



Celebrating Student Success

Men's Basketball Team Earns No. 1 National Ranking

The Dutchess Community College men's basketball team rose to the top of the NJCAA Division III rankings and finished the regular season with an impressive 23-1 record (18-0 in Region XV). The team advanced to the post-season as the No. 1 seed in the Region XV Tournament, defeating Suffolk Community College 103-72 in the quarterfinal matchup on Feb. 25. Semifinal and final rounds will be held at Kingsborough Community College on March 1 and 2, and if they win, they'll head to Herkimer Community College for the NJCAA Division 3 tournament the week of March 17.

Led by Head Coach Robert Piano, the Falcons built their winning season on dominant defense and a talented roster, including sophomore standouts Joseph Battle, Prince Kamate, Quincey Platt, Seiray Sinerna, Alijah England and Amadou Diallo. "The players have bought into the defensive philosophy," Piano said. "We have been able to take teams out of their offense and stay disruptive."

Their success extends beyond the court. The team has also maintained high standards in the classroom, an effort that has not gone unnoticed. "The players have committed themselves to being model student-athletes, prioritizing academics and athletics," said Director of Athletics Matt Paquet. "Their success can be attributed to the entire college community providing support and resources that allow them to flourish."

As the regular season came to a close, the women's and men's basketball teams celebrated Sophomore Recognition Days on Feb. 18 and Feb. 20 respectively.

Read more about the Falcons' remarkable season in [MidHudson News](#) and the [Daily Freeman](#).

DCC's Got Talent! A Showcase of Emerging Artists

The 2025 Student Art Exhibit featured a diverse range of creative work, from paintings and ceramics to photography, videography and zines. Dr. Jordan selected three standout pieces for the President's Awards:

First place: "Little Details," a watercolor by Jenna Dudman (Art 262), taught by Holly McCabe

Second place: "Historic Vase," a ceramic piece by Alexis Bardo (Art 172), taught by Jessica Murphy

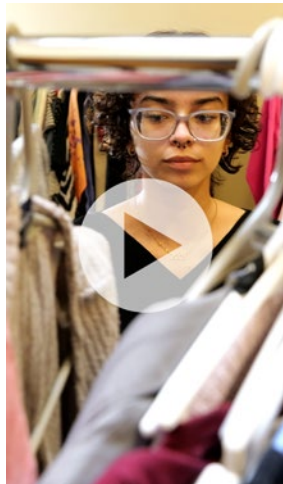
Third place: "Disrupted Realism: Self-Portrait in Acrylic," by Katelyn Oles (Art 226), taught by Lindsey Guile



Empire State Service Corps Promotes Wellness and Student Success

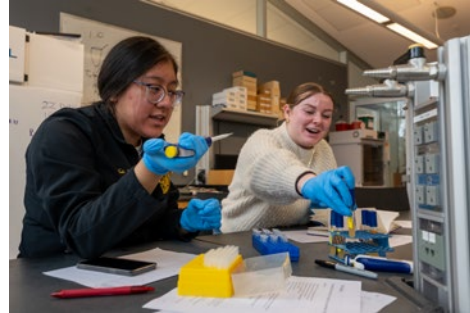
This year, DCC launched the [Empire State Service Corps \(ESSC\)](#), a SUNY initiative providing students with paid service learning opportunities. Eight students are completing placements at DCC, focusing on wellness and mental health programming to help peers manage stress, make informed choices and connect with campus resources.

As part of this work, ESSC members worked with the DCC Pantry and Clothing Closet to organize supplies, expand outreach and encourage student engagement. To raise awareness, they collaborated with faculty and staff on a video project to reduce stigma around these vital resources. A screenshot from one of the videos is included above—click to watch.



Students Gain Hands-On STEM Research Experience at Bard

Four DCC students participated in the [Project-based Learning for Undergraduates in Microbial Mapping \(PLUMM\) Project](#), a new research partnership between DCC and Bard College. Over three weeks



during winter break, they worked alongside Bard faculty and students in state-of-the-art labs, applying microbial mapping techniques,

refining lab skills and analyzing data. As part of the program, the DCC-Bard PLUMM students also took a field trip to the New York State Department of Health's David Axelrod Institute in Albany, where they met with scientists conducting research in bacteriology, virology, wastewater treatment and other areas.

