

The Power of Partnership & Collaboration

Alexander Graham Bell once said, “Great discoveries and improvements invariably involve the cooperation of many minds.”

The same is true of Dutchess Community College’s recent advancements. Each initiative – from developing a new strategic plan to opening The Center of Excellence for Industry & Innovation, from launching the DSP and Cannabis Retail Management microcredentials to strengthening transfer pathways, and all of the exciting opportunities on the horizon – was made possible by the input, expertise and perspectives of many minds.

The College’s commitment to partnership and collaboration has made us an example of what can happen when P12, higher ed, industry, government and community leaders come together to solve shared challenges and leverage our respective strengths.

Last month, Dr. Jordan gave two presentations underscoring the value of higher education in an evolving landscape and DCC’s impact on the community.

On November 15, he was the keynote speaker at the Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce’s Monthly Contact Breakfast. He shared how DCC is innovating and collaborating with regional partners – broadening our role as an educational institution and economic driver.



In his remarks, Dr. Jordan said, “We’re redefining terms like students, instructors and alumni. And we’re reimagining our role as partner and facilitator in making the aspirations of our region’s families, entrepreneurs and civic leaders a reality.” He also showed a video created by the Marketing and Communications department highlighting the inspiring story of April Cattell, a successful ELT graduate. Check out the video [here](#).

Two weeks later, on November 29, he traveled to Albany’s NanoTech Complex to participate in the CHIPS (Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors) R&D Office Roundtable Event. The roundtable allowed invited participants to make a brief introductory overview of their respective institution’s semiconductor academic and workforce initiatives; a Q&A session followed.

Through the power of partnership and collaboration, DCC has been able to create new pathways – especially for populations that have historically been underrepresented in higher education. In the brief overview he gave at the CHIPS roundtable, Dr. Jordan shared, “SUNY community colleges have the flexibility and the relationships to build the on-ramps needed to support a technically savvy workforce. We can provide workforce training that can serve as the first step on the ladder to a student’s degree, and career.”



Middle States to DCC: All Systems Go!

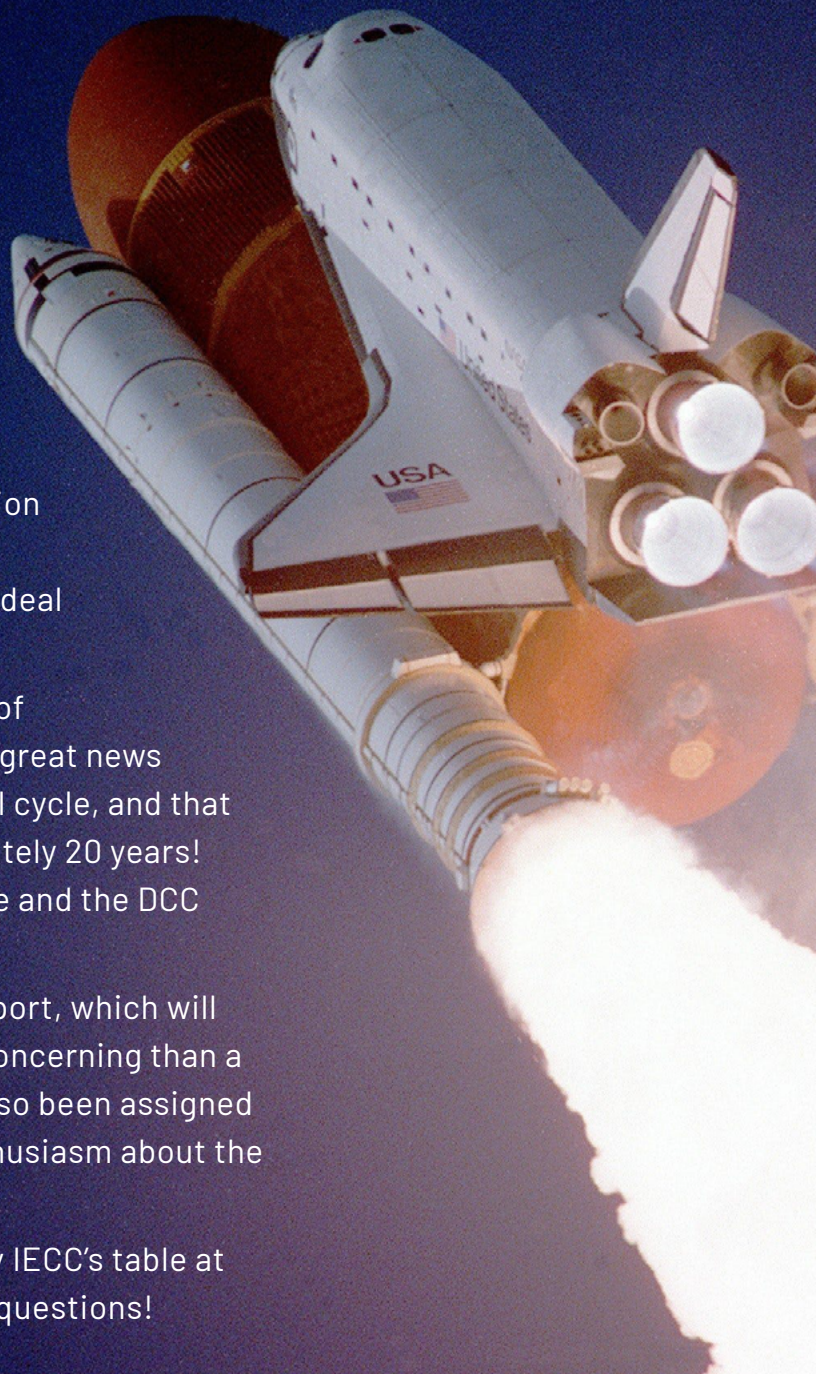
On November 16, we received **big news**: Middle States has fully reaccredited DCC through our next evaluation visit in the 2030-31 academic year.

