

The Link — January 2009

Alumni news from Danville Community College for alumni from *Danville Technical Institute, VPI-Danville and Danville Community College*

You are an alumni of Danville Community College. Upon passing one credit class at DCC or the former institutions—Danville Technical Institute and VPI-Danville, you became an alumni.

Danville Community College is yours for life. You can exchange news, share stories, look up a friend or find a career possibility on the alumni web site. As a member of the Danville Community College family, you are encouraged to stay connected with classmates, to sign up for a class, to investigate programs and to volunteer for campus or alumni initiatives.

Alumni invited back to DCC:Free dinner, tours, honors planned for May 2, 2009

Alumni are invited back to campus May 2 for free dinner, tours of the campus, greeting of the four new Outstanding Alumni honorees, and a general get together of friends and classmates. Place May 2 from 4 to 6 p.m. on your calendars now!

Plan to return to your college to meet teachers from the past, friends from the past and to enjoy good food and fellowship. Tickets will be needed for the free meal for alumni and family members. There will be further information on ticket locations, ordering tickets by mail or online, meal particulars and plans (rain or shine) for our first Alumni Homecoming Dinner through The Link and through local media in the Danville/Pittsylvania County/Halifax County region.

Nominate a deserving alumni: Outstanding Alumni Award recipients sought by mid-February

We need your recommendations during the next three weeks for individuals deserving of the designation Outstanding Alumni. One individual from Virginia Polytechnic Institute-Danville, one from Danville Technical Institute and two from Danville Community College will be honored in April and ensuing months. Please send name or names, institution they attended, reasons for possible honor and your name, address, and phone number to alumni@dcc.vccs.edu. The committee making the choices will meet in late January or early February. Your wisdom and knowledge of deserving individuals for these awards is important.

Construction continues Foundation Hall completion looms in April; Student Center bids to be opened

Health Sciences, now to be known as Foundation Hall, is fully covered with wall sheathing with work rapidly underway internally and externally. The medical facility is scheduled for a late April completion, weather permitting. "When weather is icy outside, we still can work inside," explained Buddy Rawley, foundation director. "With plans for an alumni event in early May (see related story and invitation) we should have a building they can look at with pride, hopefully in its final stages of inspection by late April or early May and opening to the public afterwards." For many city residents, this building is becoming known as the landmark for the South Main area, comparable in their discussions to "the Castle" which stood a few feet further back during the 1890s to late 1970s time period.

In other construction developments, the bids for the Student Center were scheduled for December before the holiday break with ground breaking anticipated for February. Rawley explained, "We are expecting multiple bids with a hope for everything needed being allowable in the cost structure when bids are opened."

Helping with costs is a local civic organization that has been a consistent supporter of DCC over the years. "We are very grateful for a \$44,000 grant from Kiwanis of Danville to fund furniture for the student center. This grant will allow us to buy sofas, tables, chairs and outside benches. With the furniture funded, we anticipate a fully completed student center by the end of 2009."

The first of the three new construction projects on campus, the new maintenance building, is fully operational, so only an eventual demolition of the old building is to be anticipated.

The Power of One: One can make a difference!

Approximately 80 local leaders from business, industry, religious, volunteer, medical and government organizations were interviewed by members of the Clements Group concerning their visions of the future of the Danville/Pittsylvania County/Halifax County service region and their views on proceeding with a Capital Campaign for Danville Community College. Earlier in October, Dr. Carlyle Ramsey, president of Danville Community College, communicated to those individuals as well as to other residents, that "Many citizens in our region's workforce have low skills and are underemployed or unemployed. We need to encourage more students to seek education beyond high school. We need to support new careers in advanced manufacturing and engineering technologies. Moreover, we need to realize that, due to the anticipated baby-boomer retirements and other demographic changes, our region faces a daunting workforce shortage."

Ramsey further explained, "Danville Community College recently conducted a strategic planning process to develop initiatives that will move us forward into the next decade. As we consider DCC's role in Southside Virginia and the achievement of

our college goals, we must be proactive in developing additional resources to ensure our success. While state funding continues to diminish, the needs and responsibilities of DCC continue to grow. New sources of funding must be considered in order to fulfill the initiatives DCC has identified as most critical to the future growth and success of our college.”