Funded by a \$34,000 Glenn W. Bailey Foundation grant, the project is led by Bard's Dr. Brooke Jude and Dr. Robert Todd, with Associate Professor of Biology Dr. Katherine Espinosa serving as faculty mentor for the DCC students. PLUMM aims to enhance students' lab, experimental design, data analysis and research skills, preparing them for STEM careers or graduate school.



Our Annual Report Is Here - Take a Look!

The latest Annual Report is now available! Explore highlights from the past year and see the impact of our collective work. View the digital edition at www.sunydutchess.edu/annualreport.

Dr. Jordan's Town Halls Foster Open Campus Dialogue

In light of rising concerns about the influence of federal policies on our campus community, Dr. Jordan's Spring Town Hall series has emerged as a vital forum for supportive and direct communication between College administration and faculty and staff.

The first two sessions, held on Feb. 5 and 19, began with updates from the president on a range of topics—including capital projects, the development of the Centers of Excellence, and advocacy work in California and Washington, D.C. The floor then opened for discussion, allowing participants to ask questions and voice concerns about everything from DCC's future to the potential implications of recent White House directives.

The resulting conversations were candid and collaborative, with participants focused on addressing the challenges of an uncertain higher education landscape while serving the needs and aspirations of our diverse student body.

Reflecting on his recent visit to Washington with other DCC leaders, Dr. Jordan shared one of his biggest takeaways: the broad recognition by senators and members of Congress of the key role community colleges play in uplifting citizens and strengthening the economy. He also emphasized that we have solid support from SUNY and New York State, who back our mission and values as an institution. "In the midst of everything that we do, let's remember that our impact is really critical," said Dr. Jordan.

"Community colleges serve some of the nation's most marginalized students, and DCC is no exception," said Chief of Staff and Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness Dr. Susan Rogers. "As we face an unprecedented wave of federal mandates likely to



impact our students' education, it's crucial we come together as a community. The Spring Town Hall series provides one avenue for meaningful conversation around shared concerns, helping us to strengthen our resilience and reaffirm our commitment to our students."



"Even amid today's evolving federal landscape, under the leadership of Dr. Peter Jordan, DCC remains committed to transparent communication through our Town Halls—providing an inclusive space where diverse voices are heard, questions are welcomed, and feedback is valued as we work together to strengthen the impact DCC has on our students and local community while fostering a culture of belonging for all," said Director of Diversity and Compliance Felicia Ellzy-Smith.

With the next Town Hall scheduled for March 13, the conversation continues—providing another chance for leadership, faculty, and staff from every corner of the College to come together and shape our collective future.



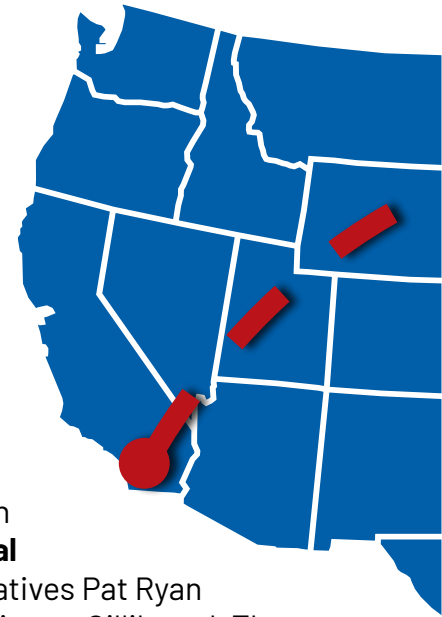
VIPs in Action



Advocating for DCC in D.C. and San Diego

This winter, representatives from DCC traveled to Washington, D.C., and San Diego to engage with national leaders, discuss key issues facing community colleges, and advocate for policies that support students and workforce development.

President Jordan joined Board of Trustees Chair Dr. Angela Flesland, Vice Chair Michael Dupree, and members Ibis Guzmán and Linda Pratt, along with Director of Diversity and Compliance Felicia Ellzy-Smith and Student Government Association President Rahim Sow, at the **Association of Community College Trustees National Legislative Summit** in Washington from Feb. 9-12. The group met with Representatives Pat Ryan and Mike Lawler and took part in discussions with Senators Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand. They also participated in meetings with officials from the U.S. Department of Commerce, the National Institute for Standards and Technology, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Labor. Conversations focused on federal investments in workforce development, financial aid, recent executive orders, federal grants, the role of community colleges in regional economic growth, and how these factors will impact the college community and culture at institutions like ours.



