

Secretary Cardona Returns to DCC for Career Pathway Roundtable



Roundtable participants from left are Dr. Daisy Rodriguez (Arlington CSD), Terlyka Horton (Arlington CSD), Johnnieanne Hansen (Council of Industry), Dr. Peter Grant Jordan (DCC), Secretary Miguel Cardona, Congressman Pat Ryan, Matthew Canfield (DCC), Yelena Vaynberg (IBM), Leiyla Barthe (Newburgh CSD, P-TECH), Dr. Jonah Schenker (Ulster BOCES)

U.S. Secretary of Education Dr. Miguel Cardona returned to DCC on June 20, less than a year after attending our Mechatronics Lab grand opening last October. He co-facilitated a Career Pathway Roundtable with Congressman Pat Ryan, featuring students and leaders from successful career-focused initiatives across the Hudson Valley.

The roundtable, in Secretary Cardona's words, aimed to "talk about what's working really well here" and gather advice "to systematize for the country." Panel participants shared insights from P-12 education, higher education and industry, discussing the strengths and challenges of career and technical programs.

Dr. Jordan underscored the pivotal role of community colleges in meeting regional workforce needs and supporting career and technical education. Matthew Canfield, an Electrical Technology (ELT) student, emphasized the importance of promoting technical career paths.

The event featured representatives from Newburgh City School District, Arlington Central School District, Ulster BOCES, the Council of Industry and IBM. Distinguished guests included Senators Hinchey and Rolison; Assemblymembers Barrett, Beephan and Jacobson; Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino; Ulster County Executive Jen Metzger; Poughkeepsie Mayor Yvonne Flowers; SUNY Orange President Dr. Kristine Young; SUNY Ulster President Dr. Alison Buckley; Dutchess BOCES Interim District Superintendent Jodi DeLucia; and Orange-Ulster BOCES District Superintendent Tom Bongiovi.

Special thanks to Dr. Susan Rogers, Chief of Staff and Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness, for orchestrating another successful White House visit. Gratitude also goes to our marketing and communications, admissions, scheduling, and facilities teams for their contributions.

A Community Vision Comes to Fruition



On July 18, DCC celebrated the grand opening and ribbon cutting of our new community garden. Despite the heat, the atmosphere was buzzing with excitement as guests toured the garden, which was developed in partnership between DCC and Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County (CCEDC) and with the support of Assemblymember Jonathan G. Jacobson.

In previous years, [The Pantry](#) maintained a modest garden outside Dutchess 101 to grow fresh produce for students and community members in need. Human Services Program Chair and Pantry director Lacie Reilly led the effort to expand the garden, securing a 4,000-square-foot plot of land near the tennis courts on the main campus. The DCC Foundation generously supported the project, supplying essential resources such as plants, rakes, buckets, fencing, netting and planters.

Recognizing that the larger space would need more support for cultivation and distribution, Reilly partnered with CCEDC. Their [Green Teen Workforce Development program](#) offers vocational training, food system education and life-enhancing opportunities to teens. This partnership not only boosts The Pantry's capacity but also provides hands-on learning and college connections for at-risk youth in the City of Poughkeepsie.

Dr. Jordan expressed his enthusiasm for the initiative: "I appreciate the multiple levels on which this garden operates – addressing food insecurity and healthy lifestyles, sustainability through agriculture, active learning and the



A short video by Multimedia Content Producer Eric Greenop captures the garden's story, highlighting key project contributors, student testimonials and footage of its early stages.

opportunity to connect the garden to so much of what we teach students – from science to sociology, writing and research, and much, much more."

What started as a small, intimate event grew into a significant community moment. Attendees included a representative from Pat Ryan's office, Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino, Poughkeepsie Mayor Yvonne Flowers, and Dutchess County legislators Chris Drago and Brendan Lawler.

Mayor Flowers highlighted the potential to replicate these efforts citywide, while Assemblymember Jacobson committed to advocating for continued budget funding. The strong support from elected officials and local dignitaries underscored the importance of collaboration among government, education, and community organizations.

Lettuce celebrate!