Four funding initiatives were defined as needs during the strategic planning process:

- a Scholarship Fund
- a Student Success Fund,
- a 21st Century Fund
- a Rapid Response Fund

Scholarship Fund

Rationale for proposal: Approximately 80 percent of our students are the first in their families to go to college. Many come from low-income backgrounds. A number of our students are in jobs where they are underemployed. In order to adequately advance our mission, the college needs to provide additional support for these students.

We propose the development of a \$2,000,000 Scholarship Fund. This fund could be used to address critical workforce careers, such as healthcare, engineering and manufacturing technology. It could include both annual scholarships as well as endowments.

Student Success Fund

Rationale for proposal: Too many college students fail to complete their chosen programs of study. Often, this has less to do with their abilities than with their circumstances. This Student Success Fund will provide specialized career and student development programs. It will target new and expanded levels of support through student activities, counseling, support services, such as tutoring, and other programs designed to help students successfully obtain their degrees.

We propose that a \$3,000,000 Student Success Fund be established which will allow collaboration with local school divisions, community agencies and other important stakeholders to make this a model program for our region.

21st Century Fund

Rationale for proposal: Technology used by businesses and industries that employ our graduates is changing at an increasing pace. New jobs demand new skills. Faculty and staff must also keep pace with rapidly changing business and industry practices. This demand, coupled with a decline in funding at the state

level, requires that DCC seek private sector investments to assist in meeting regional workforce development needs with a continued commitment to quality.

We propose the establishment of a \$2,000,000 21st Century Fund that will allow the college to create more advanced technology labs, replace outdated equipment and provide ongoing professional developments.

Rapid Response Fund

Rationale for proposal: Recently, there has been a resurgence of interest in our region from both existing and new industries. The future, however, requires a skilled workforce. The college is committed to providing ongoing education and training support for the region's employees, but doing so often requires building new programs with limited or no financial support. In reality, we must "borrow" from existing programs to start new ones, which can limit our overall impact.

We propose establishing a \$1,000,000 Rapid Response Fund under the auspices of the DCC Educational Foundation, to be used for investing in new training programs as critical, regional economic development opportunities arise.

On December 17, the report from the Clements Group was explained to the Foundation Board and College Board. That report includes compilations of the interviews, evaluations and recommendations of the Clements Group. An update on that report will be available in future editions of *The Link*.

If you desire to discuss college needs in-depth and ways to meet those needs or inquire how to support Danville Community College in its initiatives, whether with financial or nonmonetary contributions, please contact Buddy Rawley, DCC Foundation Director, 434-797-8495 or brawley@dcc.vccs.edu Your institution values your wise counsel and support.

Alumni Committees to begin meeting in January

Committees to carry out the initiatives of the DCC Alumni Association have been developed with several committees in need of more alumni to serve. The committees should not meet often. Projections are two to three meetings a year at the discretion of the committee members with means of meeting varying from gathering at the college to using e-mail and phone conferences as means of carrying forward committee responsibilities. The individuals with asterisks beside their names are the chairpersons for the first official meeting of the committee. Committees may then appoint permanent chairpersons except for the chairperson, Nancy Taylor, already appointed for the Special Events Committee. Marie Harris and Buddy Rawley serve as ex-officio members of all committees. Marie Harris will work with each committee chairperson previous to the first meeting and attend all meetings the chairman deems necessary. Chairpersons will report back to her on decisions made at the meetings.

If you have expertise, interest, and time to serve, we encourage you to volunteer to help on one of the committees still needing members by contacting Marie Harris at alumni@dcc.vccs.edu

