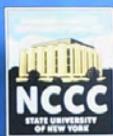




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I am  #SUNYCC

# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT



NIAGARA COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE



# We are SUNYCC

## *A message from the President*

As I reflect upon the 2019-2020 college year, it is marked by some significant events, including my official SUNY appointment as the seventh president of Niagara County Community College.

I accepted the role in November, not fully realizing the difficult path ahead, but knowing I was in the company of an exceptional team of administrators, faculty and staff that were as committed as I was to ensure academic success for our students. The COVID-19 pandemic had a tremendous impact upon the operations of NCCC this spring, forcing employees and students alike to make the unexpected adjustment to a remote learning and working environment. The global health crisis presented many new challenges and adjustments. It also proved how resilient we are at NCCC and the importance of our community college to the surrounding area.

With Zoom classes, a student emergency relief fund, the continuation of the student food pantry, and providing diploma deliveries, NCCC found creative solutions to maintain a strong connection to students when it mattered most. While more difficult days are likely ahead, I am reassured by the progress we have made so far, and the dedication of those around me. I am proud to be the president of Niagara County Community College and look forward to creating a lasting impact on future generations of Thunderwolves.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive 'W' followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

**William J. Murabito, Ph.D.**  
*NCCC President*

*I am*



**#SUNYCC**

**Welcome**

# Welcome from the NCCC Board of Trustees



## Board of Trustees

NCCC is governed under policies established by its Board of Trustees. All trustees are area residents, with a student trustee elected annually by the student body.

- A. **William Ross**, *Chairman*
- B. **Jason Cafarella**, *Vice Chairman*
- C. **Bonnie Sloma**, *Secretary*
- D. **Gina Virtuoso**, *Financial Secretary*
- E. **Katherine Alexander**
- F. **Kevin Clark**
- G. **Vincent Sandonato**
- H. **Sheila Smith**
- I. **Jerald Wolfgang**
- J. **Eric Lipps**, *Student Trustee*

## Board of Trustees NYCCT Awards

On September 21, 2019 three members of the NCCC Board of Trustees attended the New York Community College Trustees 65th annual conference in Saratoga. Chairman William L. Ross received the Donald M. Mawhinney Jr. Award for Trustee Leadership, Secretary Bonnie R. Sloma and Financial Secretary Gina I. Virtuoso both received the Marvin A. Rapp Award for Distinguished Trustee Service.



Chairman William L. Ross

Trustees Bonnie Sloma and Gina Virtuoso

# The *Smart* Place to...



Welcome

*With over 50 degree and certificate programs, NCCC is the smart place to...*



### 3 Most Popular Majors



Liberal Arts and Sciences  
**555**



Liberal Arts and Sciences:  
Humanities and Social Science  
**326**



Nursing  
**294**

### Admissions Profile

First-time registered  
freshmen: **1,075**

Registered Transfers: **437**



**Student Costs**  
(per semester)

Full-Time Tuition: **\$2,280**

Housing Cost: **\$3,811 - \$5,288**

### Employees

Total number of employees: **684**

Number of full-time faculty,  
staff, administration: **316**

Number of adjunct faculty  
credit instructors: **190**



Number of part-time staff,  
administration, non-credit instructors: **178**



**Facilities**

Acres: **287**

Buildings: **11**

### Accreditations



**Institutional Accreditation**

Middle States Commission on Higher Education



**Baking and Pastry Arts  
Culinary Arts**

American Culinary Federation  
Education Foundation



**Medical Assistant**

Medical Assisting Education Review Board  
(MAERB)

Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health  
Education Programs (CAAHEP)



**Nursing**

Accreditation Commission for Education  
in Nursing (ACEN)

New York State Education Department  
Registered Professional Nursing

Licensed Practical Nursing Office of Professions



**Physical Therapist Assistant**

Commission on Accreditation in  
Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) of the  
American Physical Therapy Association



**Radiologic Technology**

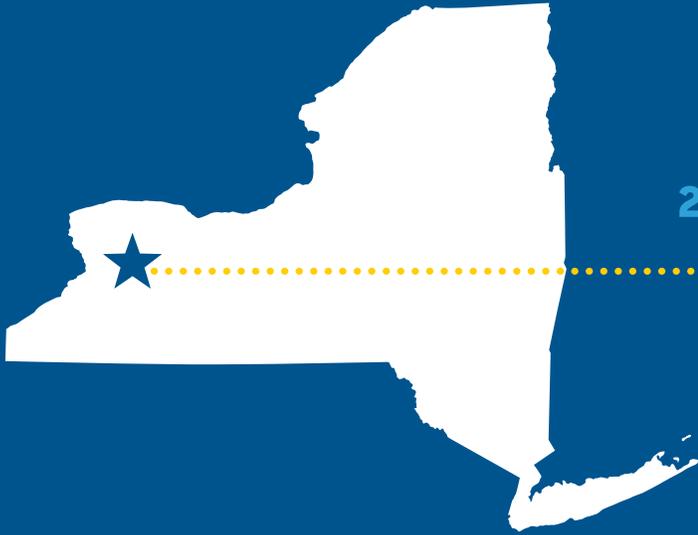
Joint Review Committee on Education in  
Radiologic Technology (JRCERT)



**Surgical Technology**

Accreditation Review Council on Education in  
Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting  
(ARC/STSA)

Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health  
Education Programs (CAAHEP)



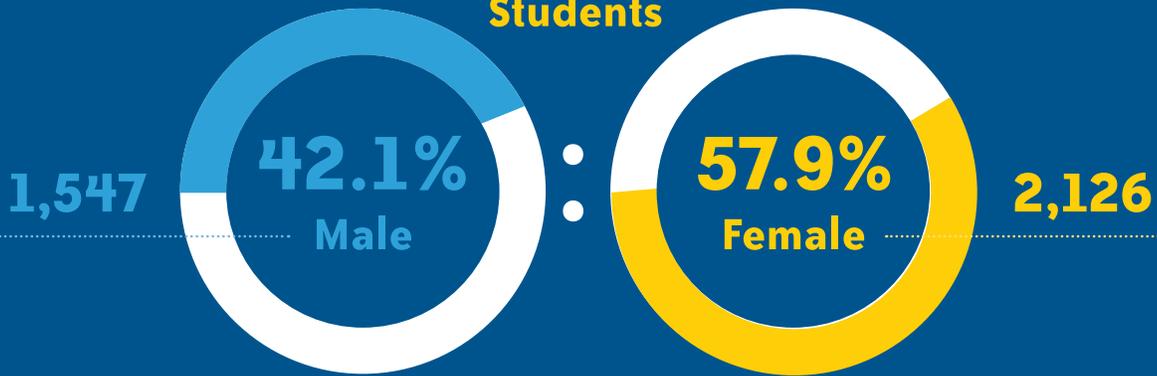
## Enrollment

*\*data is for Fall 2019*

**3,607** - New York (98.2%)  
**2,262** - Niagara County (61.6%)

**66** - Out of State (1.8%)  
**1,411** - Out of County (38.4%)

## Ratio of Students



## Average Class Size



## Degrees for 2019-2020

Certificates	<b>124</b>
Associate in Arts	<b>188</b>
Associate in Science	<b>216</b>
Associate in Applied Science	<b>299</b>



## Alumni

Total Alumni	<b>43,198</b>
Alumni in NYS	<b>35,952</b>
Alumni in Niagara County	<b>19,287</b>

At a Glance



*Chef Steven Hummel assists student chefs in Savor Restaurant*

## Student-Run Concept Implementation at Savor

The Niagara Falls Culinary Institute (NFCI) has always provided up-and-coming chefs with a hands-on learning environment to sharpen their skills in culinary arts and baking and pastry arts, and now these unique programs offer even more opportunities for students to excel and stand out in their field. At the start of the fall semester, the retail outlets at NFCI revised their approach by launching a completely academic model supported by Niagara County Community College.

This all-academic model means that chef instructors at NFCI incorporate rotations in the retail outlets, Savor Restaurant and La Patisserie, as part of the curriculum. The applied learning experience of preparing and serving food in an active restaurant right in the heart of a world-class tourist destination is a unique and valuable tool to ensure students are ready to be successful in a career right after graduation.



*Student chefs serve appetizers during reopening of Savor Restaurant*

## SUNY Chancellor’s Awards

### Chancellor’s Awards for Professionals

The Chancellor’s Awards for Excellence are honors conferred to acknowledge and provide system-wide recognition for consistently superior professional achievement and to encourage the ongoing pursuit of excellence. These awards underscore SUNY’s commitment to sustaining intellectual vibrancy, advancing the boundaries of knowledge, providing the highest quality of instruction, and serving the public good. Through these awards, SUNY publicly proclaims its pride in the accomplishment and personal dedication of its instructional faculty, librarians and professional staff across its campuses. The awards provide recognition in: Adjunct Teaching, Classified Service, Faculty Service, Librarianship, Professional Service, Scholarship and Creative Activities, and Teaching.

#### Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Scholarship and Creative Activities:

Dr. Rebekah Keaton

#### Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Classified Service:

Maureen Winters

### Chancellor’s Awards for Student Excellence

This award honors SUNY students who have best demonstrated their integration of academic excellence with other aspects of their lives, which may include leadership, campus involvement, athletics, career achievement, community service, or creative and performing arts.

