Dear Friends,

The end of an academic year is always a happy time, as we celebrate the achievements of our graduates and thank all of you for helping them reach this important goal. Several student success initiatives have launched over the past year with the assistance of the Westchester Community College Foundation. Among these include programs to strengthen our ties with feeder high schools to ensure students are ready for college, and provide personal coaching to students to help them stay on track to graduation. The Foundation also supported a comprehensive orientation for our hundreds of adjunct faculty along with other faculty development opportunities. With Foundation support, the College joined the prestigious Achieving the Dream national network of colleges, which opens access to additional funding sources, and we remained true to our promise to increase student scholarship funding and other emergency aid.

The Foundation is actively helping the college make important strides forward, and we thank you so much for your support! Through the summer, we will be planning for another busy year ahead. We look forward to keeping you updated on other new initiatives currently “in the works.”

With best wishes for a safe and relaxing summer!

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Executive Director
A DIFFERENT LEVEL OF SKILL

At a gathering of business leaders, educators, and community advocates on Tuesday, May 24, 2016, WCC and the New Skills at Work-Lower Hudson Valley Stakeholder Collaborative announced the release of CONNECTING TO PROMISING CAREERS Middle-Skill Jobs in the Lower Hudson Valley. This major report, made possible by the JP Morgan Chase Foundation, contains findings on the changing nature of the regional economy and recommendations for educators, businesses and government to support the education and training required to empower the local workforce. Middle skills jobs are defined as those jobs which require education beyond high school but less than a four-year degree.

The National Skills Coalition reports that key industries in the United States are unable to find enough sufficiently trained workers to fill middle skill jobs. In order to access middle skill jobs, people need education and training that is truly aligned with what employers say they need, now and in the future. Community colleges are poised to help fill that gap. For the full report and accompanying details, click here: Middle Skills

24TH ANNUAL BEACON CONFERENCE

The Beacon Conference was established by faculty to recognize, celebrate, and showcase the academic achievements of outstanding students at community colleges.

This year three WCC students were selected to present their scholarly work at the 24th annual Beacon Conference for two-year colleges in the mid-Atlantic region. Please join me in congratulating our WCC Beacon scholars and their mentors!

(L-R, Olivia Mata, Dr. Mira Sakrajda, Linda DePaolis, Dr. Belinda Miles and Antonio Del Vecchio):

Student: Linda DePaolis
Paper: "Reforming Incarceration for Nonviolent Drug Offenders"
Conference Category: Political Science/Social Justice
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Mira Sakrajda

Student: Olivia S. Mata
Paper: "Tattoo Culture Amongst Women"
Conference Category: Women and Gender Studies/LGBTQ
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Jo Stokes

Student: Antonio Del Vecchio
Paper: "Stem Cell Differentiation of Cardiomyocytes for Regenerative Therapy"
Conference: Poster Session
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Walsh

BEST IN CATEGORY - SUNYCUAD

Heather Shank, Special Events Director, and Patrick Hennessey, Director of College Community Relations have won the Best in Category Award for Special Events, Coordinated Activities for The Inauguration of Dr. Belinda S. Miles from the SUNY Council for University Advancement (SUNYCUAD). With Professor Sean Simpson, Heather and Pat co-chaired the campus-wide committee that organized the inauguration—an enormous undertaking—and delivered a whole series of events and publicity that appeared effortless and highlighted the whole institution with great distinction. SUNYCUAD awards recognize “the very best efforts of our talented and creative professionals,” with entries in various categories being judged by professionals in their fields. Heather and Pat also gave a well-received presentation at the SUNYCUAD Educational Conference this past June, in addition to picking up their official awards. Congratulations!
Virginia Marx Children’s Center Art Show

Since 1986, the Virginia Marx Children’s Center at Westchester Community College has provided award winning care for the preschool children of students, staff and the community. Each year the VMCC presents a very unique art show featuring the drawings, paintings, and sculptures from class projects worked on collaboratively by children ranging in age from 18 months – four years. The work that these young students produce is quite extraordinary – presented “professionally,” it's almost like stepping into a gallery at MoMA! Connoisseurs are encouraged to bid on any piece, which helps to raise funds for the Center, and note cards featuring the artwork are available for purchase. Free and open to the public June 16 – July 14, 2016 in the Fine Arts Gallery, Hankin Academic Arts Building. Exhibit hours: Monday & Wednesday. 10:00 am - 3:00 pm; Tuesday & Thursday. 2:00 - 7:00 pm

Scholarships Making Bright Futures

CON EDISON ESTABLISHES STEM SCHOLARSHIPS

On April 11, 2016, Westchester Community College was invited to participate in a very special event held at Con Edison corporate headquarters in New York City to announce the corporation’s new STEM scholarship initiative and to recognize students who were the recipients of their first awards. Con Edison Establishes Stem Scholarships

ACTION! WCC Digital Filmmaking Program – Jacob Burns Partnership

On June 22, 2016, the Jacob Burns Film Center hosted "WCC Short Cuts," a selection of short films from some of the most promising young filmmakers to emerge from the WCC Film Program in the past few years. The program featured a screening of select student films, with a Q&A featuring student filmmakers and Film Program Curriculum Chair Craig Padawer.

In addition, The Jacob Burns Film Center is committed to supporting the development of new filmmakers through their Emerging Artists Fellowship and we are proud to announce that Former WCC Digital Film Club President and recent Digital Filmmaking AS graduate, Stefaniya Vey, was recently awarded this fellowship.
Study Abroad - More Than Just a Scholarship

In addition to scholarships at WCC, the Scholarship Center presents other opportunities to our students for special programs. The **Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship** is funded by Congress, and sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State. The program selects award recipients through a competitive national selection process. Students awarded this scholarship participate in credit-bearing study abroad programs and career-oriented internships in countries all around the world. Of the 3,400 applications reviewed for the summer cycle, approximately 950 outstanding students were selected. And to think we sent only one student forward, and she won! So wonderful.

