



*Graduation May 2013 saw WCC's largest class, with 1,800 receiving degrees and certificates*

*Fourth Issue – June 2013*

## *Westchester Community College* **FOUNDATIONNEWS**

Dear Friends,

We have concluded a busy and very productive spring season that included numerous special events, announcements of major gifts for innovative projects, outreach to new audiences and partners, and some special publicity and recognition. We offer you a sampling of all this activity in this edition of the newsletter. As always, I am so impressed by the efforts and accomplishments of so many—volunteers, supporters, and staff. Westchester Community College Foundation is a national example of success, and we are so grateful to all of you who help us forge new connections, pursue new ideas, and encourage us to new heights. The outcome is tangible in programs initiated, dollars raised, and lives changed, as in the words of a recent graduate, below. Thank you for your ongoing support, and I wish you a restful and relaxing summer!

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Eve Lerner".

Executive Director, WCC Foundation

### **Recent WCC Graduate "Gives Back" in a Big Way**

Olga Crisu came to WCC to change her life. She recently completed a certificate in Medical Billing & Coding and soon after was hired by Nyack Hospital as a medical coder trainee. On May 10, 2013 Olga attended WCC's Honors Convocation where she was presented with a curriculum award; earlier that morning she officially became a U.S. citizen. This past May she graduated with honors. In appreciation for everything she feels WCC has done for her, she presented the Foundation with a personal check, representing a full week's wages, to be used as a scholarship for another conscientious student in the office technologies program. Olga says: "Being overwhelmed by the greatest moments I had to experience, I would like to express my gratitude to you and to all Faculties of Westchester Community College who helped me grow. From the very first day I walked on campus I felt welcomed, and [that] the door of opportunity was opened to all. I am pleased to give back to our College where students have all the resources to build their mind and future."



## Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) Names WCC Foundation 2013 Fundraising Award Winner

Each year CASE recognizes selected colleges for overall performance and overall improvement in educational fundraising programs. This year WCC was selected to receive the award for Overall Performance as well as the 2013 Sustained Excellence in Educational Fundraising Award. This award recognizes those few exemplary fundraising programs that have garnered a CASE Award for Educational Fundraising in either *Overall Performance* or *Overall Improvement* in three of the last five years. Just to give you an idea how special it is to receive this award please note that in the US there are a total of 4,140 colleges and universities nationwide and we were one of only seven colleges to win this award. (<http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0908742.html>).

## Giving and Grants

- A most generous gift of \$250,000 from **Eugene and Emily Grant** was given to the WCC Foundation in support of the new WCC Humanities Institute, scholarships, and other needs
- **The Kohlberg Foundation** has donated \$216,000 to establish a welcome & support center on campus for returning veterans and their families
- \$90,000 was committed by **JP Morgan Chase** for continued support of the Center for Financial & Economic Education in the Gateway Center
- **New York State Education Department, Perkins IV Career and Technical Education Act** – WCC received an allocation of \$900,491 to strengthen graduation, retention, transfer and job placement of students enrolled in career and technical programs
- **Con Edison** – The Con Edison Green Faculty Learning Community received \$20,000 for a third year of support for integrating environmental sustainability throughout the curriculum
- **US Department of Labor, Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College Partnership Grant** – WCC is part of a \$14.6 million, 3 year SUNY consortium grant to design, implement and deliver a strategic approach to education and job training for high need industries such as nanotechnology and advanced manufacturing

## Encore Performance Raises Funds for Scholarships

**April 17, 2013** – Another dazzling performance was given by Christine Andreas at our “Spring for Scholarships” event which was held at Tappan Hill featuring catering by Abigail Kirsch. The gala raised \$111,000 for scholarships.



## WCC Hosts Guidance Counselor Summit

On **April 26, 2013** the first ever Guidance Counselor Summit took place in the atrium of The Gateway Center. Almost 100 high school guidance counselors, administrators, community partners and friends attended, 65 of those being counselors representing more than 45 area high schools. Presentations in the Davis Auditorium from numerous college departments were followed by an elegant lunch catered and donated by Abigail Kirsch Catering Relationships.