Two weeks earlier, from Jan. 28-31, Dr. Jordan, Workforce Development Liaison Laraine Kautz and Academic Coach James Williams traveled to San Diego for the **American Association of Community Colleges Workforce Development Institute**. The conference focused on workforce trends, including the impact of artificial intelligence on our work and workforce, advanced manufacturing and strategies for strengthening industry partnerships. Speakers emphasized the need to integrate technical training with communication and problem-solving skills to prepare students for a rapidly evolving job market. Many of the ideas shared align with DCC's efforts to create credit-free to credit pathways, increase Credit for Prior Learning opportunities, introduce new programs, design an effective Learning Commons and build Centers of Excellence—initiatives that could easily be highlighted at next year's conference.



Pictured from back to front, left to right: Ibis Guzmán, President Jordan, Raheem Sow, Michael Dupree, Felicia Ellzy-Smith, and Linda Pratt. Not pictured: Angela Flesland.

Help Us Build the DCC Website!

Have an update or additional information to highlight what's unique about your program or office? Send it our way! www.sunydutchess.edu/web-request.

Representation Matters

Students, faculty and staff gathered Feb. 11 for the Black History Month STEM Panel and Networking Event, where five accomplished STEM professionals shared their career journeys, challenges and advice. The event, organized by Black History Committee members Assistant Professor of English Willie Morris (chair) and Assistant Professor of History Sharon Hallager in partnership with Workforce Pathways Coordinator Dr. Linda Haas Manley, highlighted the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in the workplace and the impact of representation in leadership.

Morris led a dynamic discussion featuring panelists with expertise in a range of fields, including cybersecurity, civil engineering, healthcare, aviation and utilities: Sajed Naseem (DCC), Nicholas Vamvas (LaBella Associates), Marcus Paca (Nuvance Health), Keith Baskett (United Airlines) and Godwin Uwechue (Orange & Rockland Utilities). They spoke candidly about breaking barriers in their industries and working to expand opportunities for people of color in influential roles. Through their example and experience, panelists encouraged students to trust themselves, build confidence in their skills and stay focused on their goals. They also emphasized the need for resilience, drive and clarity of purpose in attaining professional success.

After the panel, students had the opportunity to connect one-on-one with panelists, explore internship and career opportunities and speak with company representatives. These conversations reinforced the value of mentorship, as panelists continued to share insights and advice—underscoring the role of community, connection and advocacy in advancing DEI in STEM.



Stop the File Hunt – Sync and Succeed with SharePoint

If your department still relies on locally hosted files, consider moving to SharePoint. This secure, cloud-based platform ensures easy access to the latest versions from anywhere.

SharePoint allows real-time collaboration, automatic saving and version control, eliminating the need for email attachments. It also integrates with Microsoft 365 tools like Teams, Outlook and OneDrive, streamlining communication and file management.

Contact IT for more information or help setting up a SharePoint site.

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.

Manufacturing Pre-Apprenticeship Program Off to a Strong Start



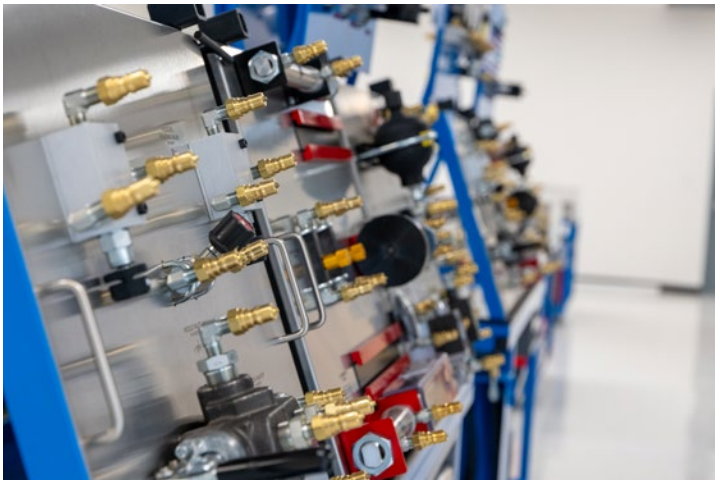
In December 2024, six students completed DCC's first Manufacturing Pre-Apprenticeship Program, Measurements for Quality Control in Manufacturing, at the Mechatronics Lab in Fishkill. The program, which is supported by the Future of Work Center Hudson Valley Consortium of Community Colleges, the Future of Work Center at DCC, and SUNY Apprenticeship Programs, helps students build foundational skills for careers in manufacturing.

