President’s Message

As I write this message in late August of 2021, we are welcoming students to a new academic year. Many have not been on campus for a while, and for some, it is their first time. They are being greeted by faculty and staff full of energy, determination and hope.

We expect to emerge from the pandemic stronger than ever, having discovered new tools and methods of serving students. We’ve just opened two new, state-of-the-art facilities that will expand opportunities to more students as they prepare for successful careers. This year, we also increased access to free career programs for underserved communities.

Throughout the pandemic, we listened to our students and studied what worked best for them. As a result, we’re shifting back to more in-person learning while continuing to expand class options and student services. This fall, students can take classes fully face-to-face (with a continued commitment to safety), fully online and a combination of the two called “hybrid.” They can also “get in, get trained and get a job” at our new Workforce Institute, with multiple start dates and convenient class times.

What’s most important is that we continue to look forward. Whether our students enroll part-time or full-time, they will achieve, learn and progress toward their goals as we continue to serve them and our communities.

Charlotte Warren, Ph.D., President
Launching a new era in local nursing education, LLCC in partnership with Memorial Health System opened a state-of-the-art facility aimed at addressing the regional nursing shortage.

The first day of classes in the new Nursing Education Center was Aug. 23, 2021. The facility allows 90 additional students to enroll in LLCC’s nursing program each year, for a total of 215 new nursing students annually.

“We are thrilled to open the doors of this new center with our Memorial Health System partners, just in time for the start of the fall semester,” said Ken Elmore, chair of the LLCC Board of Trustees. “The LLCC/Memorial Health System partnership addresses the need for more students to graduate from our nursing program and live and work in our communities, and aligns with both of our missions, to improve lives and serve our communities.”

“This facility marks a new era as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the LLCC nursing program, which has produced nearly 4,000 nursing graduates,” added Dr. Charlotte Warren, president of LLCC. “Our nursing students will have access to the latest technology and equipment in this new center as they prepare for lifesaving and rewarding careers.”

A $6.1 million gift from Memorial Health System allowed LLCC to renovate the west wing of Montgomery Hall for the new center, purchase high-tech simulation equipment and hire additional faculty and staff. The partnership was announced in February of 2020, just prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Throughout the pandemic, the public has come to appreciate more than ever the incredible dedication, expertise and heroism of the nursing profession. Unfortunately, our region continues to experience a nursing shortage that has made the last few months incredibly more challenging,” said Ed Curtis, senior vice president and chief nursing officer. “Memorial is proud to employ so many LLCC nursing graduates here in Springfield and at our hospitals and clinics across the region. Like the students who are educated here at LLCC, we are deeply committed to meeting the health care needs of the people in the communities we serve. Supporting the future generation of nursing professions is one way to do that.”

“Having been a nurse for over 40 years, I am thrilled to see the caliber of this learning environment and the tremendous support it will provide for the next generation of nurses in our region,” said Marsha Prater, senior vice president and chief nursing officer. “Memorial is proud to employ these LLCC graduates, we are confident they’ve developed strong knowledge and skills in the fundamentals of nursing and that they reflect our organization’s values of safety, integrity, quality and stewardship.”

Tracy Madonia is entering her fourth semester of the LLCC Associate Degree Nursing Program.

“I chose LLCC to pursue my nursing degree for several reasons. When I began researching schools and meeting with advisors, LLCC stood out because of their affordable tuition and their impressive statistics, including the success of LLCC students on the NCLEX,” said Madonia. “I was excited to learn that Memorial, a four-time recipient of a Magnet designation, was partnering with LLCC to expand on their already stellar program. This allows more nursing hopefuls the opportunity to pursue their RN and fill a much-needed demand in the field of nursing. LLCC has provided us with the tools and supplies necessary to perfect our nursing skills.”

The 12,000 square foot Nursing Education Center includes:
- 1,900 square foot nursing skills lab
- Simulation labs, including a Labor/Delivery lab
- Practice lab
- Classrooms
- Office space for nursing program staff

Montgomery Hall also houses surgical technology and basic nurse assistant programs.
More than college. More than farming. You belong here. These are the new messages being conveyed about the transformed agriculture program at LLCC.

Symbolic of this transformation is the new Kreher Agriculture Center, a 19,750-square-foot, $7.5 million building which opened with a ribbon cutting on May 6, 2021.

“Today we continue to honor the intent of our generous donors, Charles and Irene Kreher, to transform and grow our agriculture program and attract more students to this rewarding profession,” said LLCC Board Chair Ken Elmore.