This has been an incredible, college-wide undertaking, involving the input and collaboration of faculty, staff and leadership from across all departments and divisions. We all have a great deal to celebrate!

According to Chief of Staff and Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness Susan Rogers, "The great news here is that DCC is fully reaccredited for the full cycle, and that is the first time that has occurred in approximately 20 years! Our full appreciation to the Steering Committee and the DCC community who helped make this happen."

All that remains now is a brief supplemental report, which will be due on September 5, 2024. This is far less concerning than a "monitoring" report – and most schools have also been assigned the task – and it didn't diminish the team's enthusiasm about the reaccreditation.

You can view the complete action [here](#). Stop by IECC's table at Convocon on January 18 to learn more and ask questions!



Students Ready for Budding Business

On December 13, DCC recognized the first cohort of Cannabis Retail Management microcredential students in a ceremony in the Ritz Lounge.

Professor of Biology Dr. Mark Condon and Assistant Professor and Chair of the Hospitality & Tourism program Maureen Gittelman, who were in attendance, worked with a consortium of SUNY schools and industry professionals to build the curriculum, following a SUNY grant aimed at the about-to-open retail cannabis market in New York.

“You know you had a great semester when you’re sad to see it come to an end,” Professor Condon shared. Professor Gittelman remarked, “The students in our program came from diverse backgrounds. Some haven’t been in a college classroom for 10 to 15 years -- or ever. But, they committed themselves to the program and to each other. It was a privilege to teach them.”

Dr. Jordan said, “The Cannabis Retail Management microcredential is a great example of the ways DCC and the SUNY system continue to innovate, finding new ways to collaborate with business and industry to develop quality programming that truly serves our community.”

Join us in wishing our new entrepreneurs great success!



As a DCC faculty or staff member, you can [download Microsoft Office 365 apps](#) onto your home computer for free!

How? Simple. Just go to microsoft365.com and log in with your DCC credentials.

After you’ve logged in, you’ll see the **Install apps** dropdown menu on the top right and have the option to download Microsoft 365 apps including Word, Excel, PowerPoint and more.

Remember, the Help Desk can be reached at helpdesk@sunydutchess.edu. Can’t email? Call **x4357** or **(845) 431-8005**. If you get voicemail, please leave your contact information and a description of your troubles. All voicemails are automatically generated into tickets.

VIPs in Action: Frank Castella Jr.



Frank Castella Jr. is new to the Board, but his roots in Dutchess County go back multiple generations to the settlement of the Dutch and he's maintained his connection to DCC for at least a quarter-

century. He graduated with an associate degree in Business Administration in 1999.

An accomplished businessman, Castella credits his entrepreneurial spirit and work ethic to formative experiences such as growing the family printing company and Headless Horseman Hayrides and Haunted Houses. (Fun fact: Headless Horseman is among the top 13 haunts in the country!).

He spoke glowingly of his education at DCC, saying it did more to prepare him for the "real world" than his four-year college. "As a student, what I recall most about DCC was that it was an organization that was part of the community," he shared. "What I mean by that is that the professors all had industry experience. Either they were working at the same time or they had just come from a business career."

Castella has been CEO and president of the Dutchess County Chamber of Commerce since 2014. He got involved with the Chamber early in his career, working closely with his predecessor on initiatives such as Hudson Valley Young Professionals to engage the next generation and build a thriving community network.

There's a strong connection between Castella's work with the Chamber and his work on the Board. Both share a focus on workforce development and breaking down barriers/creating opportunities for students to complete their education. "I'm proud to be able to give back to the organization that gave me my first leg up and continue that tradition for others," he stated.

A Path to College for ESL/HSE Students

Many of our ESL and HSE students have work and family responsibilities that make it difficult to prioritize college. Thanks to the DCC Foundation, these students now have the financial support to help them take the next step in their education. A scholarship, offered for the first time this past fall, enabled ESL/HSE students to take a free BHS 103 class, allowing them to see what college is like without worrying how to pay for it.

Some of these students visited the main campus on December 11, where they learned about resources and met with faculty and staff. After the visit, the Office of Marketing and Communications created videos of two students. Click the student names to hear their stories: [Joy \(GED program\)](#) and [Hayat \(ESL program\)](#).