1. **Finance Committee:** Debra Carlson*, Shannon Hair, Robin Jones, Jim Lindley, Connie Wann
2. **By-laws Committee:** Bobby Roach*, Amy Yesalavich—***need two more members***
3. **Membership Committee:** Barbara Dameron, JoLane Dunlap, Martha Flanagan*, Wayne Foster, Shannon Hair, Jim Lowe, Jimmy Wade, and Anita Wyatt
4. **Nomination Committee:** Debra Carlson, Carolyn Price, Cathy Pulliam* and Connie Wann
5. **Communication Committee:** Lori Bidgood, Andrea Burney*, Dennis Carter, Rebecca Fitzgerald—***need three more members***
6. **Resource Development Committee:** Randy Davis, Harry Kolendrianos*, Beverly Scruggs, Scott Waller, and Diane Waters—***need five more members***
7. **Special Events Committee:** Hannah Bennett, Robin Jones, Cathy Pulliam, Bobby Roach, Ann Taylor, Nancy Taylor *(Chair), and Connie Wann
8. **Recognition and Scholarship Committee:** Sue Davis, Shelby Irvin, Jim Lindley*, Butch McDaniel, and Ed White—***need six more members***

Alumni featured on *DCC Today*: Angela Harris, Shannon Hair profiled

Alumni in the Danville vicinity who receive Comcast Cable Vision channel 19 can see the DCC Foundation program DCC Today on a monthly basis. The program is broadcast throughout the month during different hours. A schedule can usually be found in the channel listings for Comcast Cable Vision. This past month's program included two alumni, Angela Harris and Shannon Hair, talking about their experiences at Danville Community College and their activities since graduation. They represent a growing number of successful alumni who began education careers on the DCC campus.

DCC Today has been a monthly program for over two years with various topics related to Danville Community College's operations and students. It is an easy way for alumni

to connect with current operations on the campus. If you have a recommendation for a subject for the program or a recommendation of an alumni who would be interesting to interview in the planned alumni program segments in the future, please send us a message at alumni@dcc.vccs.edu

Alumni focus: One class is ‘spring board’ for George Kelecheck’s career

George Kelecheck is a true example of how one class at Danville Community College can make a radical difference, in career preparation for lifetime achievement. While a student at Averett University, he took a Danville Community College night class offering in Real Estate. The only real estate course available in the late 1970s, it helped prepare him for ventures in land purchases and sales and in community construction developments far beyond Virginia. “The DCC class was really a spring board. I wanted not just to sell but also to invest in real estate,” Kelecheck explained.

Already knowing his career path as a young person, Kelecheck sought a B.S. degree in Business, but coming to Danville was not originally in his plans. A resident of Manassas, Virginia, Kelecheck would have logically applied to Northern Virginia colleges or beyond, but his sister steered him to Danville and its two colleges after she attended DCC in the early ‘70s and found local higher education to be quite positive.

While attending Averett, Kelecheck sought training in a college course that would allow him to apply what his dad had taught him earlier in life through a construction business. “Because of dad’s business and his knowledge of government operations, I always knew, prior to college, that I would be in some type of real estate pursuit. I had learned construction from dad, so I had a lot of background skills.”

Even though Kelecheck was a full-time student at Averett, he took the night class to help pursue his dream, opting for less free hours during his available study time. Choosing to not take the Virginia real estate test after completing the course, he instead moved to Georgia after graduation in 1979. He later took the class under that state’s guidelines, and then gained his real estate license.

Today, Kelecheck, who still returns to Danville to visit, can look back on dual careers with corporate work for American Honda Motor Corporation and real estate ventures in coastal Georgia, Atlanta, the Georgia mountains and Florida. In his employment areas, he is a promotional speaker and trainer as well as a hands-on developer.

The latest real estate project Kelecheck is involved with is a 32 unit condo neighborhood located 30 miles south of Savannah, *The Hammocks at Sapelo*. The units are a mixture of long-term residents, a few units available for rental for owner investors, a few units for sale and some units under lease for future purchase. For alumni who are interested, information regarding *The Hammocks at Sapelo* can be accessed by going to www.cooperspoint.com and clicking on the *Condo* information. During his spare time, Kelecheck can be found applying skills learned from his dad through carrying out unit repairs or developing landscaping for properties owned by his company.

A golfer and a father with an avid interest in his daughter's education, Kelecheck remembers fondly his days in Danville, a city of 50,000 people, a city he hopes to see viable far into the future. It was in Danville that he further honed a vision of how to treat others in business and throughout life: "Do your best; do what's right and treat people the way you want to be treated." A simple, yet profoundly workable philosophy that has stood the test of time for an alumni who has seven years left with Honda Motors and who envisions never being out of the real estate pursuit he loves—a pursuit strengthened by a class at DCC.