The course introduced students to essential manufacturing principles while also developing job-readiness skills such as resumé writing, interview techniques and workplace confidence. Graduates earned an industry credential, enhancing their qualifications for apprenticeships and other industry opportunities.

"Mid-Hudson Valley manufacturers are looking for reliable, responsible employees, and those who have basic skills will be more in demand," said instructor Mike Sikula. "Many of these positions do not require a college degree but training and certifications are very desirable. These are not just jobs—they are career paths that can lead to financial freedom, personal satisfaction and opportunities for personal growth."

The next course begins April 7, with an open house for prospective students on March 18. No prior manufacturing experience or high school diploma is required.

For course details, contact workforce@sunydutchess.edu or call (845) 443-5087. For registration or scholarship information, contact laraine.kautz@sunydutchess.edu or call (845) 431-8905.



DCC Out and About

Falcons are making an impact—both within the College and in the greater community. Each month, we'll highlight standout moments and achievements from our faculty, staff and students.

Performing Arts Students Shine at Kennedy Center Theatre Festival

Sixteen students from DCC's Performing Arts (PFA) program participated in the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (Region 1), held at Central Connecticut State University in New Britain, Connecticut from Jan. 28 to Feb. 1. Over five days, students engaged in workshops led by industry professionals, exploring all aspects of theatre production, including stage combat, performance competitions, auditioning techniques, dance instruction and lighting design.

Several students earned special recognition for their outstanding work: Orrin Dow represented the PFA program as an intern for the Design, Technologies & Management program; Frank Dominguez received an honorable mention from the Institute for Theatre Journalism and Advocacy program; Aaron Williams was named a semifinalist for the Irene Ryan Acting competition; and Gianna-Marie Torres was named first runner-up for the Region 1 Musical Theatre Scholarship Competition.

Their success highlights the dedication and talent of DCC's PFA students as they continue to excel on the regional stage.



A video of Gianna-Marie Torres' performance is available to view: [Watch the video here](#)

Accounting Program Recognized for Strong Transferability

DCC was recently [highlighted in The CPA Journal](#) for the strength of its accounting program's transferability within the SUNY system. The article examined the challenges community college graduates face in completing their accounting degrees and entering the CPA profession. Among regional community colleges, DCC stood out for minimizing credit loss in transfer—students typically lose only one course, compared to four or five at other institutions.

In short, DCC is making it easier for students to start their careers in accounting at the community college level, paving more equitable pathways into the field. Kudos to the DCC Business program for ensuring our students have a smoother, more affordable path to their accounting careers!



Share Your Story!

One of the best ways to foster belonging and connection with students is to share a bit about yourself. Where did you grow up? What challenges did you overcome? What kind of student were you? How did you navigate difficult material? Opening up about your experiences gives students more ways to relate to you, the course and DCC.

Read more about the Teaching Learning Center (TLC) at www.sunydutchess.edu/tlc.



Ready for Your Close-up?

Refresh your professional profile with a new headshot! Book an appointment with Eric Greenop today—call ext. 8398 or email eric.greenop@sunydutchess.edu.

DCC Out and About:

Instant Admissions Day Opens Doors for Poughkeepsie Students

DCC's admissions team helped more than 50 Poughkeepsie High School (PHS) seniors take their next steps toward college at an instant admissions event last month. Organized in collaboration with Poughkeepsie College Readiness and Workforce Education Counselor Kelly Semexant, the event gave students the opportunity to apply on the spot and receive immediate acceptance decisions.

"For many," said Semexant, "this was their first college acceptance. The excitement in the room was inspiring."

The event is part of DCC's ongoing partnership with the Poughkeepsie City School District to support college and career readiness. Last year, 143 Poughkeepsie seniors were accepted to at least one college, with 76 choosing DCC. This year, more than 75 students have already been admitted.

At the event, DCC Admissions assisted students with their applications, with Semexant helping to ensure their transcripts were prepared. Students also learned about scholarships and financial aid, and representatives of the SUNY Educational Opportunity Program talked about additional resources available. Read more about the event in this [PHS press release](#).



Weather Clears for Aviation Info Sessions

A Feb. 6 snowstorm that closed the College during the day abated just in time for the evening Aviation Information Sessions at DCC @ HVR Airport. Twenty-five prospective students and their families attended one of two back-to-back sessions, with some joining via Zoom.