VIPs in Action:

Meet Bobby Biersack, DCC's New Student Trustee

Bobby Biersack, our new student trustee, was officially sworn in on July 1. He will represent the student body on DCC's Board of Trustees through the 2024/25 academic year.



An adult student who resumed his education at DCC in the fall 2022 semester, Biersack has been part of the Falcon community for the past 11 years. Since returning to school, Bobby has excelled academically, earning a 3.79 GPA and being inducted into Phi Theta Kappa this past spring. He also served as president of the Outdoor Adventure Club, where he organized activities such as kayaking, skiing and rock climbing, fostering a sense of community among students.

Biersack brings a unique perspective to the student trustee position. He first attended DCC as a recent high school graduate, unsure of his direction. Now, he balances a full-time job at Vassar with a full-time class schedule and plans to complete a bachelor's in social work after earning his associate degree in human services at DCC.

In his new role, Biersack aims to boost engagement on campus and in local high schools. Having experienced DCC both before and after the Covid-19 pandemic, he has observed a decrease in in-person student activities and is committed to revitalizing them. He also plans to visit local high schools to promote DCC, highlighting the benefits of community college and encouraging prospective students to consider DCC for their higher education.

His goal is to build on the College's strengths and ensure it remains a welcoming and supportive environment for all students. "I saw this as my chance to give back to the campus and leave my mark," he says. "Now, I'm looking forward to finishing my story and starting anew."



Celebrating the Success of Our HSE Graduates



From left to right are HSE Instructor Karina Gutierrez-Huincho, Senior Program Assistant Lynette Patrice, HSE Instructor - Spanish, Julia Saquicela, Rubi Mechaca

On June 27, we held our annual High School Equivalency (HSE) graduation ceremony, celebrating 36 graduates. This year, 16 were from the Spanish program, underscoring the College's commitment to diverse educational needs and supporting ESL students. A key highlight was the cross-departmental effort to ensure an inclusive experience for students and their families. Graduation letters were translated by Francisco Roche-Escalera, assistant director of admissions for diversity and equity, and the program was translated by HSE Coordinator Judith Lopez, who also provided real-time translation during the ceremony. "It was worth it to see everyone be able to understand and enjoy the ceremony!" Lopez said.

Both English and Spanish HSE program graduates spoke at the event. Spanish-speaking student Melany Solis said, "Today as I stand next to my mother, I can say that every sacrifice made was worth it. A lifetime in just one year. Today I am graduating, and I am very grateful to the institution that allowed me to achieve this, to my teacher Julia for her patience and genuine delivery of knowledge, and to my classmates who motivated me to continue trying harder every day." Transition Coach Emma Slate translated this quote. English-speaking student Melissa Clancy provided inspiring remarks, saying, "You should all be proud of the effort and dedication that you put in that got you to where you are right now. Deciding to pursue your GED is a brave and commendable choice." The event was supported by various departments, including the President's Office, Instruction and Learning, Marketing and Communications, Chartwells Dining Services, Physical Plant, Maintenance, the Mailroom, HSE instructors and staff, Family Partnership Center staff, Security, Scheduling, and Purchasing. The processional and recessional music was provided by Instructional Media Technician Jeff Baker, who has supported the HSE graduation through the years.

With over \$9,000 from the DCC Foundation, nine students who completed an ESL or HSE class will attend a fully funded BHS 3-credit class this fall at the Family Partnership Center, aiding their transition to college coursework.

Dreaming Big at the Annual Childcare Coalition Summit

On June 25 and 26, the Hudson Valley Childcare Coalition hosted its first annual Summit at Locust Grove Estate in Poughkeepsie. Led by Louise McLoughlin of the Dutchess County Workforce Investment Board (DCWIB), the coalition is dedicated to promoting affordable childcare and high-quality early education.

DCC has been actively engaged in these efforts. Over the past six months, a team of DCC faculty, staff and administrators, led by Dr. Susan Rogers, chief of staff and vice president for institutional effectiveness, met monthly with coalition members. They focused on addressing challenges related to affordable childcare and enhancing early childhood education in our community.

