence that culture and cultural perceptions have on guiding and shaping societal behaviors. to learn more about dr. foeman’s dna discussion project, see www.dnahiddiscussionproject.com.

jerome s. parker
president
Faculty and Staff Learn About Creating Welcoming Environment for U.S. Veterans

U.S. Marine Corps veteran Tom Cossettino found the lack of structure he faced when leaving the service both liberating and unnerving. Life in the Marines was usually rise and shine at the crack of dawn, and everything was extremely structured with "bone-deep, repetitive discipline," he said. By compari-

son, college, with its choice of academic majors, courses, professors and classmates, was like another world.

In the military, "you learn to do things by the numbers," he said. But with the help of the supportive faculty and staff at the College he was able to apply the skills he learned in the military to succeed in the classroom.

Cossettino, who served as an infantryman in Cuba, Japan, Korea, Kuwait and Operation Enduring Freedom in the Horn of Africa, was one of two veterans who spoke in October to faculty and staff as part of an in-service professional development presentation titled, "Identifying, Engaging and Supporting Veterans in the Classroom," coordinated by Assistant Professor of English Susan Ray.

The presentation was videotaped and is available on the Teaching Resources channel on the Faculty tab in dela-

gate (the College's intranet).

A graduate of Upper Darby High School, Cossettino enlisted in the Marines when he was 17 years old. Four years later, he was honor-

ably discharged as a corporal, and three months after his discharge, he enrolled at the College. He transferred to Villanova University in 2008, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2008 and a Master of Arts in 2011. He is cur-

rently writing his dissertation toward a Ph.D. in History at Rutgers University.

Army veteran Craig Hilliard, Ray's husband, who also spoke during the presentation, served in the invasion of Iraq in 2003. After the service, he earned a Master of Public Administration from the University of Pennsylvania. He currently works for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

College Receives Military Friendly® Designation

The College has been designated a 2016 Military Friendly® School by Victory Media, publisher of G.I. Jobs® and Military Spouse. "Post-secondary institutions earning the 2016 Military Friendly® School award have exceptionally strong programs for transition-

ing service members and spouses," said U.S. Navy Reserve veteran Daniel Nichols, chief product officer of Victory Media. "Our Military Friendly® Schools are truly aligning their military programs and services with employers to help students translate military experience, skills and training into successful careers after graduation."

The Military Friendly® School designation was based upon the College's support of military veterans on campus, graduation and employment outcomes, and military spouse policies.

Delaware County Community College offers credit for military training and knowledge, career counseling, day, evening, weekend and online classes. Several staff members are skilled in helping vets and their family members navigate the intricacies of U.S. government benefits and financial aid. The College has a Veteran Center at the Marple Campus Student Center, where veterans can use a computer, study and meet other veterans. On November 10, the College held a Veteran Appreciation Lunch in celebration of Veterans Day, and ran before-and-after photos all that week of staff and faculty who served in the country in the U.S. Armed Forces on the College's internal television monitors under the heading: "In honor of Veterans Day, we thank you for your service."

Alumna Succeeds in Keeping Memory of Her Grandfather, U.S. Veteran "Wild Bill," Alive

Debi Kalfety '87 proudly watched September 19 as a bronze statue of her late grandfather World War II veteran William "Wild Bill" Guarnere was unveiled at the Delaware County Veterans Memorial, 4599 West Chester Pike in Newtown Square. "Today is a special day," Kalfety said at the unveiling ceremony, which was attended by many veterans and county, town and city officials. "It is a day of honor and respect. It is a day of celebration. It is a day to celebrate a hero."

The statue of World War II veteran William "Wild Bill" Guarnere, grandfather of alumna Debi Kalfety, unveiled last September at the Delaware County Veterans Memorial.

Alumna Raises Thousands to House Homeless U.S. Veterans

Megan Trinkley '94 and her husband Robert Trinkley raised $28,000 last year to help provide housing to homeless veterans. The money was raised through a "Homes for Heroes" fundraiser the Trinkleys hosted last February at Barnaby's Heritage Ballroom on MacDade Boulevard in Holmes. A second fundraiser is scheduled for Friday, February 26 at the same location.