#### Chancellor’s Award for Student Excellence:

Tayllor Clark

Rachel Shanor

## Student Showcase

The Student Showcase has become an annual tradition, featuring students working with the help of faculty mentors to create projects highlighting every division on campus. In its third year, the Showcase could not be held on campus due to COVID-19, but that did not stop organizers from pushing forward in a virtual format. “Knowing how much time and passion students pour into these projects, it seemed wasteful not to find a way to give the public at least a taste of what the students intended. Once presented with the new format, many students chose to add additional materials to their posters and abstracts so the public would understand the project’s real intention,” says Dr. Matthew Clarcq, Professor and Chairperson of the Student Showcase.

In the past, NCCC employees contributed donations that funded monetary prizes for winners in each category. With the complexity of trying to assess projects remotely this year, judges determined that all twenty-four participants deserved an equal cut of the prize money. One additional \$250 prize was awarded to Lily Stafford in the “People’s Choice” category, for her project titled, “What’s the Move” that explored factors to consider when relocating.



2020 Student Showcase People’s Choice Winner Lily Stafford



**“The goal is that through a host of discussions, programming, multicultural activities, and guest speakers, we will attain and spread a certain level of respect for cultural diversity, peaceful coexistence, and inclusivity.”**

**- William Brinson**  
*Coordinator of Multicultural Services*

## **Cultivating Diversity in the Classroom and the Workplace**

Will Brinson has become a popular name across campus. He’s known for guiding students, actively working on college committees, and representing NCCC across Western New York’s education arena. Brinson currently serves as the Coordinator for Multicultural Student Support Services at NCCC. He has been with the College since 2007.

On campus, Brinson is doing important work like mentoring students, leading the Black Student Union as their advisor, and serving as a committee member for the Diversity and Inclusion Committee. Out in the field, Brinson works on committees with several schools to develop partnerships between NCCC and graduating seniors. He is proud of the work he has done with the Buffalo Public Schools Career and Technical Education (CTE) Division, Saint Joseph Collegiate Institute, Niagara Street School, and the Native American SUNY: Western Consortium. He’s also proud of his position as Chair of the Western New York Coalition of Multicultural and Minority Offices in Higher Education. His connections, research, networking, programming, and cultivated partnerships have opened the door for talented people from diverse backgrounds to enroll as students at NCCC. His consistent leadership has also assisted students from their first semester in college all

the way through their graduation.

Brinson applies his passion for diversity and students to his work as the Advisor to the Black Student Union which, according to Brinson, “Serves as a conduit of communication amongst diverse minded students and diverse minded institutional employees. The goal is that through a host of discussions, programming, multicultural activities, and guest speakers, we will attain and spread a certain level of respect for cultural diversity, peaceful coexistence, and inclusivity.”

Furthermore, Brinson, along with the NCCC Liberty Partnership Program, has been vital in developing excitement about college in children as young as 11 years old. He has helped generate interest for Niagara Street School’s children to attend college in the future and reinvigorate immediate plans for their parents to return to college or workforce development classes at NCCC.

When asked what his favorite part of his job is, Brinson responded, “I love it all. In particular, the students.” He believes NCCC is the smart place to start because of the “price, location, academic programs, class sizes, and... me,” he humorously adds. He’s correct, though. The Will Brinson household name is central to many students and synonymous with their love of NCCC. He continues to be a connector, educator, and role model within our region, but especially within our tightly knit college community.

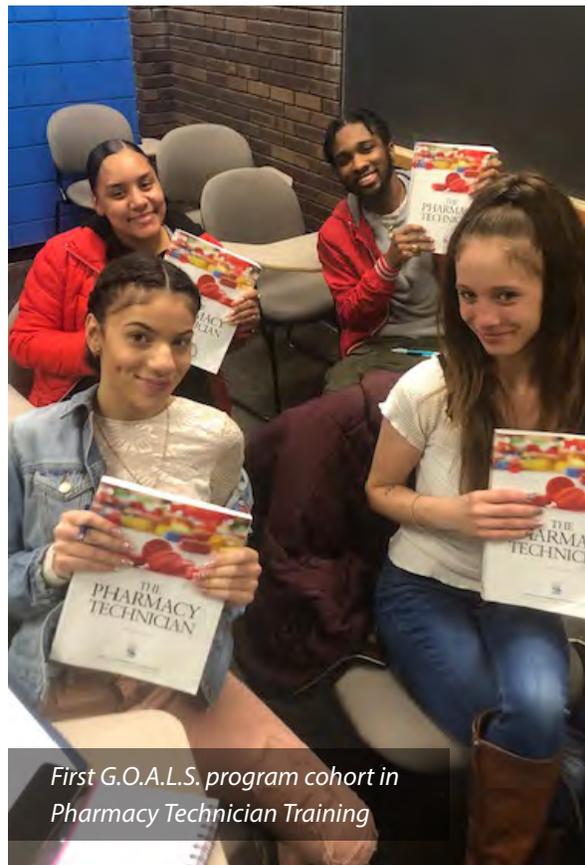
## G.O.A.L.S. Program

Niagara County Community College now has additional opportunities for students to further their education and start a successful career. The Gaining Occupational Academic and Leadership Skills (G.O.A.L.S.) Program funded through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) grant offers essential hands-on training and practical skills to people between the ages of 18-24 in the following programs: Hospitality, Machine Tool 1, Medical Billing, Pharmacy Technician and Pre-Apprenticeship. These training programs are shorter than a typical degree and certificate programs, with classes offered in the evenings.

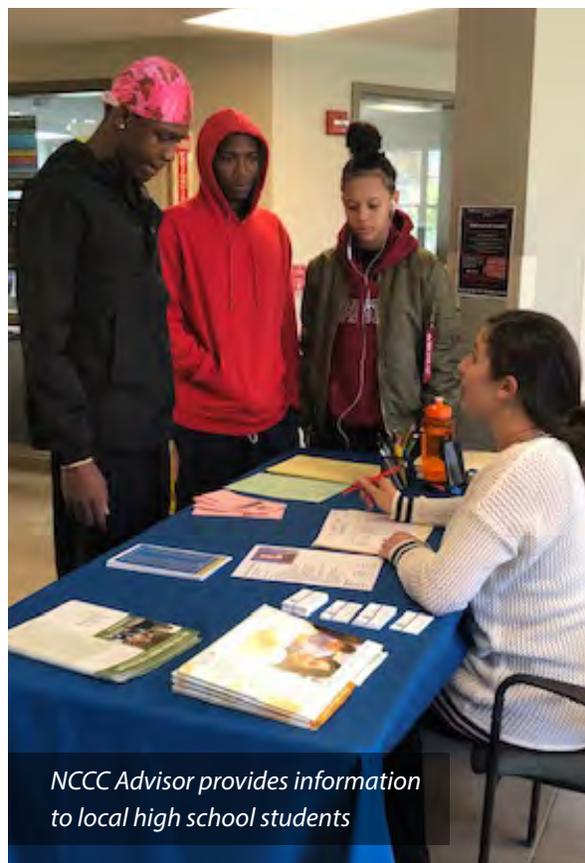
The WIOA grant provides students the opportunity to receive tuition and textbook assistance, NFTA transportation, academic support, monetary incentives, counseling and career guidance, and guaranteed interviews upon completion of the course. The program's additional benefits include networking opportunities, job and college readiness training, credit for prior learning and state certifications that lead to employment with higher wages and careers in high demand occupations.

## P-Tech Grant in Collaboration with Niagara Falls High School

As part of New York State's Cohort V of the Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-Tech) program, NCCC is partnering with the Niagara Falls City School District and Stavatti Aerospace, Ltd. to help students prepare for highly skilled jobs in technology, manufacturing and finance. The \$2.8 million grant will fund specialized college and career training for academically and economically at-risk high school students, allowing them to earn a two-year degree while still in high school. A cohort of students will be on a dual path of graduating from Niagara Falls High School and obtaining an associate's degree in Industrial Technology from NCCC. Upon completion of the program, graduates will be given exclusive first opportunities to interview for jobs at specific companies within their field.



*First G.O.A.L.S. program cohort in Pharmacy Technician Training*



*NCCC Advisor provides information to local high school students*



SUNY Chancellor  
Kristina M. Johnson



Graduate Philip Patricola receives diploma from  
Vice President of Enrollment Management Bob McKeown



## Virtual Commencement

On Saturday, May 23, 2020, Niagara County Community College (NCCC) hosted a virtual commencement celebration for the Class of 2020, recognizing over 900 graduates. The pre-recorded video allowed graduates to submit a photo of themselves, future plans, and messages of appreciation to friends and family. Additionally, the video included remarks from SUNY Chancellor Kristina Johnson and NCCC President William Murabito. “You have already made history by being the first class at Niagara County Community College ever to have a virtual commencement ceremony. Now you can start the next part of your life knowing you are flexible, you can overcome challenges and you can thrive in the face of adversity,” said President Murabito.

As Student Senate President and recipient of the SUNY Chancellor’s Award for Student Excellence, and the 2020 President’s Medallion honoree for involvement at NCCC, Tayllor Clark congratulated

her peers noting she had made lifelong friends at NCCC and her studies at the College were just the beginning of her journey to a lifelong career. While students were not physically able to be together to celebrate their accomplishments, a virtual watch party was held via Facebook so graduates, their friends and family could view the ceremony simultaneously and make comments in real-time.

**“You have the power to rebuild confidence in our nation, and your SUNY degrees will help you do that.”**

**- Kristina M. Johnson  
SUNY Chancellor**

**View our virtual commencement at:  
[niagaracc.suny.edu/commencement](https://niagaracc.suny.edu/commencement)**

Graduate Maritza Rivera poses with her family during a diploma pick-up on campus



“One of the advantages of being at a community college is that the staff and administration are very invested in the students, and they pushed to create these meaningful experiences for graduates despite the inability to have a traditional commencement ceremony.”