Tell us your story

Every alumni has a story of how he or she began DCC, VPI-Danville, or DTI and where individual choices and the college's training took him or her. Every alumni has unique experiences that we would like to know about. Look at the George Kelacheck story above. He told us where he is today and how he got there, what he's working on and what his interests are presently. We'd like to hear your story—give us a little information and how to contact you and we'll go from there or you tell us the whole story. Sometimes we'll use the story in these monthly e-mails; sometimes we'll archive the story for future information. Tell us your stories alumni. We're interested in hearing from you. Send to alumni@dcc.vccs.edu

Success at Danville Community College often begins with Dual Enrollment at high schools

Dual enrollment is a state-wide program which allows students to accrue college credit in courses that correspond to college offerings in Virginia colleges. High school students in the service area of Danville, Pittsylvania County and Halifax County are enrolled in Danville Community College through the dual enrollment program coordinated by Cathy Pulliam, Assistant Coordinator for Recruitment and Enrollment. Such enrollment not only is a cost saver for parents but an immediate incentive promoting higher academic achievement. Dual enrollment in academic classes began at DCC in 1987. "We were one of the first colleges to become involved with the program. By 2000-01, our program had doubled in offerings," Pulliam pointed out.

“Dual enrollment is not only available for higher level English and math classes, but also available in auto body, auto mechanics, electrical electronics, computer courses, administration of justice, air conditioning, welding, building trades, emergency services—EMT and drafting and design,” Pulliam explained. “So often the public thinks only of Arts and Sciences courses when hearing the words ‘dual enrollment.’ There’s so much more that is offered today to students wishing to attain college credit while in high school. Dual enrollment in technical areas seems to be a best kept secret that must be shared.”

When a student in a technical field attains college credit in high school, his credits allow him to lower the number of classes per semester at DCC from 18 to a possible 12, so he or she can truly excel in skill attainment before applying to a four-year institution or before going into the work world. Or the extra technical credits allow students with needs in academic courses to catch up and improve their skills.

For a student pursuing a four-year degree or beyond, dual enrollment in high school English, math and other dual enrollment areas can lead to attaining at least a full semester of credits—up to 18—and for a few students, even a full year of credits. For a student envisioning several higher degrees before leaving the college environment, dual enrollment is economically and educationally advantageous. “Any state college will accept the credits, either as straight transfer for a course equivalent or as general credit.”

DCC offers dual enrollment credit free of charge to all high school students in its service area, an offer not available across the state. One dual enrollment class is \$260 per a three-hour credit class. Students can easily attain \$1,000 or more free college credit during their high school careers. At the same time, teachers who instruct dual enrolled students must be credentialed at the college level and teach to the college syllabus for each course. “There’s no greater bargain;” Pulliam pointed out, “it’s a bargain for the taxpayer, the parent, the student, and the colleges. Students become aware of college possibilities—often first-generation students become drawn to college degree attainment for the first time.”

Because of the quality instruction available through the college’s dual enrollment classes, Pulliam directs a very large program. “In the fall of 2008, Pittsylvania County had students seeking 2,228 credits, Danville had students seeking almost 1,000 credits, and Halifax County had students seeking approximately 2,300 credits. Thousands have gone through the program during the time I have been its director. Not only do students gain college course credit, but I go into the schools, help students fill out college applications, register for classes, teach them how to access their posted teacher grades, and talk about their future aspirations with them.”

Beyond working with the dual enrollment students, Pulliam starts recruiting in the high schools at lunch and at other times during second semester. “I answer questions during lunch, offer workshops and go over the basic process for placement testing at the high schools if students are in need of assessments prior to beginning college math and English. Students recognize me, because I am so present in their schools. Often they stop and talk with me in the mall, on the street, wherever.”

Pulliam not only works with dual enrollment at DCC but also is the assistant testing administrator handling some testing on the ACT-COMPASS test, a computerized test administered at the college’s on-campus testing center. She also handles a majority of off-campus testing.