Speaking on behalf of DCC, Dr. Rogers' welcoming speech was one of several that set a positive tone for the summit. "I'm excited about the conversation happening around early childhood education and childcare in our region," she said. "I'm so proud to be working with a team of smart, dedicated colleagues who bring a powerhouse of energy and ideas when DCC enters a partnership in the community." Senators Michelle Hinchey and Rob Rolison, Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino and others also spoke at the event, emphasizing community commitment to improving early education.

Participants were urged to "dream big" and explore innovative ideas. Sandra Kraich, director of the Louis Greenspan Day Care Center, shared her insights: "High-quality childcare is the foundation upon which our children's future success is built. To see so many people come together at the Childcare Coalition, and to know DCC is behind this, is amazing."



The second day of the summit featured tours of various locations throughout the region. At DCC guests were invited to explore our Day Care Center and the Lab Nursery School in a walking conversation led by Director of the Greenspan Daycare Center Sandra Kraich along with Assistant Professor and Program Chair of Early Education Jennifer Santosuosso. The tour highlighted DCC's commitment to early childhood education, with transportation provided in the College's new vans for attendees.

Michael Hall, Behavioral Sciences department chair and professor of psychology, praised the event's energy and community focus, noting, "I thought it was an amazing event and was pleased with how many people seemed energized about moving the needle in a positive direction in Dutchess County." Adrianna Greco praised the event, stating, "This was a wonderful event. I appreciated the active participation and diverse ideas."

Santosuosso shared, "I see DCC's expansion and unification as our biggest opportunity! Adding infant care, creating one model center, existing under one roof, working together, and becoming a leader in high-quality early learning in Dutchess County is our potential. We can achieve this."

Emphasizing the importance of collaboration, Workforce Development Liaison Laraine Kautz said, "Working together with our business community to lift professionals and create seats for children will increase the success of all our programs."

Data shows a growing need for early childhood spaces and qualified educators by 2035. DCC aims to lead in universal childcare and support professionalization by providing aspiring educators with educational opportunities and recognized credentials.

Hooray for UPK!



Starting this fall, DCC will offer the [Poughkeepsie City School District Universal Pre-K \(UPK\) program](#) at the Louis Greenspan Day Care Center. This is great news for students, employees and community members residing in the City of Poughkeepsie who now have access to free, comprehensive full-day education for their 4-year-olds. DCC's involvement in the UPK program also underscores the College's commitment to lifelong learning.

Louis Greenspan Day Care Center Director Sandra Kraich and her team have worked hard to make it possible for the center to host the UPK program in collaboration with the Poughkeepsie City School District. "We're thrilled to offer this opportunity to our community," said Kraich. "We believe in nurturing environments that support early childhood development and family empowerment, making UPK a natural extension of the work we do. It's a

remarkable chance for students to enroll at DCC, pursue their education, and benefit from high-quality child care."

As DCC continues to expand its role in early childhood education, plans for future collaborations and enhancements to child care offerings are already underway. This new development demonstrates the College's commitment to fostering partnerships that benefit the community.

View our [press release](#) for more information about the UPK program at DCC. Be sure to spread the word to people who may be eligible to enroll – colleagues, students, friends and family!

Falcon SOAR Launched!

Orientation got a boost this summer, thanks to Falcon SOAR (Summer Orientation and Registration), which allowed about 70 accepted fall students to register for classes and complete orientation on the same day.

This July 18 event took shape in the Orientation Committee, under the leadership of Matt Hanlon, director of Student Activities, Mike Roe, associate dean of Student Services & Enrollment Management, and Adrianna Greco, assistant dean of Student Engagement and Development. The Registrar, ACT, Scheduling and Admissions teams worked hard behind the scenes to help make SOAR a reality, and the Title III Onboarding Committee endorsed this special session to offer students a better chance for sustained success in their first term at DCC.

Brian Sondey, AVP for Enrollment Management and Student Success, said, "We are confident that by assisting students with achieving a premade fall schedule that we will greatly aid their comfort in this huge transition and alleviate wait times for students who need to register as we move through the summer as well."