- William J. Murabito, Ph.D.  
NCCC President

## Pick-Up or Delivery?

After a bit of brainstorming, members of the commencement committee decided that repurposing the campus shuttle for delivering diplomas was a unique way to bring a special moment to deserving graduates. The Class of 2020 was excited to share the special moment with their families and some even dressed in their caps and gowns to receive their diplomas at their homes while NCCC staff cheered them on and took photos to commemorate the occasion.

This summer, graduates also had the option to participate in a diploma pick-up on campus at the Niagara Falls Culinary Institute or on the Sanborn Campus of NCCC. At each location, graduates had an opportunity to get pictures with their families. Some graduates were even able to pose for photos with NCCC President, William Murabito as they normally would at commencement. “One of the advantages of being at a community college is that the staff and administration are very invested in the students, and they pushed to create these meaningful experiences for graduates despite the inability to have a traditional commencement ceremony,” said President Murabito.



2020 graduate Joshua Riedel poses with parents after receiving diploma



2019 Scholarship Gala Chairpersons James Turner '86 with Christina A. Cerrone Pecoraro '06



The annual event raised  
**\$105,000**  
for the NCCC Foundation  
and scholarships

## Scholarship Gala

Honorary Chairpersons Steven Pecoraro and Christina A. Cerrone Pecoraro '06, along with James Turner '86 and Nancy Turner together with the NCCC Foundation Board of Directors, welcomed guests to the Annual Scholarship Gala at the Niagara Falls Culinary Institute on Saturday, October 19, 2019. Under the direction of newly hired Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs at NCCI, Josh Blumberg, NCCI Culinary and Baking & Pastry Arts students created a memorable dining experience for guests with an ice carving and delectable food courses at various dining stations within the building. Thanks to the assistance of dedicated volunteers, donors, sponsors and staff, the annual event raised \$105,000 for the NCCC Foundation and scholarships.

The 2020 gala originally scheduled for Saturday, October 17 has been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but the need for funds to support NCCC students is still great. Please consider making a donation to the NCCC Foundation by visiting: [niagaracc.suny.edu/alumni/giving](http://niagaracc.suny.edu/alumni/giving).



Student chef plates meal during Gala dinner

## Gingerbread Wonderland

A magical Gingerbread Wonderland was designed and created by Baking & Pastry Arts Instructors and Certified Executive Pastry Chefs, Cathy Barron and Seana Sullivan along with students at the Niagara Falls Culinary Institute. The second floor of the building was transformed into an edible holiday extravaganza, including an ugly sweater themed house, a sleigh wash, a gift shop, an ice cream shop, and of course, Santa's house!

Thousands of guests participated in the family-friendly holiday activities inside NCFI and some talented home chefs made their own gingerbread houses as a part of the annual gingerbread competition sponsored by Delaware North.



Visitors pose for pictures with a life-size gingerbread house and Santa during Gingerbread Wonderland



John R. Oishei Child Development Center ribbon cutting



President William J. Murabito, John. R. Oishei Foundation  
President Robert D. Gioia & Sr. Vice President of Programs  
Blythe T. Merrill, Chairman William L. Ross

## Child Development Center Ribbon-Cutting

An official ribbon cutting for the John R. Oishei Child Development Center was held in October of 2019. A generous grant provided by the John R. Oishei Foundation enabled the Child Development Center to relocate to the Learning Commons, expanding programming and space to accommodate the evolving needs of children in attendance. The center is officially accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, which recognizes outstanding early childhood education programs that meet national standards of high-quality care and education.



~~Gay~~  
~~BISEXUAL~~  
~~TRANS~~

HUMAN.

~~AM:~~  
~~STRAIGHT~~  
~~Gay~~

HUMAN.

de Flag



2013

The Bisexual Pride Flag



Created in 1998

NCCC Students celebrate National Coming Out Day

## Diversity and Inclusion Committee Makes Big Strides

The Diversity and Inclusion Committee was created in September 2016. It serves as an initiative to actively engage the whole college community in recognizing the importance of diversity for assuring the success of all members of our college community, including students, staff, faculty, and administration, in an ever increasingly global environment. The 2019-2020 committee members consist of: employees, Jonathan Bellomo, William Brinson, Catherine Brown, Dr. Suzanne Buffamanti, Christopher Herbeck, Angela Jackson, Kareen Klettke, Dr. Karen Kwandrans, Pamela Lange, Monica Lopoyda, Julia Pitman, Dr. Deborah J. Robinson, Harsh Sharma, John D. Strong, Rhonda Bivins-Talley, and Heather Trumble.

### Highlights

- A Generational Differences Training at the All Faculty Meeting
- Diversity and Inclusion the week of Sept. 23 on NCCC's social media outlets
- New Faculty Orientation presentations
- Trip to the UB Speaker Series to listen and meet with Angela Davis, American political activist, Academic, and former Black Panther
- Keynote Speaker Keith Boykin and classroom workshop
- Celebrated National Coming Out Day with students in the Learning Commons
- Brown Bag Lunches with employees to discuss topics such as "Diversity in the Workplace," "Are Diverse companies really more innovative?" "How to Deconstruct Racism, One Headline at a Time" and "Color Blind or Color Brave"
- A Diversity Panel Discussion during NCCC's Professional Development Days



*Keith Boykin speaks in NCCC Arts & Media Theatre and moderates group discussions*



## A discussion about progressive ways to create an equal country

### Keith Boykin Visits NCCC

In September 2019, NCCC had the honor of hosting CNN political commentator and New York Times best-selling author, Keith Boykin, as a guest speaker. His resume also includes teaching at the Institute for Research in African-American Studies at Columbia University. He is the co-founder and first board president of the National Black Justice Coalition and Boykin is a former White House aide to President Bill Clinton.

An event coordinated by the Diversity and Inclusion committee, Boykin drew in students, faculty, and the public to NCCC's Arts & Media Theatre, where audience members listened to Boykin present about the importance of inclusiveness in higher education, the workplace and society in general. He intertwined his own stories from growing up in St. Louis, Missouri, to working in public service and eventually becoming a public figure on BET and CNN networks.

Boykin spoke about his personal account as a gay, black man and the inequities he has faced. Connecting with students over the same challenging experiences, Boykin

opened his talk up to a Q & A session where students asked poignant questions about overcoming systemic racism and prejudice which led to a discussion about progressive ways to create an equal country.

Following his official event, Boykin was kind enough to visit Professor Michele Hamilton's Disabilities Birth to Adolescents class. He led a workshop with students where they engaged in activities about opening up to people they do not know and actively listening to one another.

Committee Chair, Jonathon Bellomo states, "Mr. Boykin's visit to our campus to not only educate our campus community on diversity and inclusiveness but to interact and engage with our students, faculty and staff was a valuable experience that will have a positive lasting impact." Bellomo added that the 2020-21 Diversity and Inclusion Committee plans are underway as members are working on creating a powerful yet safe action plan for students and employees. Look for upcoming events on the NCCC website.

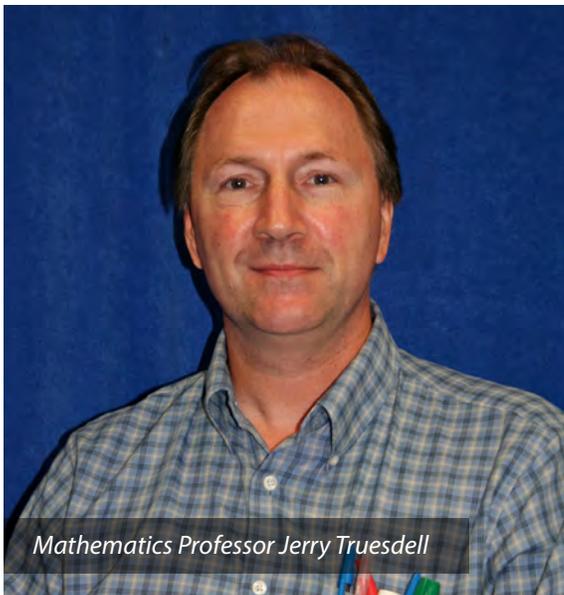
## Veterans Services

### Joe Potalivo

Joe Potalivo, Veteran Services Technical Assistant and former Staff Sergeant in the United States Airforce has been very active in furthering outreach efforts between NCCC and the veteran student population. Joe was selected as the Advisor of the Year at the Annual Student Life Awards for his efforts in creating a veterans lounge on campus and promoting advisement and resources available to current and former military students.



*Veteran Services TA Joe Potalivo (left) with fellow Veteran employees Butch Payne and Joe Colosi*



*Mathematics Professor Jerry Truesdell*

### Jerry Truesdell Publishes Book

Mathematics Professor Jerry Truesdell has published a new textbook entitled, "The Mathematics of Virus Spread for Beginners." This 12-chapter, 100-page book uses pre-calculus fundamentals to illustrate models for virus spread, including the Susceptible, Infected, and Recovered (SIR) model. When classes at NCCC went virtual during the spring 2020 semester, the book was created to cover the last five units in his pre-calculus course. Truesdell shares, "We do a section on modeling with exponential functions, so I developed this as a substitute during the pandemic."