Three years earlier came the announcement of an $18 million gift from the Kreher Charitable Trust to the LLCC Foundation. The legacy gift launched the college’s agriculture program to a new level, with updated curriculum, new technology, research and scholarship opportunities for students.

“My late uncle Charles Long was among the founding trustees who planted a seed over 50 years ago,” continued Elmore, an LLCC alum along with his wife and daughter. “It is a great honor to recognize a gift from a farm family that will impact the lives of so many people for generations to come.”

LLCC President Charlotte Warren envisions the building as “the central hub for agriculture education and the agriculture industry, the number one industry in the state. With this new facility, we will prepare even more students to be successful leaders and innovators in agriculture careers.”

Throughout the facility, you will also see the belief in students and the LLCC Agriculture program from community partners including Evelyn Thomas, Farm Credit Illinois, First National Bank of Litchfield, The BRANDT Foundation, Illinois Pork Producers Association and the Illinois Soybean Association,” said Don Wienhoff, representative of the Kreher Trust. “We also celebrate the many scholarship donors joining us today who have invested in the education of students.”

The redesigned ag curriculum incorporates project-based learning in text plots on campus and at the Kreher Research Farm. In fall 2020, LLCC Ag conducted field research to test agricultural hemp production practices, the only community college in Illinois at the time doing so.

Also, LLCC’s associate in applied science and certificate in precision ag and fertilizer were revised to create stackable credentials based on the agricultural calendar. New equipment includes a variable rate applicator, autosteer and tillage tools. Expanded faculty and staff will support students and partnerships with universities and high schools.

Since opening Kreher’s doors, the ag department has hosted multiple tours for FFA students and community partners. Upcoming activities will bring Illinois Professional Agricultural Student (PAS), Farm Bureau and Soil and Water Conservation District members and others for meetings, seminars, contests and conferences.

“In this building, collaboration, innovation and great moments will happen,” said Alexis Carroll, Ag Club president.

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Retooling and rebranding several high-demand, hands-on training programs, LLCC launched the Workforce Institute May 24, 2021. “Students get in, get trained and get a job,” said Nancy Sweet, dean of the Workforce Institute.

The Workforce Institute encompasses short-term training in automotive technology, aviation mechanics, construction, commercial electrical maintenance, electrical distribution lineman, HVAC, truck driving, welding and culinary arts/hospitality management.

Recognizing that the pandemic led many people to reevaluate their futures and look for new career opportunities, LLCC changed the structure of these programs to add multiple start dates and a more seamless enrollment process, with personal assistance from first contact through to job placement. “Whether you’re a recent high school graduate or someone looking to reskill or upskill, it’s now even more convenient to enroll in our trade programs when you want and complete certificates employers want,” said Sweet.

Local economic development and business partners were eager to endorse the new Workforce Institute. “We fully support LLCC’s Workforce Institute and its vital role in getting community members back to work after the pandemic,” said Ryan McCrady, president and CEO of the Springfield Sangamon Growth Alliance. “We rely on LLCC grads to fill our workforce needs,“ said Josh Laurent, director of fixed operations, Green Family Stores. “We have great jobs available in the automotive industry for mechanics who are skilled and want to work.”

LLCC is now partnering with Green Family Stores and Landmark Automotive, the two largest Ford dealerships in Springfield, on their ACE (Automotive Career Exploration) program, which aims to raise awareness and increase interest in career opportunities within the automotive industry.

“The projected worker shortage in skilled trades over the next five to 10 years is staggering,” said Andy Fuchs, training coordinator for Local 137 Plumbers, Steamfitters and HVACR. “I encourage students to consider a career in the trades. These careers can support you throughout life with high pay and great benefits.”

Several Workforce 101 events in summer 2021 let prospective students “try on a trade” and meet local employers. “At Workforce 101 sessions, you roll up your sleeves and get hands-on with the kinds of work you’d be doing on the job,” said Sweet. “This allows you to picture yourself in that career.”

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One of the Workforce Institute programs, Truck Driver Training, received a federal grant to offer veterans, active military and their spouses free training. LLCC was one of 20 institutions in the nation and the only one in Illinois to be awarded a U.S. Department of Transportation Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) Operator Safety Training Grant of $82,000.
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

“We respect and celebrate the differences among people, cultures and ideas. We incorporate multiple perspectives into our processes, informing decision-making, improving the college and enriching lives. We strive to be kind, compassionate and empathetic in our interactions with others and recognize the inherent dignity and worth of everyone throughout the college community.”