Let's Chat about Housing



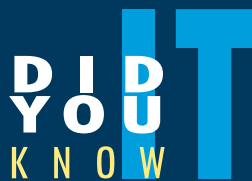
Earlier this year, the Academic Housing team was discussing how to better help incoming students complete their fall housing applications—specifically, how to get their questions answered in a timelier way while still offering face-to-face assistance. They decided to do this via a series of weekly Zoom sessions. Resident Coordinator Brianna Hicks came up with the name "Conklin Chats," and a schedule was set up. Since the chats began, the office has assisted fifteen families and counting. They've helped students complete their housing applications, submit documentation, and navigate interoffice connections.

"We have been working closer with students and their families and have been trending 60 deposits above last year," said Director of Academic Housing Kaina Rivera. "We also have restructured internally which allows our outreach and functionality to become more efficient."

Campus Notes

ENROLLMENT Updates

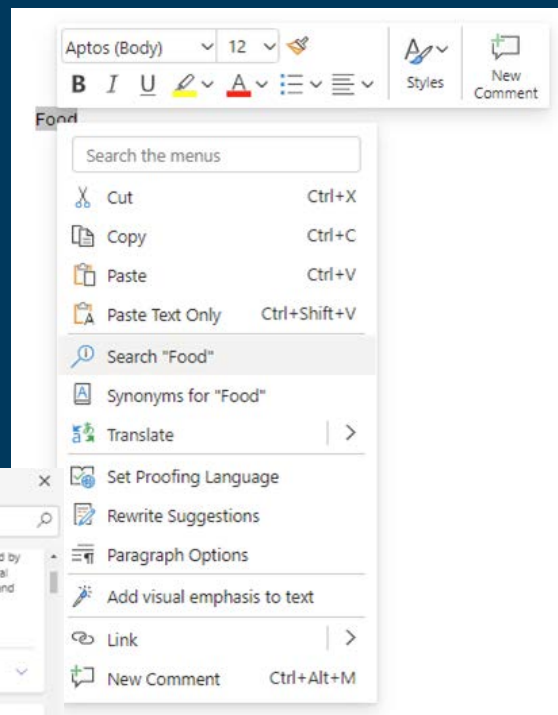
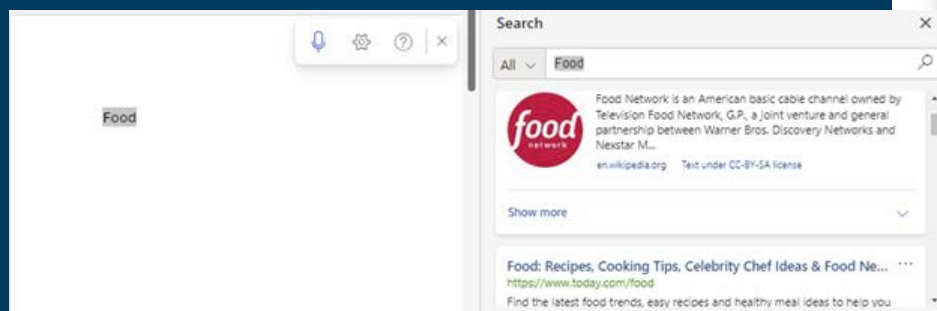
As of July 22, Vice President for Enrollment and Student Success Scott Schnackenberg reported that fall enrollment continues to be higher than this time last year. There are 2,904 students enrolled in a total of 34,087 credits for the fall term – 279 more students (+11%) and 3,050 more credits (+11%) than we had at the equivalent point last year. Falcon SOAR appears to have positively impacted the number of new students who have registered for fall – 1,003 versus 926 at this point last year. Fall enrollment for continuing students is 1,901 – 202 more than this time last year. Fall applications are also up, with a current total of 3,923 – 120 more (+3%) than we had at this point last year. Residence Hall occupancy is up as well, with 243 deposits received so far – 77 more than we had last year at this point in the cycle and higher than the final total from last year. To help meet the demand, DCC has reclaimed three suites from the Anderson Center.



Keep Your Word: Do Research without Leaving Word Documents

Switching between tabs and windows to do research and write up your findings can be tedious and annoying. Luckily, you don't have to leave Microsoft Word when you're conducting research. Use the built-in Search tool to quickly find online information without opening a new browser window.