"We had over 250 attend," Megan said of the first fundraiser. "We were thrilled!" All of the proceeds were donated to Mission First Housing Group, a Philadelphia-based nonprofit which provides housing, rental assistance and food to people in need (see missionfirsthousing.org/fundforvets).

Megan said what prompted her to do the Februa-

ry fundraiser was the death of her father, Dan Kearney, a Korean War Air Force veteran, in 2014. She wanted to do something to honor him and other veterans.

The success of their first fundraiser and the urgency of the home-

less veterans' cause prompted the Trinkleys to plan the second fundraiser. In 2014, on a single night, 49,933 veterans spent the night in a shelter or on the street, according to Mission First's website. "There should never be a homeless vet," Megan said. "Our goal is to provide for as many vets who are homeless as possible, to put them into homes, so they can have the quality of life we all have."

The Trinkleys are a dynamic duo. Robert is a longtime project manager for Mission First. He also owns and operates Complete Carpentry, a general construction business. Megan manages RMT Management Inc., a company whose initials stand for Robert Megan Trinkley. RMT oversees dozens of rental properties the Trinkleys own in Delaware County.

To be successful at fundraising takes people skills, the ability to attract the attention of the news media and a knack for utilizing social media and technology to raise awareness, says Megan, who attributes much of what she is able to do to what she learned while a Communication Studies ma-

jor at the College. "One professor I'll never forget is Norman Smith," she said, adding that Smith, a Communication Studies professor and U.S. vet-

eran, was charismatic, knowledgeable and "made you want to be" in his class.

After graduating from the College, Megan went to West Chester University, where she received a Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies in 1996. She then spent about a decade work-

ing in admissions and recruitment at for-profit schools, such as The Chubb Institute, before being recruited by her husband to run RMT Self-Storage, a business the couple created by converting the old Villa Theater movie house in Collingdale into a self-storage facility. The Trinkleys later sold the facility and Megan turned full-time to her current job of running RMT Management Inc.

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Continued on page 5.
in the news

Travel the World Without Leaving Campus

The annual Multicultural Festival drew a large crowd of students, faculty and staff to the Academic Building on the Marple Campus last November. The free festival featured ethnic foods from around the world, as well as performances by the Zawadi School of African Dance and Drum.

Psychology Professor’s Study Sparks Worldwide Interest

Assistant Psychology Professor Kelly Landman, Ph.D., was honored when the American Psychological Association (APA) published “The Role of Compulsive Texting in Adolescents’ Academic Functioning,” a study for which she was the lead author. But little did she realize the avalanche of news media attention the study would generate.

Since the APA published the study in its Psychology of Popular Media Culture quarterly journal last October, the study has been featured in The New York Times, TIME magazine, The Sun and the Daily Mail in the United Kingdom, The Times of India, and The Daily Observer in Antigua, as well as on television on CNN, Good Morning America, the Today Show, NBC News, CBS News, and online on Parenting.com. A story in Media Life, a print and online publication, arguably had the best headline: “Like, drop that phone if you want to pass.”

“I was surprised,” said Landman, a clinical child psychologist who has since been interviewed by a host of reporters about the study. Why all the fuss? She can only surmise that, in today’s technologically connected world, where children can communicate privately through phone texts, largely away from their parents and teachers, a study about teens, texting and academic performance is of interest not only to psychologists, but to parents worldwide.

The study, in which 403 students self-reported, asked questions like, “How often do you do your chores to spend more time texting?” and “How often do you try to cut down the amount of time you spend texting and fail?” Landman and her two co-authors found in their study of 211 females and 192 males in eighth through 11th grade in a small Midwestern town that increased compulsive texting is related to lower academic performance for adolescent girls. Why girls and not boys? She suggests the reason may lie in why teens text.

Previous research shows that teen boys use digital technology to convey information, while girls use it for social interaction and to nurture relationships, possibly making girls more prone to compulsive texting than boys.

“It appears that it is the compulsive nature of texting, rather than the sheer frequency, that is problematic,” Landman says. “Compulsive texting is more complex than frequency of texting. It involves trying and failing to cut back on texting, becoming defensive when challenged about the behavior, and feeling frustrated when one can’t do it.”

