The College’s 2013 Commencement was held at Villanova University on May 23 as hundreds of students in caps and gowns created a joyous sea of graduates for family and friends to look at and celebrate. About 1,700 students received degrees and certificates this year. Commencement was held in the morning, unlike previous years when the event was held in the evening.

Alumni keynote speaker Frank J. McKee ‘70, winner of the College’s 2013 Alumni Professional Achievement Award and president of The McKee Group, a Springfield, PA-based developer and manager of active adult communities in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware, encouraged the students to dream big and not forget what they learned in College.

continued on pg.3
Learning Commons Inspires and Awes

The Grand Opening of the Learning Commons on March 1 attracted friends and family, old and new. Old friends like retired faculty and staff were awed by the transformation of the Library and the up-to-the-minute technology that abounds in the new location. Faculty and staff who had played a role in developing the Learning Commons over a six-year period were delighted to provide information and tours to colleagues, board members and other VIPs in attendance.

Combining the attributes of a traditional library with the accessibility of technology and academic support services, the Learning Commons offers students, faculty and staff a place to review, research and collaborate. “It is a Friday afternoon and students are here,” said Provost Virginia Carter at the grand opening event. “We feel we have created an educational environment where students become engaged and feel supported in a way that makes their lives more seamless.”

The concept of the Learning Commons developed from surveys and focus groups centered on the way students learn. As their assignments evolved from single to team tasks, students needed places where they could convene. The large tables and glass-enclosed study rooms with whiteboards and computer monitors provide the perfect environment for collaborative efforts and quiet study.

The Learning Commons also has centralized access to academic resources. Rather than walk to four different floors in three different buildings, a chore made even more challenging when an assignment was due the next day, students can now complete each element of the project without leaving the facility. Reading and writing tutors, ESL instructors, information literacy assistance and more than 100 computers allow students to research, compose, revise and print their work in a one-stop location.

“Everything has been brought together to give students the support they need – when the doors open at 7:30a.m., they are already in line,” said director of Learning Commons Services Lametha Northern, one of

(continued on page 4)
president’s letter

This year, all 14 community colleges in Pennsylvania are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the signing of the legislative act that created community colleges in the state. It is a wonderful time to reflect on how far we have come from the days when our fledgling institutions were founded in order to make affordable, high quality education and training available to the residents of our communities.

Just how small Delaware County Community College was back then is evident from a September 1969 newsletter, entitled, “The President’s Memo,” in which then-College President Dr. Douglas F. Libby, Jr. congratulated the 24 students who were the first to graduate from the College. Commencement exercises were held on June 22, 1969 at the Dante School in Concordville, a former temporary site of the College.

All 24 graduates and their degrees were listed in Dr. Libby’s newsletter and in The Philadelphia Evening Bulletin. In his newsletter, Dr. Libby mentioned that an agreement had been reached to acquire the Skull property on Route 252 in Marple, which today is the home of the College's Main Campus. The newsletter also notes that 18 temporary mobile modules were purchased to be placed on the Dante Campus “to accommodate the anticipated increase in enrollment to approximately 1,700 students for the 1969-70 school year.”

Today, you would be hard pressed to list all of the approximately 1,700 graduates of our degree and certificate programs in a newsletter. Now, Delaware County Community College serves approximately 28,000 credit and non-credit students each year at eight locations in Delaware and Chester Counties. One of our newest building additions is the now $8 million Learning Commons on the fourth floor of Founders Hall at the Marple Campus. The Learning Commons, which replaced the outdated College Library, features the latest in digital technology and academic support services, and even hosts a café (see story on Page One).

In this issue of your Connection, there is a photo of Phyllis Sockwell ’69, a proud first graduate of the College and a former part-time worker in the College’s first Library. The original Library was all of about 20 feet by 8 feet in size and was located in Ridley Township High School, another of the College’s former temporary homes. Comparing the photos of today’s Learning Commons to the photo of the College’s first Library, it is amazing to see how much the College has grown since it first opened.