### Savor on the Street

From June 18 through August 15, the Savor patio opened for a new summer-time dining experience: Savor on the Street. The smell of fresh, house-smoked and braised barbecue meals wafted down Old Falls Street, welcoming guests to the Savor patio. Each week different barbecue meat was featured with a side and delicious cookie made by the pastry chefs of La Patisserie.



*Chefs Myriah Meyer and Seana Sullivan present boxed meals at Savor on the Street*



Trustee Sheila Smith

**“I love my community college because it helps shape the voices of thousands of students who are the future of our community”**

**- Sheila Smith  
NCCC Trustee**

## I am SUNYCC

As part of the SUNY campaign to raise awareness for the 30 community colleges across the state, NCCC featured stories from students, alumni, President Murabito, and Trustee Sheila Smith focusing on why community colleges are valuable to them personally and professionally.

“I love my community college because it helps shape the voices of thousands of students who are the future of our community” -Trustee Sheila Smith



## William J. Murabito, Ph.D. chosen as seventh President of NCCC

The State University of New York Board of Trustees announced the appointment of Dr. Murabito as president on November 20 at the SUNY Trustee meeting in Albany. The appointment was effective on December 1, 2019 and an inauguration date will follow in the near future.



*NCCC VP of Operations and Alum Wayne Lynch poses with daughter and 2020 graduate, Ava Lynch*

## Kickball Game to Raise Money for Roswell

In honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, students from the Men's Basketball Team, Wrestling Team, Club Hockey Team and Women's Basketball Team competed against faculty, staff and administration in a kickball game on October 10 to raise money for the Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center. Participants purchased team t-shirts and wristbands for food with proceeds going to benefit the cause. In total, \$1,000 was raised for the charity.



Students raised money for Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center

## Alisha Rivers EOP Award

On Thursday, October 17, 2019, State University of New York (SUNY) Chancellor Kristina M. Johnson hosted the first Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) Honors Awards Ceremony at the SUNY Global Center in Manhattan. This inaugural event honored students from 41 SUNY campuses across New York State, including Alisha Rivers, a radiologic technology major from Niagara County Community College.

Alisha was chosen to receive the 2019 Norman R. McConney, Jr. Award for EOP Student Excellence, which celebrates EOP students who have overcome significant obstacles in life to achieve their educational and personal goals. The award is named after the late Norman McConney, one of the architects of the statewide EOP program and a champion of youth empowerment.



Alisha Rivers

## ACF Culinary Demo at NFCI

In February, Chef Jesus Olmedo from the ACF Culinary Team USA 2020 and accomplished NFCI Alumnus, Chef Antonio LaBarbera performed a culinary demonstration for culinary students and faculty. Since graduating in 2019, Chef Antonio obtained employment with the Country Club in Boston, Massachusetts.



NFCI Alumnus, Chef Antonio LaBarbera with ACF Culinary Team Member Jesus Olmedo



## Craft Coffee House

SBDC Clients and NCCC Alum Katie and Nick Graves were honored as the Small Business Association Buffalo District Veteran-Owned Small Business of the Year for 2019. Katie and Nick drew upon their experience as entrepreneurs in the community serving as keynote speakers at the annual Leadership Luncheon held at the Niagara Falls Culinary Institute in March of 2020.

## Small Business Development Center

The Niagara County Community College Small Business Development Center (SBDC) has helped small business owners achieve their dreams since 1984. SBDC accomplishes this at no cost to our clients through one-on-one, confidential counseling, training presentations, and research services.

### In the past year the NCCC SBDC counselors:

- Served 730 clients (352 of which were new to our center)
- Provided over 3,800 hours of assistance to our clients
- Invested over 1,100 hours connecting at community events, meeting local resource partners, serving on boards and committees, and supporting our host institutions
- Facilitated 32 training events with over 800 attendees
- Aided total investment of \$10,350,000 in business development in our local economy
- Those investments led to job creation/retention of over 219 new and saved jobs
- Since March, the SBDC has assisted nearly 300 businesses to obtain over \$5,000,000 in disaster grants and loans, all while working remotely.



*Craft Coffee House Owners Katie and Nick Graves speak at Annual Leadership Luncheon*

## Contact the SBDC

**Phone:** 716-210-2515

**Email:** [sbdc@niagaracc.suny.edu](mailto:sbdc@niagaracc.suny.edu)

**Hours:** Mon-Fri, 8:00am – 4:00pm

**[niagaracc.suny.edu/sbdc](http://niagaracc.suny.edu/sbdc)**

## Student Life

- The Niagara County Community College chapter for the National Society of Leadership and Success was created in Fall 2019. There are over 80 members currently in the NCCC chapter. NSLS is the nation's largest leadership honor society.
- Student Life held 60 on campus programs for the year of 2019-2020.
- Over 450 students participated in community service opportunities offered through the Student Life Office.
- Student Life kept the campus pantry open through online ordering during the COVID-19 pandemic and was able to raise \$2,480 to keep the pantry stocked.



Students at Welcome Week activities

Due to COVID-19 Student Life was able to offer over

**50** Virtual Programs

via social media and other online engagement platforms



Future Leaders at LaSalle Vineyard

## Liberty Partnerships Program

The Future Leaders Liberty Partnerships Program at Niagara County Community College has been focusing a large part of its efforts on encouraging students to invest in their communities. One of our program's proudest achievements was our partnership with The LaSalle Vineyard. LaSalle Vineyard is a community garden run by Grassroots Garden of WNY, an organization that funds several gardens across Niagara Falls to ensure those in food deserts have access to fresh produce. The LaSalle Vineyard is within walking distance of LaSalle Preparatory. In the fall of 2019, the Future Leaders attending that school and the community collaborated to get the garden ready for winter. Additionally, the Lead Gardner is in the process of building a decorative windmill to put in the garden and asked our Future Leaders to design and paint six, 6ft long, paddles that will be added to the windmill for next spring.



## PAIGE EMBORSKY

*Women's Basketball*

*Second all-time  
leading scorer with*

# 1,011

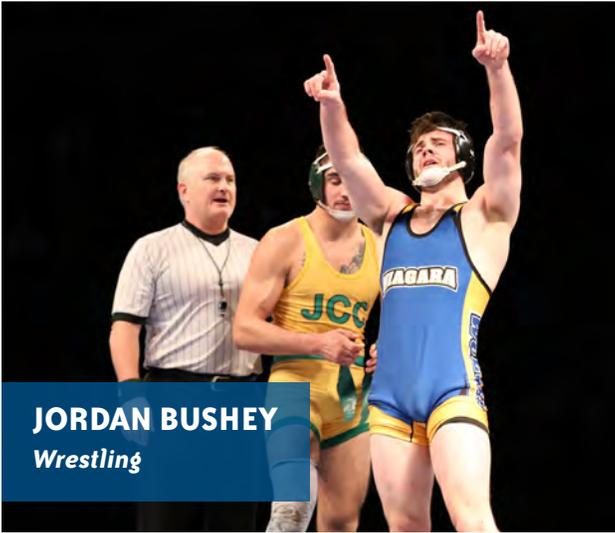
*career points*

### President's Cup Award

The President's Cup is the most distinguished award within NCCC intercollegiate athletics. The award is presented to a sophomore who has been enrolled at NCCC for at least three full-time semesters and completed 45 hours or more with a minimum 3.0 GPA. The scholar-athlete must have also been a vital member of the team(s) he or she competed for two full seasons of competition.

Paige Emborsky excelled on and off the hardwood. She is an NJCAA Division II 2nd team All-American, Region III Player of the Year, Western New York Athletic Conference Academic Female Athlete of the Year and the school's second all-time leading scorer with 1,011 career points. The two-year team captain also had a 3.90 GPA in Liberal Arts & Sciences, was a valuable member of the Intercollegiate Athletic Board and represented NCCC at several community events over the past two years. This student-athlete signed a National Letter of Intent to continue her education and hoops career at NCAA Division I Abilene Christian University in Texas.





**JORDAN BUSHEY**  
Wrestling

## Co-Male Athlete of the Year

Jordan Bushey transfer joined elite company on the mats, becoming the sixth National Champion in program history. The 174-pounder was 35-2 this past winter on his way to NJCAA All-American, Region III/Eastern District I Wrestler of the Year, Region III Male Athlete of the Year and Western New York Athletic Conference Senior Male Athlete of the Year honors. The team captain won individual crowns at six different tournaments and led NCCC to its 23rd regional title. He plans to continue his education and wrestling career at a four-year school in the fall.

## Co-Male Athlete of the Year

Despite having his sophomore season cut short due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Erik Johnson left his mark on the diamond. The hurler finished his NCCC career with a 7-2 record, a minuscule 1.38 ERA and 65 strikeouts in just 52.1 innings pitched. Last spring, he became the program's 12th NJCAA Division III All-American following a first team All-Region nod. The team captain also had a 3.47 GPA in Physical Education Studies. He signed a National Letter of Intent to continue his education and baseball career at NCAA Division I Coastal Carolina University.



**ERIK JOHNSON**  
Baseball



**AUBREY HALLORAN**  
Women's Basketball

## Female Athlete of the Year

Aubrey Halloran helped NCCC to an incredible 61-3 record and a pair of regional championships on the hardwood over the past two seasons. A two-time All-Region selection, this post player amassed 721 points, 440 rebounds and 126 blocks in her two-year career. She was also a team captain, held a 3.29 GPA in Criminal Justice and blossomed into a leader on campus. She signed a National Letter of Intent to continue her education and hoops career at NCAA Division I Niagara University.