Landman, who completed the study as part of her doctoral thesis at Bowling Green State University in Ohio, is the first to say that more research needs to be done. She also is quick to add that there are positive benefits to social media, such as its use as a vehicle to bring people together. After receiving her doctorate from Bowling Green State University in 2010, Landman taught Psychology at Chestnut Hill College for four years. Last summer, she began teaching Psychology at Delaware County Community College. “I’ve found that teaching is my passion,” she said. “I love being in front of a room full of students in General Psychology and making information come alive.”

“Violence in America” Symposium Held at the College

6abc Action News Anchor Matt O’Donnell moderated a symposium on October 13 titled “Violence in America: Public Trust and Police Practices” that featured a panel of experts. The panel included noted academics, as well as representatives from the FBI, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Delaware County District Attorney’s Office, and the city of Chester Police Commissioner. The panel addressed so-called “stand your ground” laws, and police use of excessive force. It was hosted by the College’s Division of Business, Computing and Social Science.

Faculty Member Named 2015 Pennsylvania EMS Educator of the Year

Continued from cover.

Hamilton has been a paramedic for 24 years, serving in the capacity of critical-care paramedic, flight paramedic and 911-paramedic, a post in which he still practices today. He has been an EMS educator for 19 years, teaching many disciplines, including Emergency Medical Technician, paramedic, pre-hospital trauma life support and geriatric education for EMS, as well as serving as an American Heart Association instructor for CPR, advanced cardiac life support and pediatric advanced life support.
Researcher, Professor, Mother, Alumna Luli Akinfiresoye

Luli Akinfiresoye ’04, a scientist who holds a Ph.D. in neuropharmacology, considers enrolling at the College one of the best choices of her life. “My story is not complete without talking about Delaware County Community College,” Akinfiresoye said.

A native of Nigeria, she came to America with her family, became a U.S. citizen and enrolled at the College after considering other options, such as the University of Pennsylvania. “I knew I wanted to go to medical school, but Penn was too expensive and large,” she said, adding that she wanted a school with smaller class sizes.

Today, Akinfiresoye is a research scientist at Howard University studying neuroprotectants and medications to treat depression. She also is an adjunct Chemistry and Pharmacology professor at Northern Virginia Community College. While she enjoys research, she takes great pride and joy in teaching students. “It’s the core of my being,” she said, adding that it is a privilege to be in a position where she can make a difference in someone’s life. “We could really use a lot of vibrant scientists across the world,” she said. “It adds value to human existence.”

Back in 2003 when Akinfiresoye started at the College, she did not even know what a community college was, she said. “We did not have that back in Africa,” she said. But after speaking to a College counselor, she was convinced the College was right for her. Her favorite course was English, not so much because of the subject, but because of the teacher, Liz Biebel-Stanley, associate professor of English. “English was the most remarkable class I ever took,” she said, adding that Biebel-Stanley gave her a lot of support and made her feel confident about her writing. “She trained me to write.”

Those writing skills would stand her well after she graduated from the College with an associate degree in Science and transferred to Temple University, where she majored in Biochemistry and graduated in 2007. She then went to work as a quality control scientist for Teva Pharmaceuticals and later earned a master’s degree in Clinical Chemistry from the University of Scranton in 2009 and a Ph.D. in Neuropharmacology, a branch of medical science dealing with the action of drugs on and in the nervous system, from Howard University in 2013. Along the way, Akinfiresoye also married and had three children. “It has been a journey,” she said, adding that she feels blessed to have reached her goals.

Alumna, Paris Jazz Singer Reflects on Recent Events in France

Recent terrorist events in Europe and the Middle East have prompted Denise King ’83 to focus even more on using her education and wonderful singing prowess to help people in her adopted home, Paris.

A celebrated recording artist who received her start in Philadelphia before performing around the world, King has lived for the last seven years part-time in Philadelphia and also in Paris, where she performs in and around the city. She was in Philadelphia on the evening of November 13, the fateful day when terrorists attacked multiple locations in Paris, killing and injuring dozens of people. She has friends and family who were directly affected by the violent siege that transformed restaurants and a music venue into battlefields. In a recent interview, she shared her experiences and hopes for a peaceful future.

“One of the restaurants that was targeted—Le Carillon—was at the end of my street, where I lived for a year,” King said. “I used to walk by there, ate there and it is in a trendy area which is just a fun place to be in central Paris.”