LLCC VALUES (DIVERSITY)


LLCC was awarded $1.2 million by the Illinois Community College Board in November 2020 to continue the Open Door Workforce Equity Initiative (WEI).

“LLCC is committed to equity and ensuring all individuals have access to opportunities for career success,” said Dr. Lesley Frederick, vice president of student services. “This grant allows us to expand this life-changing program aimed at improving equity in the workforce and addressing identified workforce gaps in our community.”

WEI students enroll free of charge in short-term training programs leading to immediate employment including truck driver training, automotive technology, welding and various health care programs such as basic nurse assistant (CNA), clinical medical assistant, dental assistant, pharmacy technician, phlebotomy technician and others. Under terms of the grant, at least 75% of participants must be African-American.

College DEI initiatives

LLCC-BEARDSTOWN partnered with JBS on the Better Futures Program, an employment benefit that provides tuition assistance.

LLCC again welcomed teens in the BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB OF CENTRAL ILLINOIS SUMMER CAREER LAUNCH PROGRAM for once-a-week sessions. Participants learned about various health professions from ambulance to trauma bay, sonography, surgery and in-hospital experiences. On another day, they explored welding, GIS and aviation careers.

LLCC’S CAMPUS CLIMATE TEAM implemented the college’s first “Innovation in Diversity and Inclusion Grant” providing funding for projects aimed at advancing access, equity and inclusion at the college. Awards were granted to the Workforce Equity Initiative (WEI) for a targeted marketing and student support program, and the Student Success Office for a Student Success Coach book club focusing on equity and inclusion.

THE SAFETY AND INCLUSIVITY WORKGROUP also partnered with WEI to provide training at the college’s Professional Development Day on “Engaging with Equity: Applying Inclusive Practices in your Role at LLCC.”

THE ANNUAL AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH observance and Multicultural Fest transitioned to virtual formats, with faculty and students sharing information on their individual cultures.

We Are the Reality of the Dream!
**More opportunities to earn college credit in high school**

**Teacher education pipeline**

High school students were able to start preparing for a career in education as part of LLCC’s new Teacher Education Pipeline, a partnership with Springfield School District 186. Students interested in becoming teachers took education courses at LLCC at the “zero hour” (7 a.m.) prior to the start of their high school day.

“The world needs more teachers, and I believe I would fit this role perfectly,” said Springfield High School student Kylie McMillan. The Introduction to Teacher Education class opened her eyes to new possibilities. “I have always wanted to be a high school teacher, specifically in mathematics. However, I worked at a preschool several times a week and developed a love of working with the little kids in the classroom and becoming close with them. So, right now I am in the middle between early childhood and high school.”

Southeast High School student Aden Woods wants to make an impact on many lives and acknowledges that the Illinois teacher shortage is another reason to enter the field. “The Teacher Education Pipeline is helping me start early toward my goal by allowing me to take college education classes while I am still in high school. I want to become a teacher because I know I will make a huge impact on many kids’ lives.”

Patrick Moore, LLC’s director of concurrent enrollment, said the Teacher Education Pipeline was designed to address the need for more K-12 educators in Illinois. “One of the key things that prompted the development of this program was the recognition of the teacher shortage throughout the state. There has also been a growing interest throughout LLCC’s district in our College Now programs, which grant high school students an opportunity to receive college instruction from LLCC faculty. The Teacher Education Pipeline program, which is a College Now model, is unique as it has a particular focus (the field of education).”

There are currently eight District 186 high school students enrolled in the program. More growth is expected through partnerships with Springfield and other high schools in the LLCC district.

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**Dual enrollment**

**Kyle Cearlock**, an LLCC-Taylorville College Now student and Taylorville High School senior, was awarded $1,053 students participated in dual credit, College Now model, is unique as it has a particular focus (the field of education).”

More growth is expected through partnerships with Springfield and other high schools in the LLCC district.

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**Dual credit**

LLCC increased dual credit offerings in many areas. By the end of spring 2021, high school students enrolled in the program. More growth is expected through partnerships with Springfield and other high schools in the LLCC district.

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**Podcast**

LLCC launched a podcast to highlight the “amazing faculty, staff and students of LLCC” and take an in-depth look at various programs offered by the college. Hosts Mac Warren and Emily Smith from the Public Relations and Marketing department explored topics including course delivery options, adult education, the Center for Academic Success, concurrent enrollment, scholarships, enrollment transitions, geography, computer science, English, humanities and the Summer Boost program. The podcast is available on hosting services as well as the LLCC website www.llcc.edu/podcast.