But while it is worthwhile to pause and reflect on just how much we have grown, it is evident that the College will need to continue to evolve and grow to accommodate the many new students who seek the real-world skills and education necessary for the careers of the future.

Jerome S. Parker

Jerome S. Parker
PRESIDENT

campus news

quick hits

Alumna Heather Welsh ‘13 has the unique distinction of having contributed to a first-of-its-kind report done by the Philadelphia-based Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians, on how local immigrants use mobile technology. Welsh contributed a story about an Algerian woman living in America who “attended” a family wedding in Algeria via her iPad tablet computer, including dressing up for the occasion and eating a traditional meal at the same time as the wedding party hundreds of miles away. The Algerian woman was one of 20 immigrants Welsh interviewed about their use of mobile communication devices. The woman viewed her cousin’s wedding in Algeria by having family members hold up an iPad so that she could see the wedding vows, the dancing, and participate from afar in the meal. “They even turned her, when everyone danced,” said Welsh, who plans to transfer to a four-year college and hopes to pursue a career in teaching and social studies research. (See the full Welcoming Center report at: www.welcomingscenter.org/tch).

Student Christopher Kleimasser

Alumna Christopher Kleimasser ’13 will spend this summer at a Stanford University laboratory working with scientists to design and develop a next-generation X-Ray sample holder for use by scientists worldwide. The 24-year-old Mathematics/Natural Science major is ecstatic about the opportunity. “You are actually working one-on-one with a staff scientist,” Kleimasser said. “I’m interested in potentially going into basic research and I actually get an idea of what researchers do through this program.” Kleimasser was selected from hundreds of applicants for the U.S. Department of Energy’s (DOE) Community College Internships program at the Stanford Linear Accelerator (SLAC) Lab at Stanford University in California. The program pays for his travel, room and board at the university and provides a stipend. The SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory is one of 10 DOE Office of Science Laboratories. A Delaware County Community College Foundation Samocco scholarship recipient in 2012 and this year, Kleimasser was accepted into Stanford and plans to transfer to the university in the fall and study bio-medical engineering. His dream is to one day work in the developing science of brain-computer interfacing. “Once we can connect the brain to a computer, the possibilities are going to be endless,” he said.

BOOKSTORE “Dollars for Scholars” raises $1,200

The Educational Foundation recently partnered with the College’s Bookstore and its parent, the Follett Corp., for the new “Dollars for Scholars” program. The effort, which ran from Dec. 1, 2012 through Feb. 28, 2013, raised $1,200 in student donations, which will benefit the College’s Educational Foundation Scholarship Program. The initiative would not have been possible without the support of bookstore manager Kris Stachowski and his staff. Students can apply to the Educational Foundation for scholarships. For more information, call 610-359-5151.

New Campus Opening in Phoenixville

The College will begin offering classes at the Chester County Intermediate Unit’s Technical College High School at 1380 Charlottetown Road in Phoenixville this fall. The new location will be the sixth for the College in Chester County, which includes the Downingtown Campus, Exton Center, Brooksby Campus, Pennocks Bridge Campus and the Chester County Hospital. Classes will be offered in Phoenixville Monday through Thursday during the afternoons and evenings.

Correction

Alumna Judy McCleary ’69, profiled in an October 2012 issue of your Connection, was back then is evident from a September 1969 newsletter, entitled, “The President’s Memo,” in which then-College President Dr. Douglas F. Libby, Jr. congratulated the 24 students who were the first to graduate from the College. Commencement exercises were held on June 22, 1969 at the Dante School in Concordville, a former temporary site of the College.

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PRESIDENT

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The College is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Higher Education, 3624 Market St., Philadelphia, PA 19104.

Want to know what’s happening on campus? Have you heard about some of the fabulous things our alumni are doing? Now more than ever, there are more ways to connect with the College, alumni and students. Like us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter, watch our videos on YouTube, or connect with our Alumni Association on LinkedIn. The College’s official social media pages are listed to the right. Connect online with us today.