## Strategic Plan

The 2019-2022 strategic plan focuses on four goals:

- Improved academic excellence
- Enhanced student enrichment opportunities
- Broader community and workforce engagement
- Overall institutional sustainability and improvement

View the complete NCCC Strategic Plan at:  
[niagaracc.suny.edu/strategicplan](http://niagaracc.suny.edu/strategicplan)



## New Safety Measures on Campus Post-Pandemic

*To ensure the ongoing health and safety of the campus community during the COVID-19 pandemic, NCCC has incorporated several new procedures and facility upgrades:*

- Daily Health Screening
- Daily Temperature Checks
- Plexiglass barriers at work stations and in student labs
- Hand sanitizing stations in every building
- Increased remote learning options
- Enhanced cleaning and sanitizing on campus



## Psychology and Chemistry Programs

To cater to a growing demand, NCCC added a Psychology, A.S. degree in 2019 to an already expansive list offerings, including more than 60 degree and certificate programs. Graduates are prepared to transfer into baccalaureate programs to become counselors, therapists, psychologists, and researchers.

A Chemistry, A.S. degree was approved by the Board of Trustees, SUNY and the New York State Education Department and is slated to begin in the Fall of 2020. The program allows students to understand the basics of chemistry and prepares them to transfer to a baccalaureate.

## Cannabis Curriculum

Recognizing the significant interest in the addition of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and cannabidiol (CBD) in food and drink products across the nation, NCCI's Chef Nathan Koscielski earned a Specialization Certificate in Culinary Cannabis and Edibles through the American Culinary Federation (ACF). He was one of fifty ACF chefs to earn this certificate, and he now plans to use that training by teaching a Culinary Cannabis and Edibles Course. This topic will focus on educating student chefs about the proper handling and dosing of THC-laced ingredients as well as non-THC ingredients. The National Restaurant Association's annual "What's Hot" survey polling American Culinary Federation (ACF) chefs last year listed cannabis and CBD-infused food and drink as the No. 1 and No. 2 top trends. The creation of a course at NCCI will fulfill this growing education need, while positively impacting student enrollment.



## English and Professional Piloting Programs

In January, the Board of Trustees approved two new degree programs that will now proceed to the State University of New York (SUNY) and the New York State Education Department (SED) for approval. Curriculum has been proposed for an A.S. English program that will allow graduates to easily transfer to 4-year colleges upon completion. Additionally, an A.A.S. Professional Piloting curriculum has been developed in collaboration with Prior Aviation, providing graduates increased opportunities for employment with the company upon graduation.



*NCCI Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs Josh Blumberg with Chef Instructor Nathan Koscielski*



COVID-19

NCCC employees wear masks to ensure health & safety on campus

**While challenges did arise,  
many bright moments  
connected NCCC closer to  
the community**

## NCCC Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

In early March, Governor Andrew Cuomo announced plans to move all SUNY instruction to distance learning for the remainder of the spring semester in response to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. NCCC Administration, faculty and staff reacted quickly to move modalities of instruction to online formats to ensure the health and safety of the campus population, while still maintaining a high level of academic standards for students. The campus community adapted quickly, and the Office of Information Technology worked tirelessly to connect students and employees to the resources needed to keep the spring semester moving forward efficiently. While challenges did arise, many bright moments connected NCCC closer to the community and brought to light the positive impact the campus has within the region.



## Virtual Student Life Events

To keep students engaged while learning from home, Student Life held over 50 virtual programs via social media and other online platforms, including cooking classes, bingo, exercise classes and more.



Mount St. Mary's healthcare heroes receive cookies from the Class of 2020

## Cookies to First Responders

With the help of the Niagara County Sheriff's Department and Tops Markets, the Class of 2020 presented 18,000 cookies in an effort to recognize the efforts of essential employees at local hospitals, nursing homes, firehouses, EMT services, the Niagara County Health Department and police stations in Niagara County. The offering was one sweet gesture to thank local heroes for all of their dedication to the community during the pandemic.

## Food Donation to Community Missions in Niagara Falls

As students and faculty were unable to return to NCCI for in-person instruction in the spring, Dave Slowik, an essential operations employee in the building suggested that all perishable food items in the culinary labs could be donated to Community Missions of Niagara Frontier, Inc. This organization provides crisis and community services, mental health housing services, mental health recovery services, and youth services to area individuals in need. Fresh produce, eggs, and dairy items from the coolers were loaded into a truck by Slowik and other NCCI employees Derrick Hilson and Dave Huntoon. "The ongoing relationship between NCCI and Community Missions is mutually beneficial, with students and staff seeing firsthand how their culinary skills and the donation of time and resources can help others," says Josh Blumberg, Vice President of Academic Affairs at NCCI.



Dave Slowik sorts donations for Community Missions



## Grants

The Grants Office managed over \$3.6 million in grant funds during the most recently completed fiscal year. Forty grant applications totaling \$9.5 million in funding request were made in 2019-20.

Over  
**\$3.6 million**  
 in grant funds

Funder	Funding
Empire State Dev Corp: COVID-19 Disaster Relief Tech Assistance	\$50,000
NSF/ATE - Mentor Connect - Welding Lab Upgrade	\$100,000
NYSED Coordinated Collection Development Aid	\$8,065
NYSED Liberty Partnerships Program	\$350,000
NYSED Perkins Title IV Career and Technical Education Act	\$369,547
"NYSED - PTEC - Grant was submitted by N.F. High School as the Lead Agency - NCCC would receive \$20,000 of \$150,000"	\$20,000
Niagara County Workforce Investment Opportunity Act	\$234,410
Oishei Foundation	\$100,000
Panera - Feeding America Day-End Dough-Nation program	Product Donations
SUNY Child Care Block Grant	\$38,500
SUNY Child Care Operational Grant	\$70,000
SUNY Developmental English Community	\$10,000
SUNY Educational Opportunity Program (EOP)	\$73,500
SUNY Open Educational Resources Initiative	\$7,500
SUNY Strong Start to Finish - Tutors in Math and English	\$20,000
SUNY Workforce Development Training Grants	\$45,617
Target Success	\$3,000
US Department of Education/SUNY: CARES Act I	\$1,799,455
US Department of Education/SUNY: CARES Act II	\$1,799,455
US Department of Education/SUNY: CARES Act III	\$175,945
US Department of Education - Trio Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS)	\$100,817
"US Small Business Administration - NCCC Small Business Development Center CARES Act"	\$100,072
"Verizon Media Community Benefit Fund Small Business Videography Marketing Initiative"	\$20,000
Wilson, Ralph C. Jr. - Legacy Funds - Girl Power Volleyball	\$127,000
"Wilson, Ralph C. Jr. - COVID - 19 Small Business Relief Fund Relief Initiative"	\$36,300
WNY Women's Foundation - MOMs Scholarship Program	\$3,500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,687,283</b>



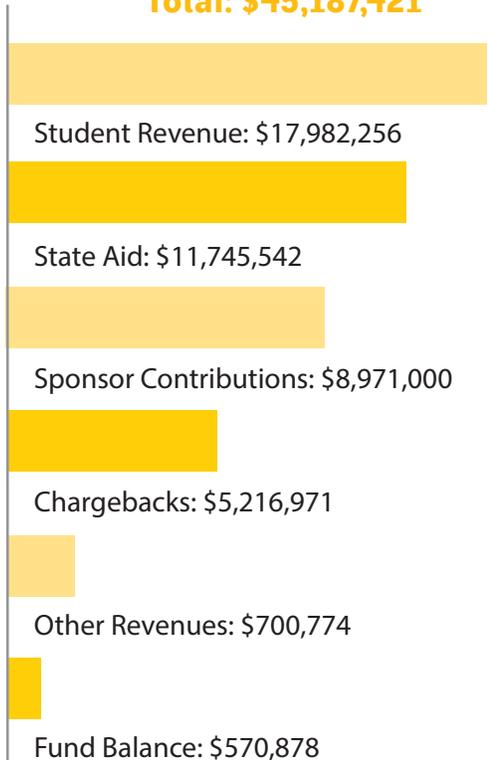
RALPH C. WILSON, JR.  
FOUNDATION

## Girl Power Volleyball

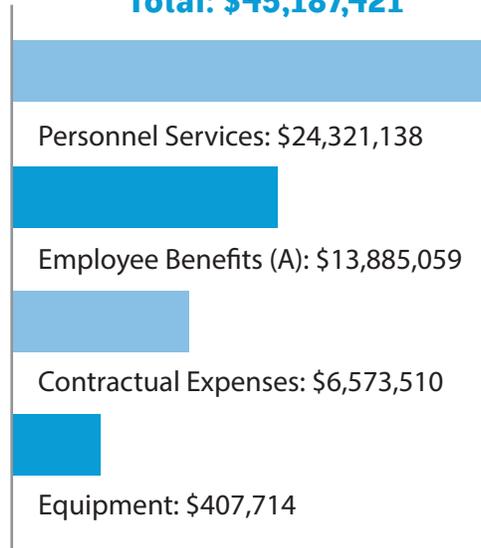
Niagara County Community College hosted a “Girl Power” youth volleyball tournament on December 11, 2019 for over one hundred girls from Niagara Falls and North Tonawanda intermediate schools as part of a \$400,000 grant from the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation. The grant supports a youth sport/leadership program between Niagara County Community College (NCCC) and the Niagara Falls and North Tonawanda School districts. The Wilson Foundation drives the “Project Play: Western New York” initiative aimed at getting and keeping more youth in sports. The three schools that participated in the fall semester were North Tonawanda Intermediate, Cataract and Hyde Park Middle Schools in Niagara Falls. The participants were girls ages 11-12 from each of the schools fifth grade classes.