Students expecting to enter math and English classes who are seeking a degree at the college level must be tested to indicate readiness for college instruction or need for remediation. To help students become aware of their academic needs, George Washington High School in Danville is planning to test its eleventh grade career and technical students in second semester to promote student awareness of deficiencies as the student enters the senior year. This will allow students to seek remediation and make them aware of deficiencies that can be surmounted during the year previous to college. Pulliam is hopeful that this testing initiative will expand to other high schools, so student success continues to climb.

Encourage prospective DCC students to apply immediately for admission, aid

As an alumni of Danville Community College, you can be a vital resource to neighbors, children and grandchildren in promoting the cost effectiveness and academic excellence to be found at Danville Community College. We encourage you to begin promoting early application to DCC for students seeking admission as well as scholarships. Early application and immediate application for student aid allows their college and student aid applications to be handled thoughtfully as well as effectively. For an administrator or counselor to have to talk with a student who waited until the close of scholarship applications before seeking help in financing college expenses is difficult, because that student cannot receive adequate help immediately. You, as an alumni with experiences from your years at DCC, VPI-Danville or DTI, can help prevent such occurrences by directing all students interested in DCC to apply now.

We also need your wisdom in encouraging those who make decisions about financing of community colleges to always place these colleges in the forefront, because they provide pathways to education for over 60 percent of entering freshman as well as provide local retraining initiatives for regional employers and new employers.

About Virginia's Community Colleges:

Created more than 40 years ago, the VCCS is comprised of 23 community colleges located on 40 campuses across the commonwealth. Together, Virginia's Community Colleges serve more than a quarter-million credit students each year. For more information, please visit myfuture.vccs.edu.

DCC advertisements created, broadcast

If you have not seen the latest advertisement for DCC, click on or type into your browser the link <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gqN5eMOcy8> . This is the second advertisement produced during fall semester 2008. You should be able to select the first ad at the above link also, but if not, use the following link to look at the first ad.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SRRw4hywa-c>

If you have suggestions for businesses, alumni, etc. who would be willing to participate in a DCC ad in the future, please send the information to alumni@dcc.vccs.edu

Online Newsroom: <http://www.dcc.vccs.edu/News/index.html>

Be sure to check out DCC's latest News Releases!

Check Career Opportunities on college web site; post resume

Job postings in the Danville/Pittsylvania/Halifax region for alumni can be viewed at http://www.dcc.vccs.edu/careercenter/Employers/Business-jobs/bus_jobs.html.

Other job postings, nationally and statewide through college career sites, can be accessed through the DCC Alumni web site. Register and post your resume for opportunities nationally and locally by going to www.https://alumniconnections.com/olc/pub/DVL/ or go to the DCC home page at www.dcc.vccs.edu, select *Alumni/Friends* from the menu at the top of the page and choose *Alumni*.

Christy Yaple, DCC's director of Tech Prep and Career Placement, receives numerous requests for resumes from employers seeking candidates for job openings. To post a resume on the DCC home page site:

- Go to www.dcc.vccs.edu
- Click on Student Services
- Click on Career Center
- Click on Student/Alumni tab
- Click on Submit a Resume
- Complete Resume Template
- Click Post Resume

If you have any questions, contact Christy at cyaple@dcc.vccs.edu

Alumni web site offers connectivity; job, networking opportunities

If you have not registered to use the alumni web site and its many opportunities for connecting and research, go to www.https://alumniconnections.com/olc/pub/DVL/ or go to the DCC home page at www.dcc.vccs.edu, select *Alumni/Friends* from the menu at the top of the page and choose *Alumni*. The Alumni information window will then open to explain use of the web site and to direct you on how to access the alumni web site.

We encourage you to spread the word to your friends from DCC about registering on the web site. The web site allows you to post information as well as access information.

You may also communicate with the Alumni Relations Coordinator at alumni@dcc.vccs.edu concerning services the office could seek and access for alumni. Such services can include specific classes or small seminars needed on specialized subjects, group travel rates, group insurance, week end meetings on special topics, reunions, etc.

If you have needs or ideas, don't hesitate to send your comments and requests.

FEEDBACK?

We hope you as a DCC, DTI or VPI-Danville alumni find information provided monthly from Danville Community College to be informative and helpful. Comments, questions, requests concerning alumni operations or *The Link* can be directed to Marie Harris, alumni relations coordinator, at alumni@dcc.vccs.edu