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Worldwide Singing Fit for a King

Denise King graduated from the College in 1983 and entered a medical career. But somewhere along the way, she took a detour, and now this late bloomer has forged a wonderful life as a jazz singer, traveling around the world. She credits the College with teaching her to persevere and never give up. “It was a great experience,” she said of the College.

In April, the Phantoms co-ed Tennis Team finished the season 7-1 and shared the regular season EPAC championship with Northampton Community College. Coach Megan Barclay (3rd from left) is pictured with team members (from left) Sam Spector, Cassidy Branigan, April Philips, Sedrick Thisa, Ka-Man Chu, Christopher Smith and Nick Sworob.

Her newest CD, “Give Me the High Sign,” was released in March. It is a collaboration with noted French pianist, composer and arranger Olivier Hutman, who also is her business partner. “It’s jazzy, but it’s got some elements of funk and soul music. It’s kind of a mélange,” she said. It is the sixth CD of her career.

Previously, King worked in oncology, in-vitro fertilization and high-risk obstetrics as a medical assistant at the University of Pennsylvania Hospital for thirteen years. She had always enjoyed singing while cleaning around the house, but never thought of singing professionally. One day, the late Raymond Welsh, a friend of hers who played guitar, passed by her West Philadelphia home and heard her singing while she was sweeping her walkway. “He said, ‘I didn’t know you could sing.’ I said, ‘I can?’” The two later teamed up and performed around Philadelphia. Through Welsh she met jazz luminary Dexter Wansel and eventually sang with him. She also met Sam Reed, the longtime leader of the house band at the famous Uptown Theater on North Broad Street in Philadelphia. Reed hired King to sing with his band and introduced her to a variety of musicians.

Meanwhile, she kept sending out demo CDs to jazz clubs throughout the world hoping to land more singing venues. One of those demos got her a gig in France singing with Olivier Hutman. After the performance, King headed back to Philadelphia, but Hutman later tracked her down through Facebook and guaranteed her steady work if she would come back to France. Since teaming up with Hutman in 2008, King has toured with his group every spring and summer. She also received a record deal with Cristal Records, which has produced her last two CDs.

Looking back on her time at the College, King marvels at how a single mother with three sons was able to blossom into the performer she is today. To help others enjoy and learn about jazz, she has started the “community jazz project,” which brings jazz performers to venues that have not experienced jazz. She also founded Friday Night Jazz at Cedar Park, which treated audiences to jazz concerts at Cedar Park at 5th Street and Baltimore Avenue in Philadelphia. In 2005, the Mellon Corp. named her the first female recipient of its community award for her Friday Night Jazz series.

Check out Denise King on her website at www.denisekingsings.com and www.hutmanking.com

In a time-honored tradition, caps and gowns were worn by graduates, faculty and some administrators. Ubiquitous with college graduations, the cap and gown tradition originated in the universities of the Middle Ages, when a warm gown and hood were useful for scholar and cleric in unheated buildings, according to an excerpt included in the College’s 2013 Commencement program book that was taken from “A Guide to Academic Protocol” by Mary Kemper Guarino, Columbia University Press. Until the Civil War, students at most American universities wore caps and gowns daily while in residence. Later, they would be worn primarily at graduation ceremonies.

A graduate proudly holds her diploma at the 2013 Commencement.

Graduate Carol Gorski is congratulated by Provost Dr. Virginia Carter (left) for attaining a 4.0 GPA, the highest grade point average for most credits earned by all 2013 graduates. For her accomplishment, Gorski received the Academic Excellence Award.

Board Chair Raymond C. Toto presented the Gould Award for Teaching Excellence to Stephen Smith Jr., College theatre director and assistant professor of Communications, Arts and Humanities.

Congratulations Phantoms Tennis!
Three Scholars Honored for Community Service and Academics

Three of the College's students were recognized April 8 by the Phi Theta Kappa international honor society of two-year colleges and the Pennsylvania Commission for Community Colleges for their academic achievements and their volunteerism in the community. The three students—Jordyn Bennett of Coatesville, Denise Logsdon of Chadds Ford and Dimitri Wevers of Sharon Hill—graduated in May.