Aviation Coordinator Genna Suraci, Admissions Counselor Emma Slate and Associate Dean of Enrollment and Student Success Mike Roe welcomed attendees and guided them through the sessions. The 6 p.m. session focused on Aviation Maintenance programs, while the 7:30 p.m. session highlighted the Pilot program and featured insights from a DCC alum who shared their experiences and career journey.

Families traveled from as far as New York City and Connecticut to tour the facilities, connect with faculty, and explore how DCC's aviation programs can help them take flight in their careers.



Send Us Your Stories

We're always looking for great content to feature in DCC Connects and on social media—and the best stories come from you, our colleagues. From student success to class trips and professional milestones, we're here to share and celebrate your news! Send your stories at www.sunydutchess.edu/media.

Upcoming Events

Each month, we'll highlight a few key upcoming events in DCC Connects. To view a full list, visit www.sunydutchess.edu/events.

Town Halls with Dr. Jordan

Dr. Jordan's recent town halls on Feb. 5 and Feb. 19 provided faculty and staff with updates on advocacy efforts, campus construction, the Centers of Excellence, and key procedural and cabinet-level developments. The open-question format prompted thoughtful discussions and gave attendees the chance to ask questions and share feedback.

There's still time to join the conversation—mark your calendar for the next Town Hall on **March 13 from 12:30-2 p.m. in the Greenspan Cafeteria.**



Falcons Home Games

Support our student-athletes by attending a game this semester! View the full schedule at dutchessfalcons.com/calendar.

Women's History Month is Almost Here!

The Women's Activity Committee has an exciting lineup of events throughout March—and even into April—celebrating the voices, achievements and impact of women. Don't miss these opportunities to engage and be inspired! View the full schedule at www.sunydutchess.edu/whm.

At a Glance:

March 4 – Aaliyah Bilal: Talk and Book Signing (*Co-sponsored with the Black History Committee*)

March 13 – Process to Text with Poets Kateri Kosek and Joann Deiudicibus

March 27 – Lecture by Vassar Professor & Transdisciplinary Scholar Dr. Kahdeira Martin

April 1 – Reading Women

April 17 – Women in STEAM Panel

April 17 – Celebrating Black Women Authors Reading (*Co-sponsored with AWDC and the Writing Center*)

Have an on-campus event to add to the Events Calendar?
Submit a web request at
www.sunydutchess.edu/web-request



From the Foundation

March Forth with Us on March 4th!

The DCC Foundation has established March 4th as a special day of giving—a day to come together, uplift students and create lasting opportunities. March Forth isn't just a date; it's a movement of generosity, impact and momentum. Your support fuels student success, strengthens our community and helps shape a brighter future.

Every gift counts. Every gift empowers. Every gift fuels success.

Let's grow, give, and March Forth on March 4th! [More information here.](#)

Our Community's Bridge to the Future Gala

March 29, 2025

Join us for the DCC Foundation's annual gala on Saturday, March 29, at The Grandview in Poughkeepsie. This special evening will celebrate the transformative power of education and raise funds to support the more than \$1 million in scholarships, grants and programming the Foundation provides each year. Learn more and check out the bios for this year's honorees at sunydutchess.edu/gala.

Stay connected!



DCCFalumni



@DCCFalumni

Keep an eye on our social media, campus posters and e-newsletter for updates on how to get involved. If you're not receiving our e-newsletter and would like to, email us at dccf@sunydutchess.edu to stay informed about all the exciting happenings of the Foundation. Haven't connected with us on social media yet? Now's the time—because when we come together, we shape the future.

Mildred I. Washington Art Gallery

There's always something inspiring to discover at DCC's art gallery! Stop by during regular hours to explore their exhibitions (Monday–Thursday, 10 a.m.–9 p.m., and Friday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.), and be sure to check out their special programs.



Water: Paintings by Daisy de Puthod and Jean-Marie Martin

Feb. 24–March 28

Gallery Talk: "Women of the Hudson River School"
by Associate Professor of Art Margaret Craig

March 6, 12:30–1:45 p.m.

Reception for the Artists

March 7, 3–6 p.m.

His Room as He Left It by Ariel Kotker

April 7–May 16

Opening Reception with Live Music

April 10, 5 p.m.