## Financial Data

### 2018-19 Revenue Total: \$45,187,421



### 2018-19 Expenses Total: \$45,187,421



(A) Does not include the expense associated with Government Accounting Standards Board Statement (GASBS) 75 regarding the accounting for other post-employment benefits of \$5,672,788 or GASBS 68 regarding the accounting for the College’s proportionate share of the New York State pension plans of \$636,705 for fiscal year 2018-19.

## Donors

### NCCC Foundation Donors

*We would like to thank all of you for your generosity. We have attempted to recognize each gift from July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020 and regret any inadvertent omissions. Please contact the NCCC Foundation at (716) 614-5910 should you notice a discrepancy.*

#### PRESIDENT'S CLUB

Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation  
The John R. Oishei Foundation

#### DISTINGUISHED \$20,000+

Barnes & Noble College Booksellers, Inc.  
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## Day of Giving

NCCC participated in its first ever “Day of Giving” on Tuesday, December 3, 2019. This single-day online campaign raised \$6,720 that went towards programs that support students and assisted in furthering NCCC’s mission in the community. Participants could target specific areas for their donations, with Athletics, STEM programs, Horticulture, the Student Showcase, and scholarships among the many recipients of the funds. The NCCC Foundation will participate in the next annual Day of Giving on Tuesday, December 1, 2020.

**This single-day online campaign raised**

**\$6,720**

**that went towards programs that support students**



### Foundation Executive Committee

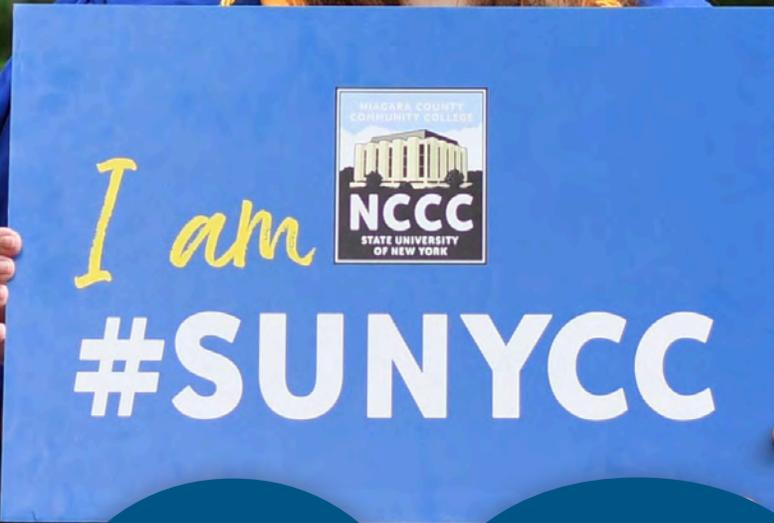
- **William J. Murabito, Ph.D.**, *Executive Director*
- **Deborah Brewer**, *Director to the Foundation Board*
- **Jerald I. Wolfgang**, *Chairperson*
- **Dr. David R. Bonnevie '74**, *Vice-Chairperson*
- **David I. Karwick**, *Treasurer*
- **James Turner '86**, *Secretary*
- **William Bevacqua**, *Member-at-Large*
- **David J. DiCamillio**, *Member-at-Large*
- **William L. Ross**, *College Trustee*

## NCCC Foundation Board

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NCCC ALUMNI  
ASSOCIATION



# 2020 CONNECTIONS

A MAGAZINE FOR NIAGARA COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE ALUMNI

# All in the Family

## Dan Jackson '99

“I am so thankful for the start to my education that NCCC offered because it provided me with a well-rounded experience that transferred to the work force.”



“Niagara County Community College holds a special place in my heart,” said alumnus Dan Jackson. “My plan after I graduated from high school was to enlist in the US Coast Guard even though I was born and raised in Canada. My mom lived in Niagara Falls, NY which allowed me to become a dual-citizen at a young age. Unfortunately, I wasn’t able to join the military due to a medical condition. I felt lost. My future plans had completely changed and I no longer knew what to do.”

Without a clear path, Dan decided to enroll at Niagara County Community College for Liberal Arts. “I wanted to attend a school that provided me with options. NCCC not only gave me the opportunity to explore a variety of courses but was also a smart financial decision. Since I wasn’t from the area, NCCC was also an intimate school that allowed me to get involved and make friends quickly. Some of my best friends to this day are from NCCC.”

While attending NCCC, Dan joined the Golf Club for 2-years. In 1999, he graduated with his Associate’s Degree in Liberal Arts: Humanities & Social Science. “I can’t point to just one professor, class, or employee specifically that impacted me the most because my entire NCCC experience was so positive,” he said. Dan continued his education at Buffalo State College, where he earned his Bachelor’s Degree in Business Administration. He was working towards his Master’s Degree at Niagara University but began his career before completing it.

While at Niagara University, Dan attended a job fair and met an individual who was hiring an entry-level sales position for what is now WIVB/WNLO. “I was fortunate enough to be hired,” said Dan. “I was given a desk, a phonebook, and a phone and told to start cold calling! At that time, I had no idea that this would lead to a lifelong career. However, I was and still am so thankful for the start of my education that NCCC offered because it provided me with such a well-rounded experience that transferred to the workforce.”



*Dan volunteering for the NCCC 5K Run/Walk with fellow NCCC Alumni Committee Chair Marty Drake '75 (left) and member Sal Messina '73 (right).*

For over 20-years, Dan has worked as a leader in sales at WIVB/WNLO. He was recently promoted to Director of Sales overseeing the national, local, and digital sales teams. He is recognized in the community of business leaders as an innovator of advertising campaigns that deliver results.

In 2005, Dan reconnected with NCCC and joined the Alumni Committee. "My uncle and NCCC Distinguished Alumni Award recipient, Chris Carlin, was on the Alumni Committee at the time and asked me if I would be interested in joining. I was thrilled to give back to the place that helped me get my start and lay the path to where I am today. I also work with a great group of alumni on the Committee, which makes giving back and staying involved easy and fun."

Not only is Dan a member of the NCCC Alumni Committee, but he also serves on the NCCC Distinguished Alumni Subcommittee and volunteers his time helping with events such as the NCCC 5K Run/Walk and NCCC Commencement ceremony. He is an avid supporter of the College sponsoring and attending numerous events each year.



*Dan and his team celebrating a 2019 tournament win with Amherst Knights youth hockey. Dan's son, Luke, was named Most Valuable Player after the game.*

In addition to his time spent with NCCC, Dan is a dedicated husband and father with two children. He is a member of the Amherst Youth Hockey League where he is a coach of two teams. He is a firm believer in physical fitness and tries to remain as active as possible.

When asked what he would tell his children about their future education, Dan had this to share: "Don't be afraid if you're not exactly certain what you want to do with your future, but make sure to select a school that provides you with an opportunity to explore all options. NCCC can get you on the right path to achieve your goals no matter what they are. I don't know what would have happened if I didn't attend NCCC and I am so thankful that I did. It's an incredible school that I will always support and value."

## **Courtney Bauer**

Courtney attended NCCC before transferring to the University at Buffalo, where she earned her Bachelor's Degree in Psychology and a Master's Degree in Public Health – Health Services Administration. She is currently working as the Community Relations and Network Manager at Family Choice of NY, an assisted living and nursing facility that provides support and care to those who are medically fragile or faced with a challenging illness or health condition. She has been named one of this year's 30 Under 30! Way to go Courtney!



## **Charles Harris**

Charles attended NCCC, where he studied Criminal Justice and is currently the Outreach and Education Center Assistant at Planned Parenthood of WNY. In addition, he is also a Line Chef at the Sheraton at the Falls and the creator of Project Green Space, a community gardening project in Niagara Falls. In his spare time, Charles has volunteered as a cook, and in other capacities, with The Magdalene Project, Community Missions of the Niagara Frontier, Lord's Day Dinner, and The Connection, a drop-in teen center operated by Planned Parenthood. He has been named one of this year's 30 Under 30! Congratulations Charles!

## **Lila Rollo**

Lila attended NCCC before receiving her Bachelor's Degree from the State University of New York at Buffalo in Social Work. She spent over three years in the US Navy working as a Medical Administrative Assistant and Career Counselor. She is currently the Integration Program Coordinator and an Interpreter for the International Institute of Buffalo. She has been named one of this year's 30 Under 30! You rock Lila!

## **Charlie Schutt**

Charlie attended NCCC before transferring to the University at Buffalo, where he earned his Bachelor's Degree in Accounting and his Master's Degree in Accounting, Internal Audit and Risk Management. He is currently the Assistant Vice President for the Anti-Money Laundering Technology Audit department at M&T Bank and the Head Swim Coach at the Kenton Family YWCA. He has been named one of this year's 30 Under 30! Keep up the great work Charlie!



# Class Notes

See what our Alumni have been up to!

## Antoine Johnson '14

Antoine Johnson was featured in Buffalo Business First, sharing his experience as Program Director for the Buffalo Prenatal Perinatal Network's Responsible Fatherhood Initiative in a 13-week Nursing Fathers group program. Antoine graduated from NCCC in 2014 with his degree in LA&S: Humanities & Social Sciences.

## Julia Erbacher

Julia Erbacher was featured in the University at Buffalo's Spectrum Magazine on pursuing her dreams in fashion through "upcycled" clothing. Julia attended NCCC before transferring to UB.