They were among 45 scholars from Pennsylvania's 14 community colleges honored at the Commission's annual banquet held at the Hilton Harrisburg Hotel. The scholars also were named to the All-Pennsylvania Academic Team, which requires students to maintain at least a 3.5 grade point average and be eligible to graduate with an associate's degree.

Jordyn Bennett graduated with an Associate of Arts degree and wants to transfer to a four-year school to study nutrition and dietetics. She one day hopes to become a Registered Dietician. Despite attending school full-time at the College's Downingtown Campus and Exton Center, Bennett finds time to advocate for people to donate blood to the American Red Cross. She also works part-time.

Denise R. Logsdon graduated with an Associate of Science degree and plans to transfer to the University of Pennsylvania, where she will study Human Rights and Social Justice. She hopes to one day pursue her Doctorate degree in Justice, Law and Policy and become a human rights advocate and policy scholar. A mother of four children, Logsdon has found time to juggle the responsibilities of parenting with academic excellence and social involvement. A student at the Marple Campus, she is the president of the College's Student Government Association, Phi Theta Kappa vice president of public relations; chair of the College's Thanksgiving Food Drive to benefit local homeless shelters; co-chair of the Hurricane Sandy Relief Drive; chair of the Campus' Thirst Project, which helps build wells for clean drinking water in sub-Saharan Africa; and chair of the Adopt-a-Highway program. She also founded and spoke at the College's first International Peace Day and helped the College's new Global Studies programs, bolstering the College's study abroad opportunities.

Dimitri Wevers graduated with an Associate of Science degree and plans to transfer to a four-year school, where he wants to major in Business Administration. He hopes to pursue his master's degree and become a financial analyst. A native of Belgium, whose family immigrated to Belgium from Haiti, Wevers is a Business Administration major who worked part-time for two years while attending school. He was awarded the Phi Theta Kappa's Alpha Tau Epsilon chapter's distinguished member award this year and he has participated in the LUNGevity Foundation's Breathe Deep Philadelphia lung cancer walk in Philadelphia and the College's Thanksgiving Food Drive. He also shared his global experiences with students at the College's multi-cultural festival, answering questions and sharing about living and having studied in Belgium.
For William (Bill) and Phyllis Sockwell, owners of a health care equipment and services company, the community college experience is a family affair filled with fond memories and the realization that had it not been for the College they may never have met.

The Sockwells are members of the Class of 1969—the first class to graduate from the College. Bill and Phyllis also were editor-in-chief and managing editor, respectively, of the College’s first yearbook. Back then, the school was known as Community College of Delaware County. Their daughter, Monica, graduated from the College in 2003 with a Business Administration degree, and she graduated again this year with a degree and a certificate in Allied Health and Nursing Simulation.

Bill and Phyllis Sockwell, both active and proud members of the College’s Alumni Association, laugh and cherish the memories. Phyllis said she recently wrote on her Facebook page: “Who would have thought that the community college would have been such an integral part of our lives.”

It was Bill who got things started. He won Phyllis’ heart by community college would have been such an integral part of our lives,“ she said.

On the advice of her father, Phyllis not only applied to the College, but also worked for the College as a part-time administrative assistant to work for the College and manage William E. Sockwell Associates, a Drexel Hill-based management and consulting firm that provides equipment management and procurement services to health care facilities. The Sockwells also are generous contributors of time and resources to the College. Their name is proudly displayed inside the College’s Allied Health and Nursing Simulation Laboratory on the Maplele Campus in tribute to the work, time and resources they donated to bringing the lab to fruition.

Alumna First to Receive National Honor for Service to Students

Alumna Lynda Licht ’12 was selected to receive the 2013 Alumni Award of Appreciation by the Phi Theta Kappa international honor society of two-year colleges on April 6 at the organization’s 95th Annual Convention in San Jose, California. This first-ever award was created to recognize alumni of Phi Theta Kappa who support current and future members.