To begin this feature, select a word or phrase in your document, right-click on it, and choose Search. Word will show you definitions, images and other relevant online search results while you're still in the document. We hope this tip helps you streamline your work and become more productive.



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.

Campus Notes

Advocating for Advancement at SUNY CUAD

This past June at the SUNY CUAD conference in Long Island, Associate Vice President of Institutional Advancement and DCC Foundation Executive Director Diana Pollard gave two presentations. The first, titled “Playing to Your Strengths: Strategies for Successful Community College Advancement Teams” – co-presented with Meg Natter, director of community colleges and foundations at the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) – was focused on building strong relationships within college leadership, creating an engaged foundation board, and cultivating a culture of philanthropy. The second presentation, “Small But Mighty Shops!” with Mike Barone, founder and president of STR8 4WRD Communications, discussed strategies for small-shop expansion when permanent hiring isn’t an option. They explored the benefits, challenges and ROI considerations of outsourcing. Both presentations received positive reviews and were well-attended.



Innovating Admissions at the Annual NYSACAC Conference

Associate Dean of Student Services Mike Roe and AVP for Enrollment and Student Success Brian Sondey presented insights and innovations in DCC admissions at the 2024 New York State Association for College Admissions Counseling (NYSACAC) conference at Molloy University on June 7. The event, attended by 550 guests, including college admissions professionals, high school counselors from public and private schools, and independent counselors or professionals from community-based organizations.

Roe’s roundtable presentation, attended primarily by high school counselors from New York City, highlighted DCC’s dedication to high-demand programs such as aviation, healthcare and business, and showcased housing opportunities in our residence hall. Sondey led a roundtable titled “What Students and Parents are Saying Today about the College Search Process,” exploring the evolving behavior patterns of college-bound families and strategies to enhance student recruitment.



Help us Build DCC’s Digital Presence!

Need to update something on the website? Easy! Fill out our simple web request form at www.sunydutchess.edu/web-request. This helps us keep organized and efficient.

Have a story to share? We love collaborating with our colleagues to make stories come to life. Whether it’s an upcoming or past event, a student success story, a field trip, class project, or something else – we want to know about it! Send us info at www.sunydutchess.edu/social.



Campus Notes

Bill Duke, Alumni Hall of Fame Honoree, Returns to DCC

Bill Duke '63, renowned actor and DCC Hall of Fame honoree, recently returned to DCC to revisit his roots and reflect on his remarkable journey. Accompanied by his film crew, Duke toured the campus and met with President Jordan; Associate Vice President of Institutional Advancement and DCC Foundation Executive Director Diana Pollard; Vice President for Finance & Administration Adam Rathburn; and Executive Assistant to the DCC Foundation Board and Executive Director Lara Simmons.

During his visit, Duke reflected on his experiences as an actor, director, and writer, detailing his battles with racism in the 1940s and '50s and his challenges with verbal communication. He recounted how writing poetry helped him cope, and a teacher's submission of his poems to a contest ignited Duke's belief in his potential.

At DCC, Duke's teachers encouraged him to explore drama, leading to a standing ovation for his debut performance. Although he won a scholarship to Boston University, financial difficulties nearly prevented him from continuing his education until DCC's first president, Dr. Hall, wrote a personal check enabling him to complete his associate degree. Duke's story exemplifies the profound impact of education and the lasting influence of supportive mentors.



New Hires

Welcome to DCC!

Robert Cirillo associate vice president of administration for campus facilities management, Finance and Administration

Elvin Alarcon Cortes, program assistant, Student Accounts

Nicholas Caruso, plumber, Utilities

Stefanie Healy, program assistant, Student Accounts

Stephen Henriquez, AMT lecturer, Aviation Maintenance Technology

Andric Perez, head cleaner, Custodial Services

Title Changes, Promotions & Appointments

Congratulations, Colleagues!

Enza Buonaito, lead teacher, Greenspan Day Care Center

Jennifer Lorenzo, assistant director of housing operations, Residence Hall