King watched the events unfold on television, while trying to contact friends for updates. “I feel lucky. I feel blessed and incredibly grateful that I was able to get out before this happened. At the same time, I can see on TV the neighborhoods that I am very familiar with, including Bobigny and Saint-Denis, suffer. Experiencing this from afar is very emotional,” she said.

King returned to Paris earlier this year and is now using her music to comfort Parisian audiences. “In trying times like this, we as artists and musicians share a responsibility to give people a sense of hope,” she said. “We want to help celebrate life and (have) a message of love to go on, not only in Paris, not only in France, but anywhere else where terrorist acts have occurred.” For more information about Denise King, see: www.denisekingsings.com.

Municipal Police Academy Graduation

A total of 72 students graduated from Delaware County Community College’s Municipal Police Academy on December 21 in a ceremony held at Ridley Middle School.

Alumna Succeeds in Keeping Memory of Her Grandfather, U.S. Veteran “Wild Bill,” Alive

Continued from page 3.

Guarnere was an Army paratrooper in the 101st Airborne, 506th regiment, E-company, who lost his leg due to the war. His elite rifle company became the subject of Stephen E. Ambrose’s acclaimed book, “Band of Brothers,” which in 2001 led to a 10-hour HBO television mini-series of the same name.

Rafferty, a mother of four who works full-time as a labor and delivery nurse at Delaware County Memorial Hospital, worked tirelessly holding fundraising events to pay for the 8-foot tall, 3,200 pound statue, created by award-winning sculptor Chad Fisher. She plans to continue raising funds to honor and help veterans. Her next event will be the Second Annual Wild Bill Guarnere Memorial Golf Outing on Friday, April 15. For more information, see www.wildbillmemorial.org.
The Delaware County Community College Educational Foundation hosts an annual dinner each fall to introduce student scholarship recipients to their benefactors. The donor recognizes the generosity of scholarship donors and the accomplishments of student scholars. The event was held at Drexelbrook Corporate Events Center on October 20.

Student speakers, Anthony Ortega, Courtney Emery and Gina DiLuzio, expressed gratitude to their donors and shared personal stories of their academic and financial challenges. Representing a diversity of academic disciplines—Business, Health Care and Psychology—the three students related their own unique experiences at the College, as well as their future goals. Kathleen Breslin, executive director of the Educational Foundation, announced that there were now 132 separate scholarship programs, and that 279 students received scholarships for a total of $270,000 during the academic year.

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In celebration of the College’s upcoming 50th anniversary in 2017, PECO Energy awarded a $25,000 grant for STEM Majors. At a luncheon honoring PECO and attended by 38 of the scholarship winners, a check was presented by PECO representatives including: Eric Helt, vice president of Operations; Romaine Ruesch Benson, manager, Corporate Relations; Marymou Sheppard, manager of New Business, who also is a College Educational Foundation board member; and Michele Garrity, senior community relations specialist. Greg Cary and Ralph Brown, PECO external affairs managers of New Business, also attended. Accepting the check are College President Dr. Jerry Parker and Kathleen Breslin, executive director of the College’s Educational Foundation.

For many years, 31 four-year colleges and universities have shared in the bounty of the W. W. Smith Charitable Trust scholarship program, which is awarded based on financial need and other strict requirements. This year, the trust will for the first time extend the program’s support to community college students in Greater Philadelphia.

The Trust was named after William Wikoff Smith, the fifth president of the Kewanee Oil Company, founded by his great grandfather in 1871. Kewanee initially operated in oil transport, but later concentrated on exploration and production. Eventually, Kewanee became a global company and by 1975 had revenues in excess of $357 million.

Privately, Smith established the W. W. Smith Charitable Trust in 1951 with Kewanee shares. For more than 20 years, he quietly supported many charitable organizations in Philadelphia until his death in 1976. In his will, he established an enduring legacy, the W. W. Smith Charitable Trust, to enhance the quality of life in Greater Philadelphia. During 2014, it awarded nearly $6.7 million to local charities.

This year, seven two-year colleges, including Delaware, Bucks and Montgomery Community Colleges, along with the College of Community Colleges and Camden County College, will participate in the Trust’s two-year pilot program that will support full-time students with financial need who are U.S. citizens with a minimum 2.5 grade point average. Students must reside in the five county area and are required to write a thank you note. Scholarships are renewable if qualifications continue to be met. Trustees will visit the participating colleges in alternating years.