**Carole Morris**, who is WCC’s second Gilman scholarship recipient in three years, will study Haute Couture at the Paris College of Arts in France this summer.

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**SPOTLIGHT ON STUDENT SUCCESS**

**Eliwaja Ifuja (Ellie), Class of 2017**

Dreams really come true when we believe in them. I am standing here today to tell you how grateful and blessed I am to attend college. I was born in Tanzania. Growing up there as child, I always had a passion for education. I always wanted to be in school. I remember when I first arrived in the United States, it was very scary. I had to adapt to a new culture and learn English. I didn’t know how to speak English at all. This was so funny because whenever anyone spoke to me, I just smiled. Just a smile and nothing else.

Throughout my journey there were many road blocks and mountains to climb and, someone introduced me to ESL classes at Westchester Community College. I can tell you it wasn’t easy at all. Still, I was able to complete the four levels of English in two years. This is where my motivation started. Right away I knew in my heart that I needed to go to college, but there was another tall mountain that was blocking me. There was nowhere to go - over or under. Tuition was a huge challenge for me. I knew I wanted to attend college and be successful in life. My mind was made up, and I knew the decision that I made by enrolling in Westchester Community College was the best decision that I could ever make. My experiences at the college have allowed me to develop skills, something that I never thought would never happen. [For more on Ellie](#)
Ruby Asomaning, Class of 2016

WCC scholarship student, Ruby Asomaning came to us from Ghana. She is pursuing a degree in Civil Technology. Ruby is the first Westchester Community College student to receive the new Con Edison Endowed STEM Scholarship. The support she received came at a critical stage in her studies and she would have likely dropped out without Con Edison's support. Last semester, without scholarship support, Ruby could not afford to purchase text books and was concerned about completing her degree. With assistance, she is able to complete her studies and participate co-curricular activities including working as a field inspector with GPI/Greenman-Pederson, Inc., the engineering and construction firm currently building the new Tappan Zee Bridge. Ruby is eager to help other women pursue STEM degrees, and says, "Thank you, WCC and Con Edison, for helping me on my path to greatness. I believe this is just the beginning of great things in my life." She is on track to graduate in December, 2016 and hopes to transfer to Manhattan College.

Flora and Fauna

Native plants are becoming ever more popular, thanks in part to The Native Plant Center’s education and outreach. The Center sold more than 11,000 native plants during its 17th Annual Native Plant Sale 2016 and Pre-Sale this year. That record number was 25 percent greater than the previous record of 9,000 set last year. The achievement followed the success of its landscape conference in March, where a sold-out audience learned about designing with native plants from a stellar lineup of presenters.

For more information on native plants and to joining our mailing list please contact, The Native Plant Center at 914-606-7870; wcc.nativeplant@sunywcc.edu

À tout à l'heure!

The college gave a fond farewell to John Fellas, Director of Alumni Relations, who retired on June 24. John served in many different capacities during his 22-year career with the college, and his accomplishments stretched far and wide. We are so grateful for John’s many contributions, and wish him all the best in retirement!
Bon Appétit!

Westchester Community College Foundation’s Great Chefs Series is being introduced as the newest special events series in the WCC Foundation’s roster in the fall of 2016. This series of elegant, private cooking demonstrations will be held in WCC’s spectacular Instructional Dining Room and kitchens. Spearheaded by Prof. Phil McGrath, former chef/owner, Iron Horse Grill, each event will feature a renowned celebrity chef preparing a multi-course meal, which guests will then enjoy with wine or beer pairings. WCC culinary students will be on hand for service. Interaction with the chef is encouraged. Guests will leave each event with recipes and beverage pairing notes.

Dates of events are: September 26, Chef TBA, October 17 Chef TBA, October 24 Chef TBA, November 7, featuring David DiBari of The Cookery. Keep an eye out for your Invitation in mid-August.

Dates to Remember

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date/Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Native Plant Center (NPC) - Participate in <strong>NYS Invasive Species Awareness Week</strong></td>
<td>Valhalla Campus</td>
<td>July 15, 2016 at 4:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>NPC - Take a <strong>guided tour</strong> of our demonstration areas during the Garden Conservancy’s Open Days Tours here on campus.</td>
<td>Valhalla Campus</td>
<td>July 24, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPC - Make a purchase and help the Center during the <strong>Native Plant Weekend benefit</strong></td>
<td>Rosedale Nurseries Hawthorne, NY</td>
<td>Sept. 10–11 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPC - Learn about native plants at this <strong>Go Native U Back-to-School special day of classes</strong></td>
<td>Valhalla Campus</td>
<td>Sept. 30, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCC Foundation - <strong>Great Chefs Series</strong></td>
<td>Valhalla Campus</td>
<td>Look for your invitation coming this Fall 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scholarship Recognition Ceremony</strong></td>
<td>Valhalla Campus, Gymnasium</td>
<td>October 6, 2016 at 4:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>President’s Forum</strong></td>
<td>Hankin Academic Arts Theatre</td>
<td>November 2016</td>
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Thank you for choosing to **make a difference . . . .**

“Despite the challenges that I was facing, scholarships to me represent hope, support, and encouragement. Receiving the scholarship made my impossible possible. The scholarship gave me motivation and confidence. I am so grateful to God that somebody saw my potential and decided to help me. I am on my way to a brighter future. Thank you so much!”

Eliwaja Ifuja (Ellie),
Kathryn Davis Scholarship recipient