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**Summer Boost**

LLCC offered graduating high school seniors a new, free program to boost their writing and math skills in preparation for college in the fall.

Summer Boost classes were taught face-to-face by LLCC faculty with participants who took both subjects enjoying a free Quiznos lunch between morning and afternoon sessions.

“We recognize the past year has presented many challenges to graduating high school seniors,” said LLCC President Warren. “We launched Summer Boost to give them and any student who will be new to college in the fall a strong foundation when they begin at LLCC or elsewhere.”

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**LateStart**

Recognizing that some students prefer shorter term courses and others may miss semester enrollment deadlines, the college introduced many more 12-week and eight-week courses across the curricula. Called LateStart, the courses were a success and will expand in future semesters.

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**“Our concurrent enrollment courses have continued to be one of the most affordable options for high school students interested in getting an early start toward postsecondary education.”**

Patrick Moore, director of concurrent enrollment
After a successful and thrilling regular season, the Loggers baseball team made a return visit to the NJCAA DII World Series, finishing 7th in the nation.

Jake Curtis was chosen as the MWAC Male Athlete of the Year following a strong season leading the Loggers to conference and region/district tournament titles and the world series. Curtis was also named Region 24 Player of the Year and an NJCAA DII First Team All-American. He led the Loggers in batting average (.435), hits (70) and slugging percentage (.580) and won LLCC’s Dick Dhabalt Athlete of the Year Award.

“Jake was the heart and soul of our team that was ranked in the top five almost the whole season,” said Ron Riggle, LLCC athletic director and head baseball coach. “He is an excellent leader and a solid student.”

The female Dhabalt Athlete of the Year was basketball’s Emily Meidel, who led the NJCAA in total points scored. She averaged 22 points, nine rebounds, 52% FG and 43% 3-pointers. Meidel was named first team All-American, Region 24 Player of the Year, MWAC Player of the Year, MWAC Freshman of the Year and NJCAA Player of the Week.

“Emily had amazing accomplishments on the court and an amazing season. She established herself as a not only a premier player in our region, but also in the nation,” said Chad Jones, head women’s basketball coach.

Esports champions

LLCC’s Esports Rocket League team were the fall 2020 and spring 2021 national champions. After 12 weeks of competitive play among 43 community colleges in the spring, the Loggers brought home their second straight Rocket League title and ended with a 13-0 season.

National rankings

Women’s volleyball, softball and basketball and men’s baseball were all ranked in the Top 20 during their seasons, with women’s basketball and men’s baseball ranked in the Top Five most of the year.

Two new sports

In addition to Esports with 19 players, the college added a women’s soccer team with 15 players.
As the Covid-19 pandemic continued, the college gathered online for a majority of the 2020-21 academic year beginning with a “virtual is the new reality”-themed Convocation. Hands-on career classes remained in a face-to-face format, but most others in the fall and spring were online or a hybrid of online and face-to-face. An increasing number of face-to-face classes were scheduled for summer 2021. Faculty and staff creatively rose to the challenge of offering classes, student life events, meetings, recruitment events and observances via Zoom, Teams, YouTube and social media. Those who did attend class or work at LLCC facilities followed safety protocols.

Throughout a challenging year, knowledge expanded as to how to accomplish tasks and work together online to serve students in creative ways, including:

- The LLCC Library, Student Services and IT organized the loan of laptops and hotspots to students in need of them to successfully complete their classes. The library maintained operations using online/mobile scheduling and reservations, and developed remote book request, notification and pick-up processes.
- Success Coaches met with students virtually, and introduced a new 24/7, tele-mental health and personal counseling service, TalkSpace. In FY21, Success Coaches sent over 91,000 text messages to students to support them academically and personally and held over 7,200 face-to-face and virtual meetings with students.
- Science faculty converted lab sciences to online and/or hybrid models, emphasizing essential lab skills.
- The music department premiered three online concerts on YouTube and Facebook: Together, RiseNing Together and the Honors Recital featuring music majors.
- Arts and Communication presented the annual Juried Student Art Show virtually.
- Math and Writing Centers implemented Zoom rooms to assist students with assignments in those subjects.
- New ways of reaching students virtually with important information included:
  - A series of Financial Aid FAFSA sessions
  - Discover LLCC and Moving Forward to LLCC recruitment events, along with two Campus Cruises
  - Scholarship 101 sessions to help students apply successfully for scholarships
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Assisting students during the pandemic