## First WCC “Grow Conference” for Entrepreneurs a Success



**May 3, 2013** — WCC’s Gateway to Entrepreneurship (G2E) hosted the **Grow Conference**, the first of its kind conference for entrepreneurs. Its goal was to connect entrepreneurs and local businesses with the resources needed to start and expand their businesses. This intensive day of business development and networking opportunities attracted 129 participants ranging from start-ups to small and medium size businesses. Board members Renee Brown and Peter Herrero were panelists at the conference, offering perspective on their own business growth to budding entrepreneurs.



(L-R) Foundation Board members Renee Brown, Peter Herrero, and Eve Larner, Executive Director, WCC Foundation

## Landscape Architects Help Beautify the Gateway Center

**May 16, 2013** — At the invitation of Foundation Board member Jennifer Gruenberg, the landscape design firm of Divney, Tung & Schwalbe (Jerry Schwalbe is a WCC alumnus) chose the college as the recipient of its annual “do-it-in-a-day” landscape project, where they design and install a garden pro bono for a worthy cause. The targeted site on campus was the front of the Gateway Center, which has now been transformed into an attractive, welcoming



(L-R) Carol Capobianco, Executive Director, Native Plant Center, with Foundation Board members Ellie Urstadt and Jennifer Gruenberg, and Mike Divney of Divney, Tung & Schwalbe.

entrance with the planting of native shrubs and perennials. Much effort by many parties went into the months of planning and preparation, leading up to planting day on May 16. The project was realized with the collaboration, support, and teamwork of Divney, Tung & Schwalbe; Westchester Community College Foundation; WCC Physical Operations; Gateway staff, and The Native Plant Center. Thanks and appreciation go to all. Make sure to stop by regularly to see the seasonal changes.

## A Conversation with President Clinton



**May 17, 2013** — President Bill Clinton spoke before approximately 600 people, including 180 students, at a very special event that raised funds in support of scholarships and other Foundation programs. President Clinton, who was bestowed a SUNY Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters by Trustee Tim Carey, gave a rare glimpse into some of his personal views about community colleges. “For a long time, I’ve thought community colleges are a good metaphor, a good symbol, for the way we should organize society,” he said. “They’re open to everyone, the curriculum is constantly changing, they’re strengthening and informative. It works the way Washington doesn’t.” While \$50,000 was raised at the event, a matching gift was received from an anonymous audience

member who wanted to show appreciation for the presidential visit and honor of Dr. Hankin, bringing the total amount raised to \$100,000!

## Alumni Association Makes Strides

- The **Campus Connections** program pairs recent graduates transferring to four-year colleges with WCC alumni who are already enrolled there. The young alumni will serve as advisors to the new students, helping them negotiate their new college. Over 60 young WCC alumni who are studying at various institutions have volunteered to work with incoming students from WCC, beginning this fall semester.
- On Commencement day, twenty-three members of the class of 1963 celebrated their **50<sup>th</sup> Reunion** at a reception in the Gateway Center. Following a festive dinner, alumni were outfitted with caps and gowns to lead the commencement procession at the Westchester County Center. The 50-year graduates were greeted with thunderous applause when Dr. Hankin announced their names to the rest of the assembly.
- Other notable alumni events this spring included the **25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Honors Program**, and the **WCC Football Team Annual Reunion**, with approximately 75 former players returning to campus.

## Corporate Mentors Help the Next Generation of Business Executives

The Workplace Culture Coaching program celebrated its 19<sup>th</sup> class of participants on May 2nd at the headquarters of C.W. Brown. Over 60 mentors, mentees, alumni mentees, and guests were in attendance. The program provides firsthand experience in business settings for students, and lasting relationships between mentors and mentees. Student speaker Daniel de Sa said: “I can sincerely say that my outlook on life has changed. I owe my current mindset, personal values, and the development of a variety of leadership and professional skills to the Workplace Culture Coaching Program. I expect every one of us to achieve great things in whatever we set our minds to; but no matter how high we go, we cannot forget where we started and the people who got us on these paths.”

**Save the Date for our President’s Forum Event on Sunday, November 24!**

*Compiled and edited by Dorothy Durante*