Historically, the Trust has determined the amount of funding based on the collective financial need of the students at each institution based on federal student aid guidelines. The application process will begin in spring 2016, although the amount of funding provided to the two-year schools has not yet been announced. The offices of Enrollment Management and the College’s Educational Foundation will manage the process.
Student Scott Duffy Selected as a 2015 Coca-Cola Leader of Promise

Computer Science major Scott Duffy was chosen last October to receive a $1,000 scholarship from the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society as a 2015 Coca-Cola Leaders of Promise Scholar. The 19-year-old Collingdale resident, who has a 4.0 grade point average and is a black belt in karate, was homeschooled prior to entering the College. He was chosen from more than 1,100 applicants worldwide. Independent judges evaluated the applications based on scholastic achievement, community service and leadership potential.

Duffy, vice president of fundraising for the College’s Phi Theta Kappa chapter, is one of 207 Phi Theta Kappa members awarded scholarships, a remarkable accomplishment considering Duffy has a learning disability, a visual tracking disorder and OCD, a brain and behavior disorder that causes severe anxiety. “Most importantly, I am motivated in all things by my faith. I trust that no matter what happens everything will work out. My faith helps me make important decisions, work through stressful times and keeps me confident,” said Duffy, who after graduating from the College this year plans to transfer to West Chester University and eventually enter the career field of cyber security.

While at the College, Duffy has volunteered for local stream and creek clean ups, and he led the Student Government Association’s effort to bring therapy dogs from Paws for People to the College’s Marple Campus the week before final exams as a way of helping students alleviate stress.

The Coca-Cola Leaders of Promise Scholarship scholars are encouraged to assume leadership roles by participating in honor society programs. The Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation provides $200,000 in funding for the scholarships. The remaining amount is supported by donations to the Phi Theta Kappa Foundation.

“The research shows that Phi Theta Kappa members are four times more likely to complete a college degree than their peers. The Leaders of Promise Scholars recognize students for what they have achieved already and assure that financial need isn’t an obstacle to achieving their academic goals,” said Dr. Nancy Rieves, chief executive officer of the Phi Theta Kappa Foundation.

Phi Theta Kappa, headquartered in Jackson, Mississippi, is the largest honor society in higher education, providing students a way to recognize and honor their academic achievements.

Faculty and Staff Learn About Creating Welcoming Environment for U.S. Veterans

Unlike Cossentino, who enlisted right after high school, Hilliard enlisted in the Army after earning a bachelor’s degree in Neuroscience and after having worked at a pharmaceutical company warehouse. While Cossentino’s unit was never fired upon, Hilliard was wounded in combat. As a result of encounters with improvised explosive devices, he experienced traumatic brain injury and now has issues with facial recognition, short-term memory and dyslexia. Upon his return, he was also diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder.

“The most important thing to realize about the veteran’s experience is that everyone’s is different,” Hilliard said.

Both Hilliard and Cossentino urged faculty and staff to recognize the unique potential of their student-veterans and to reach out to them lest they become isolated. Both men also said they found it helpful to form study groups with other veterans because it created a sense of community reminiscent of their time in the military. It also allowed them to share best practices for overcoming academic and social challenges and kept group members accountable to each other.

Nancy McLaughlin, an advisor in the College’s Financial Aid office, and Shannah Bermudez, a coordinator of disability services at the College, said it is important faculty and staff know what resources are available to help veterans, such as the new Veteran Center in Room 1183 within the Marple Campus Student Center, and the guidance the College offers veterans and their family members regarding military government benefits and financial aid. It can be difficult to know who is a veteran at the College because they are not required to self-identify. According to McLaughlin, there are 206 students who have self-identified as veterans at the College.

Culinary Arts Students Give Back

Students from the College’s Culinary Arts program assisted in serving holiday dinners to 200 people at the Salvation Army in Coatesville in December.

Photos courtesy of Laurel Mc Dermott.

A child and a woman enjoy the holiday feast at the Salvation Army dinner.