William and Phyllis Sockwell ’69 (left), members of the first class to graduate from the College, shown at the wedding of their daughter, Monica ’13 and ’15, in Vincent D’Agostino, a 2008 graduate of the College’s Municipal Police Academy.

More Alumni Awards & Accolades

• Ann Marie Finn-Cusick ’79 is a licensed graduate practical nurse and resides in Ridley Park, PA.
• Christopher Daher ’82 is enrolled in the Culinary Institute of America, and resides in Chandler, Arizona.
• Lisa Garcia ’06 BSN, RN-BC was recently awarded Clinician II status, the highest level on Cruiser Chestnut Medical Center clinical ladder. The award includes a $1,500 cash prize. The clinical ladder recognizes nurses who make a difference at the bedside and show leadership in the workplace and the community through their volunteer work.
• Eric Gavin ’95 was named 2013 Media Police Officer of the Year and received the Tom Wiley Memorial Award during a ceremony in February in Media. A former U.S. Army veteran, Gavin has been a Media police officer for 17 years. His wife Deborah and three children also attended the award ceremony. Gavin said it was an honor to be selected by his peers for the award.
• Frank J. Mcker ‘70 was selected to receive the College’s Alumni Professional Achievement Award. Mcker is president of The Mcker Group, a Springfield, PA-based company that builds and manages active adult housing and luxury townhomes in Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland. Mcker gained recognition in 2006 for helping the Homes for Our Troops program build an accessible home for a wounded Ridley Park veteran who was injured while serving in Iraq. He also was the College’s 2013 Commencement speaker.
• Andrew O’Neill, a graduate of the College’s Municipal Police Academy, and Kevin Wiley ’99 saved the life of Mark Tancredi, an employee of Smart Park in Tunicum Township, who left to the ground early one April morning with a sudden heart attack. Both Tunicum officers teamed up to administer chest compressions and rescue breathing until Emergency Medical Service personnel arrived. For their quick thinking and skill, both received certificates of merit and life-saving medals. “Without a doubt, their actions saved his life,” Tunicum Police Chief Steve Edmiston said.
• Stephen Oreskovich ’04 and Michael Taylor ’03, both Upper Darby police officers, were selected by their College training and quick thinking to good use in February when they helped a 24-year-old woman who went into labor at Zena’s Hair Salon, 7016 Terminal Square, deliver her baby in a back room of the salon. Taylor was the first to arrive and told the woman to push until the head came out, but the baby’s shoulders became stuck. Oreskovich, who is a paramedic, arrived and was able to turn the shoulders and the baby began to come out. The healthy baby girl weighed 7 pounds. Other alum/officials who responded to the late-night call included Randy Desroules ’99 and Kevin Donohue ’08, as well as Municipal Police Academy grad Michael Crispin and Amanda Klingsmith.
• Denise Romanelli ’94 was selected in April to receive the College’s 2013 Wong Moos Outstanding Alumni Award. Romanelli is director of Employee Development & Community Relations at Sun East Federal Credit Union, and a member of the Friends of Delaware County Women’s Commission. She was selected based on her professional achievements, continuing education and generous service to her community. She will receive her award at the Educational Foundation Scholarship Dinner on October 22.
• Robert Nulty ’91 was named 2013 Officer of the Year by the Springfield Police Department in April for his work in initiating a federal investigation of global car thieves who were targeting local dealerships.
Save a Seat for Me — Capital Campaign for the Learning Commons and Auditorium

To support the newly-remodeled Auditorium and Learning Commons, whose construction costs, equipment and furnishings total $10 million, the Educational Foundation is seeking gifts from all constituents. Faculty, staff, alumni and friends have purchased numerous seats in the Auditorium and at computer workstations in the Learning Commons, but many are still available.

Gifts ranging from $250 to $1,500 will provide for a nameplate or plaque in the area of choice. So far, seats have been purchased as memorial gifts, in honor of graduates and by faculty and staff who recognize the importance of state-of-the-art facilities in educating students for the 21st Century.