## Julianna Fortain

Julianna Fortain began her new position as Copywriter at Agency Fifteen. Julianna graduated from NCCC with her degree in Liberal Arts & Sciences.

## Barry Hart

Former NCCC Thunderwolves wrestler, Barry Hart, was named Assistant Women's Wrestling Coach at New Jersey City University.

## Tricia Littere

Tricia Littere celebrated 10 years with Northgate Health Care Facility as a Physical Therapy Assistant. Tricia is responsible for providing therapeutic care to residents and patients at Northgate while ensuring their needs are met in a safe environment. She graduated from NCCC with her Associate's Degree in Applied Science.

## Lance Moore

Lance Moore, a former NCCC Thunderwolves wrestler, has been named Keystone College's Wrestling Coach.

## Christy Zippier

Christy Zippier received the Zonta Club of Grand Island Yellow Rose Award for Outstanding Leadership and Service to the Community. Christy is currently the Co-Owner of 773 North. Christy earned her degree from NCCC in Culinary Arts and even competed on the American Culinary Federation's Junior Team.

## Cierra Harris '20

In addition to receiving a scholarship from Detroit Mercy, Cierra Harris will continue her basketball career at the DI institution. She was the fourth NCCC starter from this past season to earn a Division I opportunity.

## Nigel Scantlebury '20

Nigel Scantlebury joined the ranks of men's DI college basketball players by committing to Central Connecticut State University. Nigel graduated from NCCC in 2020 with his degree in Sport Management.

## Madison Cratsley '18

Madison Cratsley is a current full-time student at Daemen College working on her Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Human Resources. She graduated from NCCC in 2018 with her degree in Business Administration. She was married in January 2019 and has been inducted into Sigma Beta Delta, an international honors society for business, management, and administration students.

## Albert Bosley '16

Albert Bosley is currently working for the Albany County Department of Social Services as an Eligibility Examiner. He graduated from NCCC in 2016 with his degree in Business Administration.

## Reid Okoniewski '14

Reid Okoniewski began working as the Director of Major Gifts with the US Navy Memorial. Reid graduated from NCCC in 2014 with his degree in Public Communication.

### **Alexander Dispence '13**

Alexander Dispence competed in the 2020 WNY Chapter of the NYS Restaurant Association's Taste of Education Iron Chef Competition. Alex graduated from NCCC in 2013 with his degree in Culinary Arts.

### **Rashinika Vails '13**

Rashinika Vails graduated from NCCC in 2013 with her degree in Medical Assistance. Since graduating, she has gone on to obtain her Bachelor's in Health Information Management from Medaille College.

### **Autumn Evans '11**

Autumn Evans joined Jack W. Hunt & Associates, Inc. as a Stenographer. Autumn graduated from NCCC in 2011 with her degree in LA&S: Humanities & Social Sciences.

### **Jordan Alejandro '06**

Jordan Alejandro joined the Road Patrol Division of the Genesee County Sheriff's Office. Deputy Alejandro graduated from NCCC in 2006 with his degree in LA&S: Humanities & Social Sciences.

### **Kathleen McDonald '02, '11**

Kathleen McDonald is currently working as a Teacher's Assistant at St. Mary's School for the Deaf. She graduated from NCCC in 2002 with her degree in Computer Information Systems and again in 2011 with her degree in Digital Media. Her fondest memory of NCCC is with Gladys Flint who helped her a lot during her English course to become a better writer.

### **Criste' Staples '00**

Criste' Staples was elected Treasurer of the Board of Directors of the Buffalo & Erie County Chapter of the NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness). Criste' is a Supervisor in the firm's Tax Advisory Group. She graduated from NCCC in 2000 with her degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Accounting.

### **Amy Vanone '99**

Amy Vanone joined Mount St. Mary's Hospital as Manager of Perioperative Services. Amy graduated Summa Cum Laude from NCCC in 1999 with her degree in Nursing.

### **Jackie Walker '98**

Jackie Walker was recognized with the 2019 Nurse of Distinction Award from Our Lady of Peace. Jackie graduated from NCCC in 1998 with her degree in Nursing.

### **Elizabeth Pauly '85**

Elizabeth Pauly teaches individuals and seniors step-by-step how to become tech-savvy and see the benefits of new technology with her company Beth the Tech Tutor. Elizabeth graduated from NCCC in 1985 with her degree in Data Processing.

### **Arlene Jerge '81**

Arlene Jerge achieved her 10-year milestone as Resident Care Coordinator at The McGuire Group's Garden Gate Health Care Facility. Arlene graduated from NCCC in 1981 with her degree in Nursing.

### **Roberta Davis Deutsch '80**

Roberta has been working for over 40-years in the nursing industry and is currently an Associate Professor at Austin Community College. She graduated from NCCC in 1980 with her degree in Nursing. She continues to thank NCCC for providing her with the foundation she needed to become a successful nurse.

### **Duane "Duke" Richardson '78**

Duane "Duke" Richardson was inducted into Canisius College's Sports Hall of Fame for basketball. He is the only player in Canisius' school history to dish out more than 200 assists in a single game and still holds the records for career assists per game average and single season.

### **Patricia Evans '77**

Patricia Evans was named one of Lockport High School's 2019 Distinguished Alumni Award recipients. Patricia graduated from NCCC in 1977 with her degree in LA&S: Humanities & Social Science. She was also the recipient of the NCCC Distinguished Alumni Award in 1994.

### **Lawrence "Larry" Schiro '72**

Larry is currently a retired chemistry teacher from Williamsville Central Schools. He graduated from NCCC in 1972 with his degree in LA&S: Mathematics and Science. His fondest memory of an extracurricular activity at NCCC is playing on the 1971 baseball team. He appreciates all of the academic opportunities that NCCC provided him which has led to success in his career.

### **Mike LaFever '70**

Mike LaFever was recognized in Buffalo Business First's Influential People of 2020 Power 250. Mike is a NCCC Distinguished Alumni Award recipient and current Alumni Committee member. He graduated from NCCC in 1970 with his degree in LA&S: Humanities & Social Science.

## **We'd love to hear from you!**

Share updates about your career, retirement, marriage, children, or any of your accomplishments with your former classmates and campus community. Sharing your news is easy with our online form!

[niagaracc.suny.edu/alumni/updateinfo](https://niagaracc.suny.edu/alumni/updateinfo)

# 2019 Distinguished Alumni Award Recipients

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**Deborah Burns '78**

Degree: Communication  
Title: Co-Owner  
Company: Confetti Cottage



**Peter I. Certo '73\***

Degree: Business Administration  
Title: Former President and Chairman  
Company: Certo Brothers Distributing Company  
\*Posthumously



**Rebecca Cali Cuddahee '95**

Degree: Criminal Justice  
Title: Former Instructor  
Company: NCCC, Duke University, & University at Buffalo



**Richard Frizzell '65**

Degree: Liberal Arts  
Title: Retired Instructor  
Company: College of Coastal Georgia

Read our current and previous Distinguished Alumni Award recipients full biographies online at  
[niagaracc.suny.edu/alumni/awards](http://niagaracc.suny.edu/alumni/awards)

# Alumni Spotlight

Featured Alumni Accomplishments



## Tayllor Clark '20

"If I'm not busy, I'm bored," said NCCC alumnae Tayllor Clark, "and I was never bored at NCCC!". As Student Government Association president, Tayllor found herself in a unique situation never faced before when the Coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis occurred. "As a student, I was nervous and uncertain how my education would transition to online, but as a leader, I needed to reassure everyone that things would be okay and that we were all in this together.

When the pandemic hit, my main priority was to remain the voice of the student body, but we also had to think of new and creative ways to keep students actively engaged." And active they were! Tayllor, in addition to Student Life and the Student Government Association, went virtual offering students a variety of online events and activities such as trivia night, "DIY" projects, recipes, and more.

Not only did Tayllor step up to support her fellow students, but she also made sure the NCCC Class of 2020 gave back to their community. Tayllor, NCCC, and the NCCC Foundation coordinated with Tops Friendly Markets to bake 18,000 cookies. The Niagara County Sheriff's Department distributed the cookies to local hospitals, nursing homes, firehouses, EMT services, the Niagara County Health Department, and police stations as a small gesture of gratitude for all of their extra efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Throughout her time at NCCC, Tayllor was also a member of the NCFI Student Club, Phi Theta Kappa, and Campus Activities Board, along with working as a Student Ambassador and an Orientation Leader. "Although I would describe myself as an outgoing person," said Tayllor, "I was nervous making the transition from high school to college. During my freshman orientation, I stopped at the Student Life information table and without knowing it found an incredible group of people

that I shared my entire college experience with. Thanks to NCCC, I have been provided with so many leadership and life-changing experiences that I can't say thank you enough."

In May 2020, Tayllor graduated from NCCC with her degree in Culinary Arts. She was also the recipient of the NCCC President's Medallion and the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence. The NCCC President's Medallion is presented to only one graduating student each year who has contributed significantly to the development of co-curricular programs at the College. The SUNY Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence honors students who have best demonstrated their integration of academic excellence with other aspects of their lives, which may include leadership, campus involvement, athletics, community service or creative and performing arts.

Tayllor will be continuing her education at SUNY Buffalo State to pursue her degree in Career and Technical Education. "Although I hope to own and operate a restaurant one day, my ultimate goal is to become a professor and educate future chefs of the world! I can only hope to inspire and educate students in the same way that I was by my grandfather and my professors at the Niagara Falls Culinary Institute. In particular, Chef Steiner motivated me to keep pursuing my dreams and always encouraged my extracurricular activities."