Women in STEM Roundtable Held at the College

Front Row: Sandy Caro, director of the College’s New Choices Career Development Program and co-advisor for the Women in STEM Club; student Carmen Warber; Alexis San Gabriels, a work in progress supervisor at Acme Precision; welding student Jemaya Joyce; Dione Ethel, a process engineer at Boeing; Sandy Desimone, associate professor of Biology and co-advisor for the Women in STEM Club; Back Row: student Leila Moyer; Michelle Roundtree, associate professor of Biochemistry; Gina Miller, technical lead engineer at Boeing’s BR&T Vertical Lift Company; Leigh Marie Mazal, center project engineer, Southco; Sharon Wills, vice president and co-founder of Integral Molecular; students Dresdor Shamaker and Kristen Loes.

Student Scott Duffy

The Coca-Cola Leaders of Promise Scholarship scholars are encouraged to bring therapy dogs from Paws for People to the College’s Marple Campus the week before final exams as a way of helping students alleviate stress.

Students from the College’s Culinary Arts program assisted in serving holiday dinners to 200 people at the Salvation Army in Coatesville in December.

Photos courtesy of Laurel Mc Dermott.

A child and a woman enjoy the holiday feast at the Salvation Army dinner.

Chef Peter Callmer right, director of the College’s Culinary Arts program, and Jarret Young, a Culinary Arts adjunct instructor and a chef/instructor for the Culinary program at the Chester County Intermediate Unit, are interviewed by 6abc Action News at the event.
First Community College in the Nation with a Virtual Laparoscopic Training Simulator

The College is the first U.S. community college to have purchased the LapSim® 2015, a cutting-edge, virtual laparoscopic training simulator. The latest addition to the state-of-the-art Simulation Lab at the Marple Campus, the simulator will help students in the College’s Perioperative Nursing, Registered Nurse First Assistant, Surgical Technology and other medical programs.

“High-quality simulation is necessary to ensure students are learning the required protocols for simple and complicated procedures,” said Sharvette Law Philmon of the College’s Allied Health, Emergency Services and Nursing division. “This controlled simulated setting affords true learning in a low-stakes environment.” The College’s LapSim has the appendectomy module software, which introduces students to one of the most frequently performed surgeries in hospitals. It is scenario-based and challenges trainees’ decision-making skills with extensive pathology variations. Funding for the College’s LapSim® was provided by the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act, administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Education’s Bureau of Career and Technical Education.

Faculty Member Named 2015 Pennsylvania EMS Educator of the Year

Paramedic Education Coordinator Robert “Bubba” Hamilton ’11 was recently named the Pennsylvania Department of Health, Bureau of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) 2015 Educator of the Year. Hamilton, who received the award at the 2015 Pennsylvania Fire and Emergency Services Institute’s dinner on November 21 in Hershey, Pennsylvania, is the first Delaware County Community College educator to have received the award.

“Receiving this award is certainly one of the highlights of my career,” Hamilton said. “I am truly blessed to have worked alongside of and learned from so many talented EMS providers and educators. I credit my success and the success of our programs to being able to surround myself and our students with great educators and doing all that I can to remain a student of EMS myself.”

Hamilton has been the College’s Paramedic Education coordinator since February 2014. He also is an advanced EMS education in the following areas: leadership in the advancement of instructional techniques; serving as an instructor in basic and/or advanced life support programs; and public information and education programs focused on health, safety, or community EMS awareness.

Innovative Alumna Designs One-of-a-Kind Pope Francis Rookie Commemorative Card

Melissa Maani ‘94, manager of graphic design for the Philadelphia Phillies baseball team, displayed her creative genius recently when she designed the Phillies’ Pope Francis Rookie Card. The recipient of the College’s 2015 Alumni Professional Achievement Award, Maani designed the card as a one-of-a-kind commemorative keepsake. After weeks of vetting by the Vatican, the Phillies were allowed to print 70,000 cards, which were given out at the first and third base kiosks at Citizens Bank Park at the Phillies September 16 game against the Washington Nationals. The cards also were placed in the keepsake bags distributed to many of the people who attended the World Meeting of Families, the event which brought Pope Francis to Philadelphia September 26-27 for his historic visit. The rookie card includes pertinent stats, such as: “Position: 266th Pope of the Roman Catholic Church.”