- LLCC partnered with SHIELD Illinois to provide saliva-based COVID-19 testing to the LLCC community and conducted several vaccine clinics.
- Student Success staff helped students apply for funding to support their educational expenses. The LLCC Finance Office distributed $2,195,322 in HEERF (Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund) assistance to 6,130 students (as of June 30, 2021).
- The Adult Education Department provided college and career preparation services for171 students to receive their High School Equivalency certificates and transition into postsecondary education and job training opportunities. In addition, Adult Education provided English as a second language, civics education and college and career preparation services to 135 individuals.

The joy and celebration of commencement were just as evident in 2021 as in "traditional" years. For the second year in a row, LLCC had to forego an in-person, indoor graduation ceremony. In its place, during the days leading up to commencement, the college set up self-service stations for graduates and held a graduate parade. President Warren led the parade, riding in one of the LLCC semis, followed by over 60 cars of graduates, many of whom had decorated their vehicles. Faculty and staff in LLCC blue “Driven to Succeed” T-shirts lined the parade route through campus with congratulatory signs and noisemakers. The next evening, the college debuted the 2021 commencement video, with hundreds of viewers and congratulatory posts. In all, LLCC conferred more than 1,500 degrees and certificates at commencement.
The Big Read

The Academy of Lifelong Learning (ALL), a part of LLCC Community Education, brought the community together around one book, hosting the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Big Read in Sangamon County during March and April 2021.

ALL was one of 84 nonprofit organizations selected to receive an NEA Big Read grant to support a community reading program. The group selected the book "Lab Girl" by Hope Jahren. Fifty local organizations partnered with ALL to develop and offer free, fun and educational community-wide book discussions, speakers, interactive programs and arts presentations inspired by the book's themes. Over 1,000 copies of "Lab Girl" were distributed free of charge via drive-through events, with copies available for checkout at 15 local libraries.

"The NEA Big Read has been brought to our community through the efforts of many volunteers as we inspire conversation and discovery," said Kathy Dehen, ALL president.

The Big Read featured virtual keynote speakers Kathryn Harris, 2020 State Journal-Register First Citizen Award winner and retired librarian; Emily Graslie, host of "Prehistoric Road Trip" on PBS; and "Lab Girl" author Hope Jahren live from Oslo, Norway.

ALL ended the fiscal year with 338 members that made up over 2,000 enrollments in virtual ALL programming this past year.

Community Education adapted to challenges of the pandemic by successfully transferring youth technology classes to live-virtual offerings. Traditional and culinary College for Kids were reconfigured to provide 619 area youth with online options. The Culinary Institute partnered with three local restaurants to offer curbside dinner pickups for a combined total of 155 meals served.

Community Education served 212 non-culinary students through online Ed2Go classes and 183 students through pre-recorded and live-virtual instructor-led culinary classes. Community Education also offered a five-day, live/virtual Road Scholar program, featuring speakers who otherwise would not be available in the traditional, face-to-face program.

Cybersecurity
a vital and in-demand job skill

Cybersecurity professionals are in great demand as the world grapples with keeping information safe and immune to malicious hacks. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates information security will grow 31% through 2029, one of the fastest growing career fields nationally.

LLCC is offering a 18-month cybersecurity certificate program to prepare these professionals. An everchanging field, LLCC's computer science program was revised based on employer feedback.

"As the number of people and devices that are online continues to grow, so do the opportunities for cybercrimes," explained Dr. Carmen Allen, professor of computer science. "There is a great need for professionals trained in cybersecurity to protect data, networks and programs."

Developed through a National Science Foundation grant, most of the courses are in a flexible-paced, competency-based education (CBE) format.

"Each student has the option to accelerate through the course and finish before the end of the standard semester," said Dr. Allen. "The instructor is the subject expert and coach that guides, grades and encourages students along the way."

Students explore attacks against networks and computer systems along with necessary defense mechanisms and techniques to counter attackers. Hands-on projects, competitions and case studies are used to master cybersecurity concepts.

"There is a great need for professionals trained in cybersecurity to protect data, networks and programs."

Dr. Carmen Allen, professor of computer science
The 2021 Student Recognition Ceremony, like the previous year, consisted of a series of videos honoring student achievements and leadership. Julia Kienzler was named Outstanding Graduate of the Year. She was an active leader in the LLCC Honors Program and Phi Theta Kappa and was named a Coca Cola Academic Team Bronze Scholar.