Upon graduating from NCCC and ending her term as Student Senate president, Tayllor had this to say to her classmates: "I am so proud of all that we have accomplished both in-person and online! I hope that we can all continue to grow by setting goals and holding ourselves accountable for them. NCCC has been one of the best experiences of my life and I want to thank everyone who made that possible. Go Thunderwolves!".

## Lori Jagow '95, '97

You never know what obstacles you'll have to face in life. For NCCC alumnae, Lori Jagow, life presented her with new challenges after her divorce. With strength, perseverance, and support from NCCC, she turned her challenges into opportunities.

Lori graduated from NCCC in 1995 with her Rehabilitation Services Certificate and in 1997 with her Associate's Degree in LA&S: Humanities and Social Science. She has been published twice in the Chicken Soup for the Soul series. She and her son have also worked on films about autism such as "Diffability Hollywood" and "Normal People Scare Me Too." She is currently pursuing her master's degree and becoming a church deacon. She is working as a photographer and online minister. This is her story.

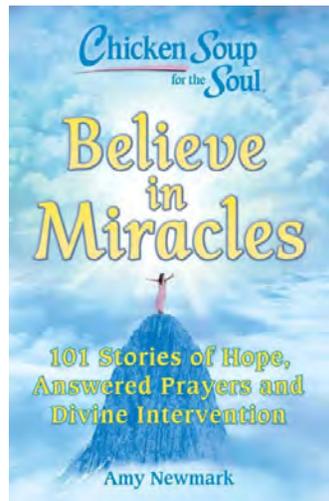
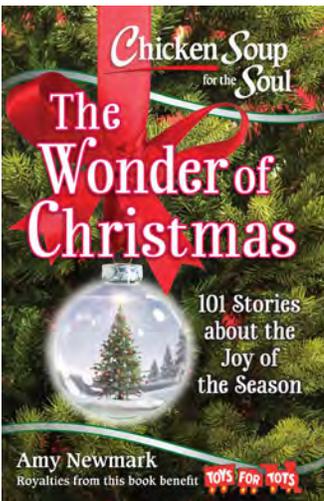
"I found myself unprepared to face the workforce as a single parent," said Lori. "NCCC's rehabilitation program interested me because addiction and rehab were things that had personally affected my life.

My son Jimmy was two-years old and balancing school while parenting him wasn't easy. There would be times that he refused to go to childcare so I couldn't attend classes. Things finally began to change when I started taking him to NCCC's Child Development Center. This gave me the opportunity to visit him between classes which relieved some of his and my stress. This allowed me to become more involved on campus.

NCCC Professor and Counselor Al Saladino made one of the largest impacts on my academic career. I was considering transferring and instead he encouraged me to continue with the program which required gen ed courses. He said to me, "You might not see how it applies today, but you're going to be grateful that you took these courses because you'll use them for the rest of your life." I had no idea that those courses would help lead to my career. I am so thankful to have been mentored by such an incredible person as Al before he tragically passed away.

I continued my education in the hopes of receiving my bachelor's degree and getting my dream job as a rehab counselor. Over the years I never suspected that my son had a disability. I thought he just had a difficult time with attachment issues. However, his struggles were becoming more apparent and now my associate's degree was coming back to haunt me. I received a notice to attend a routine benefit re-certification at the Department of Social Services. I didn't anticipate anything unusual until I was sent to a different department. A man met me at the end of the hallway and said, "You are no longer eligible for benefits now that you have a degree." My heart sank and I was devastated... how was I going to provide for my son?

When I got home, I realized that I needed to have faith that things would be okay. After almost two weeks, I received a phone call from my former YWCA supervisor. She offered me the opportunity to work as a beginner fitness class instructor that



included support groups for emotional eating issues. Even though my dream of being a rehab counselor was shattered, the YWCA was an answer to my prayers. I had a job that offered childcare, utilized my degree, and provided for us until I could continue my education.

When Jimmy was eight or nine, we learned he was autistic. He had been previously diagnosed as learning disabled and was struggling in school for years. The school transitioned him to the special education class where he excelled. However, because he received such good grades they switched him back to regular classes and he began to fail again. This went back and forth for years until I obtained an advocate who moved him to another school district. Nevertheless, the damage had been done and attending school was traumatic. Most days he would be hiding under the furniture crying when the bus came. It wasn't until one day he came home with a trumpet that everything changed. All of a sudden, he was excited to go to school because he had an incentive. Even though I knew we couldn't afford it, I couldn't tell him no.

When Jimmy reached seventh grade, he could no longer adapt due to the sensory overload of changing classes. At that point, I finally had my dream rehab counseling position at Horizon even though I hadn't finished my bachelor's degree. He begged me to consider homeschooling him and the next day I left my job to do so.

After the first year of home schooling, Jimmy jumped ahead four-years academically. When he was fifteen, I believed it would be good for him to socialize with other students. I thought back to my experience at NCCC and how supportive they had been. I reached out and the College allowed Jimmy to observe a few classes. We began to supplement home schooling with courses at NCCC for a few years. NCCC not only encouraged his musical talents, but also helped him feel comfortable in a classroom setting. NCCC laid the foundation for him to be able to graduate from the Berkley School of Music with a degree in guitar.

During this time, I was able to go back to school to finish my bachelor's degree from Empire State College. I also minored in photography and took some creative writing courses. I felt like I had a story to tell. Then I wrote our Christmas miracle story and submitted it to the Chicken Soup for the Soul series. My first story was published in Chicken Soup for the Soul: The Wonder of Christmas.

No matter what challenges my son and I faced, we always found ourselves back at NCCC. They provided constant support and helped us both achieve our goals. I felt it was important to share my story to let others know there's always hope. No matter what circumstances you're facing, you can always achieve your dreams with a little bit of faith."

\*Lori is available for speaking engagements and can be emailed at [loriannjagow@gmail.com](mailto:loriannjagow@gmail.com) for more information.\*

# 40 UNDER 40

**Meet this year's  
40 Under 40  
recipients who  
got their start  
at NCCC!**



## **Keyona Dunn**

Keyona Dunn has been named one of Buffalo Business First's 40 Under 40. She attended NCCC and is currently a Clinical Associate in the Health Home Department at Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center. She is also the Co-Founder of Highland Clubhouse and Co-Chair of Create a Healthier Niagara Falls Collaborative. Way to keep making Niagara stronger Keyona!



## **Ryan Kagels**

Ryan Kagels has been named one of Buffalo Business First's 40 Under 40. He attended NCCC and is currently the Chief Financial Officer at Counsel Financial Services. He is also the Co-Owner of two Buffalo restaurants, NEAT and VICE. Great job Ryan!

# What's Next?

## 2018–2020 Distinguished Student Scholarship (DSS) Graduates



### William Briggs

Public Communication

#### Future Plans:

William will be continuing his education at Niagara University to earn his Bachelor's Degree in Communication Studies with a minor in Theatre Studies. His goal is to pursue a career in Public Relations.

#### What the DSS Award Means to Him:

To me, the DSS Scholarship was an amazing opportunity because it allowed me to focus on my education and passions rather than the financial strain of college. The Foundation's work is essential to me and all students because it helps foster not only financially stable students, but also a wonderful group of well-rounded and passionate community members with a connection to NCCC that will last a lifetime.



### Hannah Craig

Music

#### Future Plans:

Hannah looks forward to pursuing her career in music using the knowledge and advice that her NCCC professors and fellow students have instilled in her.

#### What the DSS Award Means to Her:

I will always be immensely grateful to the Distinguished Student Scholarship because it afforded me the opportunity to meet my professors and fellow students who inspired me to pursue my dreams. It is because of my time at NCCC that I have become a more well-rounded person. The DSS Scholarship granted me the chance to gain a post-secondary education and grow as a human being.



### Madeline Keyes

Business: Business Administration

#### Future Plans:

Madeline will continue her education at Alfred State University to earn her Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration with a minor in Agriculture. After graduating, her goal is to take over the family's equine business.

#### What the DSS Award Means to Her:

I am forever thankful for the opportunities that the DSS Scholarship had given me. NCCC was the perfect place for me to start my college career and I truly enjoyed every moment of it.



## Piper Moffitt

Liberal Arts & Sciences: Humanities & Social Sciences

### Future Plans:

Piper will continue her education at Brockport University to earn her Bachelor's and Master's Degree in English with a concentration in Secondary Education and Literary Analysis.

### What the DSS Award Means to Her:

The DSS scholarship has allowed me the opportunity to earn my Associate's Degree without the worry of a financial burden. I am thankful for all that NCCC has given me.



## Morgan Szczepaniak

Liberal Arts & Sciences: Mathematics & Science

### Future Plans:

Morgan will continue her education at the University at Buffalo to earn her Bachelor's Degree in Physics. She hopes to one day earn her Master's Degree and Ph.D.

### What the DSS Award Means to Her:

The DSS scholarship gave me the opportunity to earn my Associate's Degree without the worry of going into debt. This allowed me to focus on my schoolwork more and enjoy my experience at NCCC to the fullest extent.

# NCCC FOUNDATION

## Give Back!

NCCC continues to have the most loyal and generous supporters including the College's faculty and staff, alumni, and community members. Help our students make the most of their NCCC experience and find success after graduation. Donate online today to a NCCC scholarship and change a student's life forever.

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