To explore this opportunity, visit the Foundation’s website: www.dccc.edu/educational-foundation, or to contribute by credit card, go directly to PayPal: www.dccc.edu/educational-foundation-gift, where you may designate your gift for the “Save a Seat for Me” campaign. For questions, contact the Foundation office at 610-359-5131.

Opening Night Appreciation

Donors to the Auditorium’s “Save a Seat for Me” campaign enjoyed a free opening night student performance of “Godspell” on April 12 in appreciation for their gifts. Sitting in their seats for the first time, faculty, staff, alumni and friends viewed the nameplates installed on the arm rests that carried their names, or that of a loved one. “Godspell” is one of two student theater productions held each year. The show includes some of the most popular and recognizable songs in musical theater history. This is not a story about religion; “Godspell” celebrates the power of love and strength that we gain when we recognize and believe in the goodness in each one of us.

College Foundation Supports Faculty Innovation

A mini-grant from the Educational Foundation was awarded to Susan Scalzi (center, left), assistant professor, Allied Health, and Sharvette Law Philimon (center, right), assistant Dean, Allied Health, Emergency Services and Nursing, for their project, “Innovating Practices Using iPad Technology in Allied Health.” Presenting the award are (from left) Provost Dr. Virginia Carter, Dr. Diane Piccani, director of the Center to Promote Excellence in Teaching and Learning; Kathleen Breslin, executive director of the Educational Foundation; and Donald Soslow, chair, Educational Foundation. Students will benefit from the use of iPads by being more engaged in their course material, by improvement in communication and collaboration skills and in being exposed to technology in use in hospitals and healthcare settings.

The Educational Foundation mini-grants were awarded by (from left) Provost Dr. Virginia Carter; Dr. Diane Piccani, director of the Center to Promote Excellence in Teaching and Learning; Kathleen Breslin, executive director of the Foundation; and Donald Soslow (far right), chair, of the Foundation. Recipients included (from center, left) Lauren Donovan, assistant professor, Business, and Sarah Murphy, adjunct faculty member in Psychology. Their project, “Promoting the Benefits of Sleep to College Students,” represents a collaboration with other academic disciplines designed to engage and entertain students during Sleep Week in April 2014 that will increase awareness of the health benefits of getting more sleep.

2013 Lindback Award Winner

Each year, the College is honored by the trustees of the Christian R. and Mary F. Lindback Foundation to receive a grant to present the prestigious Lindback Award, which is awarded to institutions of higher education throughout Greater Philadelphia, to promote excellence in teaching. The 2013 Lindback Award was presented to (center) Dr. Susan M. Ward, assistant professor, Communication Studies, by her dean Dr. Clayton A. Railey III and Provost Dr. Virginia Carter at the May faculty meeting. In addition to high academic standards, the winner’s efforts must extend beyond the classroom.

Part-Time Faculty Award

Stacy Everly (third from right) received a grant for excellence in teaching Business. She is congratulated by (from left) Provost Dr. Virginia Carter; Dr. Diane Piccani, director of the Center to Promote Excellence in Teaching and Learning; William Watson, assistant dean for Business and Computer Information Systems; Kathleen Breslin, executive director of the Educational Foundation; and Donald Soslow, chair, of the Educational Foundation.

Congratulating Judith Sabbat (foreground) for excellence in teaching English are (from left) Dr. Diane Piccani, director of the Center to Promote Excellence in Teaching and Learning; Dr. Sahbour Abdul-Kareem, assistant dean, Communications, Arts and Humanities; Kathleen Breslin, executive director of the Educational Foundation; Provost Dr. Virginia Carter; and Donald Soslow, chair, Educational Foundation.

Adjunct faculty in all academic divisions were recognized at the May faculty meeting.

Other recipients were:
- Dr. Ann Jeanine Lincoln, Biology at Downingtown Campus
- George Marencin, Mathematics
- Sandi Puka, Allied Health
The College Access Center of Delaware County provides test preparation, financial aid applications and other services to Delaware County’s prospective college students.