Campus Notes

ENROLLMENT Updates

As of Feb. 19, Vice President for Enrollment and Student Success Scott Schnackenberg reported that there are 3,921 students enrolled for 41,644 credits for the spring term, 146 more students (+4%) and 759 more credits than there were last spring. We have 8 students more than the projected total for the spring term, and it is the fourth consecutive term that DCC has had a significant increase. Looking forward to next fall, there are 2,233 applications, a 9% increase over where we were at this point last year.

Foundation Secures New Scholarships for Nursing and Human Services Students

Exciting news! The Community at Brookmeade, a nationally recognized leader in long-term care, has partnered with the DCC Foundation to establish two endowed scholarships, investing \$30,000 to support students pursuing careers in nursing and human services. The Brookmeade Nursing Scholarship will provide financial assistance to full-time students in DCC's nursing program, while the Brookmeade Human Services Scholarship will support full- and part-time students preparing for careers in care, advocacy and social impact. With \$1,500 awarded annually, these scholarships help ease financial barriers so students can focus on their education and career goals. The Foundation is deeply grateful to The Community at Brookmeade for its generosity and commitment to empowering future professionals in these vital fields.



Standing Together for Heart Health

Faculty, staff and students wore red on Feb. 7 to raise awareness about heart disease in women. Organized by the Association of Women at DCC and the Women's Activity Committee, the effort supported the American Heart Association's National Wear Red Day® campaign, which promotes education, research and heart health equity.



Campus Notes

“Falcon Fest Lite” Warms Up the Spring Semester

Student Activities kicked off the semester with a Spring Club Fair on Jan. 28 in the Greenspan Cafeteria. Representatives from 26 student clubs and the Student Government Association tabled at the event, along with 11 campus offices who shared information about student resources. With music from Dutchess Student Media Group setting a relaxed and lively tone, the fair gave clubs a chance to reconnect with members and welcome new recruits after the winter break.



DCC Hosts Dutchess County Forum on Human Trafficking

DCC hosted the Dutchess County Department of Community and Family Services' Human Trafficking Awareness Forum for the second year on Jan. 31, providing professionals and students with critical information and connections to local resources. Experts from law enforcement, victim advocacy and social services shared insights on prevention and support, and survivor speakers courageously shared their experiences.

“We are grateful to the Dutchess County Department of Community and Family Services for once again selecting our college as the venue for this important event,” said Chief of Staff and Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness Dr. Susan Rogers. “It’s both a privilege and a responsibility to provide the educational setting for these vital discussions.”



Go Fly a Paper Airplane!

The Perkins Paper Airplane Contest, co-hosted by the Academic, Career and Transfer (ACT) Center and the Math and Science Center on Feb. 13, was a great success. Twenty-one DCC students from several different academic programs designed, constructed and perfected paper aircraft to launch down the runway (Hudson hallway). The maiden voyages topped out around 25 feet, but after testing and refining, the final winner flew just over 63 feet. Participants also had the opportunity to speak with DCC career representatives, Eric Wright from Solid State Cooling Solutions, and transfer counseling from New York Institute of Technology while enjoying some well-deserved milk and cookies.



Campus Notes

Making Math Count

Mathcounts, a national competition for middle school students, challenges young mathematicians each year. For the past decade, DCC has hosted the regional Dutchess/Ulster competition, coordinated by Electrical Engineering Technology Program Chair and Assistant Professor Dan Barbuto. On Feb. 1, teams from Stone Ridge, Liberty and Chappaqua, along with an individual competitor from Rhinebeck, gathered on campus. Seven Bridges School in Chappaqua won the team competition, with prizes also awarded to the top three individual scorers and top three countdown round performers. Winners advance to the state competition in March, with nationals in April. "We are always looking for more teams to participate, so please encourage middle schools to be part of this fun and challenging competition," said Barbuto. Next year, Math and Science Center Director Jenn Kurtz will take over as regional coordinator. Learn more about Mathcounts at mathcounts.org.



"Trapped" in the Black Box Theatre

DCC hosted a preview of Kate Skinner-McLarty's one-woman show, "Help! I'm Trapped in a One-Woman Show," in the Black Box Theatre on Tuesday, Feb. 11. A Shakespearean actress, Skinner-McLarty was in the original cast of "The Graduate" and has appeared on screen in "The Watcher" and "Law & Order," where she met her late husband, actor Ron McLarty. Her show recounted her experiences with dating after his passing. A brief talkback followed the performance.



Personnel Updates

New Hires

Welcome to DCC!

Timna Kligler, academic coach, ACT Center

Joran Ross, program assistant,
Student Financial Services