Joy, a GED program graduate, lives in Arlington but came from Kenya to be with her mother. She always knew she wanted to go to college. DCC was the closest to Arlington and the most affordable. She earned her GED and is now taking engineering classes with the goal of becoming a computer programmer.

The fall semester went so well that a second class, HIS 104, was added for the spring. Emma Slate, transition coach with the ESL/HSE program, said, "We hope that by giving students this opportunity it will inspire them to broaden their horizons and perhaps dismantle any daunting ideas they may have about higher education."

"The students in the FPC (Family Partnership Center) Social Problems class were nothing short of outstanding," said Behavioral Sciences Instructor Stephanie Roberg-Lopez. "This class probably contains some of the most gifted students DCC has had in some time. What a pleasure to have had the opportunity to teach them."



Campus Notes



ConvoCon 2024

Be sure to join your colleagues in the Greenspan Cafeteria on Thursday, January 18 for ConvoCon. We will come together to welcome new employees and those who've been away, celebrate our accomplishments, and prepare for a busy spring 2024 semester. The opening events will run from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., beginning with President Jordan's remarks. Lunch and the Length of Service Award Ceremony will take place from 12 to 2 p.m., and ConvoCon events will redume from 2 to 4 p.m. For complete details see the calendar of events that was emailed out earlier this week.



Holiday Gathering

In a festively decorated Ritz Lounge on December 14, DCC faculty and staff lifted glasses of assorted hot and cold beverages and enjoyed the hors d'oeuvres and desserts as they reconnected and celebrated at our annual holiday party. Dr. Jordan and BOT Chairman Michael Dupree talked about how well we're being received in the community and thanked everyone for their hard work this semester. Talented DCC students the Brown Brothers supplied the live musical entertainment, people added ornaments to an already well-festooned tree and took selfies in front of a holiday-themed tapestry, and donations were collected for our "support a student" fund. We wish a happy and safe holiday season to all!



CSTEP Students Selected for Winter Break Research Program

Every year, the U.S. Department of Energy's Brookhaven National Laboratory (BNL) runs a winter break research program for underrepresented students in the STEM fields. This year four CSTEP students, Kalegnon Dogba-Gobehi (ENR), Rahim Sow (CPS), Jr. Hill (LAX), and Dean Fejes (ENR) were selected to participate.

From January 8 to 12, the students will take part in initiatives including nuclear science, energy science, data science, particle physics, accelerator science and technology, quantitative plant science, and quantum information science. They'll also have a chance to network with BNL's scientists and engineers.

Successful participants could be invited to return to BNL for a 10-week summer internship. We are proud of our CSTEP students and excited for them to participate in this highly competitive and unique opportunity.

Campus Notes



Academy of Music Delights with Annual Community Concert

On November 15, the DCC Academy of Music's community orchestra, featuring musicians from the college and the community, presented several pieces under the baton of instructor and conductor Rich Simon at the Poughkeepsie Galleria. Academy of Music's director Jenny Park says this annual event is a great way to connect with the community, share the joy of music, and represent both credit and credit-free music programs at DCC.

The joy continued into December, when the Academy of Music held student recitals on the 15th and 16th and also participated in DCC's Chorus and Orchestra concert on December 15.



Just Dance!

In Falcon 202 on November 18, students from the Performing, Visual and Communication Department's part-time instructor Sharon Penz's DAN 141, 142, 241 and 242 classes offered a variety of dance performances as a preview of the show they will be giving in the spring, which has become an annual tradition.

More information about the upcoming spring performance will be on the website events calendar next semester. The event, as was the preview, will be free and open to the public.



Forward-thinking Art at Think Ahead Art Show

On November 29, students from two Think Ahead classes stood in front of their peers, teachers, family members and others to do something brave. Not only did they share personal artwork about sensitive mental health topics such as depression and abuse, but they also told honest stories, connecting their creations with painful experiences in their lives. Their vulnerability was equally matched with compassion and encouragement from the audience members, who asked thoughtful questions and praised the students' work and explications.

This was the second Think Ahead art show, building on the first, which centered on social awareness. The idea came from an article in Learning for Justice, a teaching resource published by the Southern Poverty Law Center. Think Ahead instructor Lydia Abreu spearheaded the project and helped students develop their ideas. "I wanted to give students a forum to express themselves and participate in what's going on in the world," Abreu shared. "Once they understood the broad definition of art – oral presentation, graphic communication, etc. – they were able to articulate things that may have been more difficult using writing alone."

Campus Notes

New Hires – Welcome to DCC!

Adam Colacicco, housekeeper, Custodial Services

John Finch II, part-time Direct Support Professional tutor, Human Services

Camarae Hardy, program assistant, Math

Kerry Kennedy, part-time reading & literacy tutor, The Center for Academic Achievement

Cheryl Mallozzi, part-time Direct Support Professional tutor, Human Services

Kim Verven, senior office assistant, Admissions

Sandra Viala, part-time professional tutor of Biology, Biology