Approximately 100 visitors attended the April 12 open house at the Center, including several students who have benefited from the Center’s activities and their parents. College President Dr. Jerry Parker and Dr. James T. Harris III, president of Widener University, welcomed the visitors to the center, which is located on the Widener campus. Dr. Rosalie M. Mirenda of Neumann University and Dr. Michelle R. Howard-Vital of Cheyney University of Pennsylvania, two of six college presidents whose institutions support the College Access Center, also greeted guests. The presidents are part of the Chester Higher Educational Council (CHEC), a charitable organization formed by six Delaware County presidents to ensure access to college for Delaware County high school students and other residents. Dr. Rebecca Chopp, president of Swarthmore College, and Dr. Sophia T. Wisniewska, Chancellor of Penn State Brandywine, also CHEC partners, were unable to attend the event.

The College Access Center Prepares Students for College

As local high school juniors and seniors navigate the arduous road of college admissions, acronyms such as SAT and FAFSA and phrases like Common App and supplemental essay are routinely integrated into a family’s everyday vocabulary.

The task is even more burdensome when no one knows what the expressions truly mean.

In an effort to help clear the post-secondary path, teens and adults seek the services offered through the College Access Center of Delaware County (CACDC). By providing free education and career awareness, study skills development, SAT/ACT preparation, one-on-one tutoring and mentoring for students and assistance with the financial aid process for their parents, CACDC is a pre-college one-stop shop.

“Our slogan is ‘access to information equals access to opportunity,’” said Director Julani Ghana. “Whether the person is a high schooler or an adult wishing to retrain for a current job or return to school for a new one, the idea is ‘let’s get you into college’.”

CACDC is the first initiative of the Chester Higher Education Council (CHEC), a non-profit organization formed in 2009 by the presidents of Cheyney University of Pennsylvania, Delaware County Community College, Neumann University, Penn State Brandywine, Swarthmore College and Widener University. While they share a Delaware County locale, each school brings a unique perspective, as the consortium includes a historically-black college, two-year college, faith-based university, large public university, select liberal arts college and private, metropolitan university.

“I am from Chester and the opportunity to put a program together for students and parents that is not duplicated anywhere else is exciting,” said CHEC liaison Cynthia Jetter, director of Community Partnerships and Planning at Swarthmore College. “People are blown away by the quality of the services and the fact they are free.”

Housed in a building on the grounds of Widener, CACDC reflects the tangible contributions of the schools, which have provided furniture, a computer laboratory and materials for the research room; information technology, legal and institutional support; and a development board and tours of the individual campuses.

“The fact we are in a beautiful building on the campus makes us part of the college community,” said Ghana.

Approximately 100 visitors attended the April 12 open house at the College Access Center of Delaware County, which was established in 2009 by the presidents of six Delaware County institutions to provide test preparation, financial aid assistance and other college prep services to students in the county.

The open house was held at the center’s new location on the Widener University campus, which opened in 2017.

The center, with an emphasis on underserved Delaware County and Chester counties, welcomed nearly 500 visitors representing every school district in Delaware County during the 2011-2012 school year, according to its annual report. More than 100 students enrolled and pre-tested for the SAT/ACT class, 97 participated in at least one tutoring/homework help session and 37 were scheduled for a one-on-one college prep counseling session.

CACDC models the college experience, as the staff is augmented with retired professionals and more than 50 volunteer student tutors from the participating schools.

As they have successfully completed the transition from high school to campus life, their insight is invaluable to those hoping to make the same switch. The tutors provide assistance with specific subjects and test prep, such as developing and expressing one’s ideas for the SAT essay.

“College is expected of me and the Center helps you to open yourself up,” said Janoah Wright, a tenth grader at Bonner Prendegast High School. “It helps lead you in the direction you want to go and think about where you want to be in 20 years.”

To see the full list of topics, visit www.collegeaccessdelco.org.

The Speakers Bureau of Delaware County Community College was established in 1973 as a FREE public service to assist area organizations and groups by providing informative, useful and thought-provoking presentations in Delaware and Chester Counties by faculty and staff.


To see the full list of topics, visit www.dccc.edu/speakersbureau. Please call 610-359-5134 for more information or to schedule a presentation.