

## NEWS RELEASE

Monday, May 12, 2008

Danville Community College's Alumni Association announced four alumni honorees for 2008 at 12 noon today when the DCC Foundation Board met. Honorees include Debra Creasy Carlson, Danville attorney; Donald Merricks, local business owner and delegate to the Virginia General Assembly; Randy Davis, financial consultant; and Wayne Foster, retired glass mold designer and precision engineer.

"Honorees, chosen by the Alumni Council from 68,000 alumni, have consistently served their community and their fields of employment with distinction," says Buddy Rawley, DCC Educational Foundation director.

The first honoree, Debra Carlson has been an attorney in Danville handling real estate related matters since 1995 for Goodson, Garrett, Creasy & Beard and then for Clement & Wheatley where she was Vice-President and Attorney in Charge of the Residential Real Estate Division.

After graduating from DCC in 1984, she attained a B.A. degree in Government from the College of William and Mary, a Master of Laws in Taxation degree from the University of Denver and a Doctorate of Jurisprudence from Mississippi College School of Law.

Carlson's troubleshooting of issues began at Danville Community College. "My greatest memory is that of being one of the first 'peer professionals,' which was developed with Pete Castiglione, a group which had an office in the Temple 'day room' for students to come by and ask questions and for us to help them with any issues. It was a group of five of us. We were very active in student politics and activities, and I made the absolute best of the two years while I was there—I really would have loved to have stayed there longer!"

Carlson, who says she did not have any problems with credits transferring to William and Mary, was admitted to the Virginia Bar in 1989. She was subsequently admitted to practice before the Virginia Supreme Court, the US Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit and the US Bankruptcy Court of the Western District of Virginia.

Carlson, an instructor over the past 16 years in law issues and real estate law at DCC and Averett University, has decided to change careers, focusing on family during her children's young years and progressing logically in real estate through seeking her real estate license.

The second honoree, Donald Merricks, legislator and civic leader in numerous local organizations, is president of J.W. Squire Company, Inc. and vice-president of RiverCity Specialties & Interiors, Inc. His interest in business and entrepreneurship began at DCC where he attained an A.A. degree in Business in 1972. While working at First Virginia Bank-Piedmont, first as a teller and then as branch manager and later as Executive-Vice-president, he received his B.S. in Business in 1974 and his MBA in 1991 from Averett University.

In 1997 he transferred from banking to business leadership. His oversight of two businesses and his years in banking gave him broad knowledge of community and state needs leading him into politics.

Merricks, who ran for the Virginia House of Delegates from the 16<sup>th</sup> District, was elected as a first-term representative in November 2007. A believer in giving back to his

community and colleges, he serves on both the DCC Educational Foundation Board and the Anderson Student Aid Trust at Averett University.

Beyond his community, he is serving in a medical mission in Cambodia for two weeks helping a DCC alumni conduct eye examinations and blood pressure evaluations for Cambodians in need of medical treatments.

The third alumni honoree, Randy Davis, attended Virginia Polytechnic Institute-Danville, one of the two previous institutions of DCC, graduating from VPI-Blacksburg in 1966. A baseball player and member of the honor court at VPI, he returned to the local area to teach and to coach baseball at Hargrave Military Academy.

In 1981 he became a financial consultant for Wheat First Securities, rising to Senior Vice-President and Branch Manager in 1982. A graduate of the Securities Industry Institute at the Wharton School of Business, he joined Scott and Stringfellow in June 2003 after four years with J. C. Bradford.

And active educational and civic leader, Davis has served DCC as its Board Chairman. He says, "The community college has really been an asset to this area, to economic development. The people at the college are outstanding." In education, Davis has also served Averett University on its Advisory Board. Currently, among many civic organizational responsibilities, he is on the Advisory Board of the Danville Life Saving Crew.

A former chairman of the Danville Area Chamber of Commerce, Davis has served on the boards of DPC Community Foundation, Piedmont Professional Baseball, Danville YMCA, and Tuscarora County Club.

The fourth honoree, Wayne Foster, graduate of Danville Technical Institute, a DCC predecessor institution, completed his Drafting and Design degree in 1963.

Working part-time at Corning, Inc. during his college days led to full employment as a design draftsman after graduation. Employment kept Foster, a former Richmond resident, in the local area. It was to keep him in Danville for his entire career—a career that saw him continuously add skills and responsibilities as equipment and mold designer, supervisor of mold and machine shop and team support representative for the Precision Lens Product Line.

Foster says, "I enjoyed everything I ever did at DTI. The program was well-developed. I didn't know what to do with my life. DTI was there at the right time. DTI improved my work ethic, which served well at Corning where we often worked 50 hour weeks." Corning "was a wonderful place to work. I enjoyed everything I ever did," says Foster, who in 1977 became Project Engineer at the local Corning plant.

During Foster's 35 year career, he served on DCC's Advisory Board for Drafting and Design from the late 1980s. Upon his retirement from the advisory board, he was honored by the board for his years of contributions.

Dr. Carlyle Ramsey, DCC president, says, "Alumni awards at DCC are to be an ongoing recognition of individuals whose lives demonstrate exemplary contributions to their communities, chosen careers, and often Danville Community College. We are justly proud of the first four recipients who are examples to all of us concerning the value of dedication and leadership."