Jennifer Haggerty, another Phi Theta Kappa leader, was honored as a 2021 Cooke Foundation Undergraduate Transfer Scholar, one of only 72 in the nation. The highly competitive scholarship provides recipients with up to $40,000 a year to complete their bachelor’s degrees.

The Lamp student newspaper won 19 awards, including five first-place awards, at the Illinois Community College Journalism Association’s annual student awards presentation. The LLCC Agriculture Club won numerous awards at the National Professional Agricultural Student (PAS) conference including second place overall by the soil specialist team and third place overall by the college bowl team and Ikenhock specialist team.

Holly Bauman, agriculture program specialist, was recognized by the Illinois Leadership Council for Agricultural Education as the District 3 Agriculture Advocacy Award winner.

LLCC was named a top college in Illinois for online criminal justice programs by Criminal Justice Degree Hub in its published “10 Best Criminal Justice Programs in Illinois for 2021.”

LLCC was named a top college in the U.S. with affordable online degrees by Best Value Schools in its “Best Affordable Online Degrees in 2021” publication. Among two-year colleges, LLCC was ranked No. 29 nationally and best in Illinois.

The Illinois chapter of the American Choral Directors Association has selected the LLCC Choir to perform at its October 2021 conference in Chicago. The Choir was chosen based on concert programs and performance samples from the past two years, an honor granted to only a few select choirs.

Students in the LLCC-Taylorville carpentry class completed the restoration of a local garage damaged in the December 2018 Taylorville tornado. LLCC partnered with Missions for Taylorville on the project, allowing students to gain real-world experience while contributing to their community.

Two senior art students, Vern Taylor and Wilma Wofford, had two works each in an exhibition at the Illinois State Museum. The exhibition featured works of art by artists of color from Illinois, Missouri and Texas in celebration of Juneteenth. Also, art students Maria Kelaarestaghi and Margaret Miller had their artwork featured in “Varsity Art XXV,” a multi-media exhibition at the Art Saint Louis Gallery.

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Outreach to business partners expands

LLCC brought on a well-known expert in the local business community to work one-on-one with organizations to ensure LLCC continues to meet their workforce training needs.

Josh Collins, formerly an executive with the Springfield Sangamon Growth Alliance and Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce, joined LLCC as assistant vice president of business relations. Collins, a certified economic developer, works to build and strengthen LLCC’s business and industry partnerships and is the point of contact at LLCC for any organization needing specific workforce or leadership training.

The college also created the new position of director of apprenticeship programming to prepare students for work in high-demand fields and help local employers meet their staffing needs. Brenda Elliott works to establish pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs, specifically in the information technology field.

LLCC computer science graduate Cole Thoron’s apprenticeship at Ace Sign Co. is the first of its kind to be established with a local business. Thoron began his apprenticeship in April while still completing coursework at LLCC. Ace is providing on-the-job training to successfully onboard him into his new position.

Working with LLCC, computer science faculty and our career services department, we collaborated with Ace to develop the right mixture of education and on-the-job training for Cole,” said Elliott. “It’s important to us to keep our students local and keep them loyal.”

“The LLCC apprenticeship program has provided Ace Sign Co. a great opportunity to connect with qualified talent like Cole,” said Todd Bringuet, CEO of Ace Sign Co. “The program allows the apprentice and our supervisors ample time to train and evaluate prospective team members.”

In another outreach to local businesses, LLCC Career Services launched the Career Coach Job Board. The easy-to-use, free online resource is designed to match LLCC students and alumni with work opportunities. Area employers can easily register online and post available jobs, and LLCC job seekers can submit their resumes directly to employers.
The Foundation supports students

The Foundation awarded over 250 scholarships totaling more than $444,000 to LLCC students for the 2021-22 academic year, an increase of nearly $78,000 over the previous year. The Foundation also assisted 99 students with emergency expenses for a total of $83,727.

Dr. Kush is the director of the upper division BSN program and an assistant professor of nursing at Goldfarb School of Nursing at Barnes Jewish College where she received the Dean’s Award for Exceptional Service. Kush also maintains a part-time practice as a geriatric nurse practitioner.

During her 46-year career in nursing, she has worked as a clinical nurse and adjunct professor at several colleges of nursing. Kush earned an R.N. from LLCC, a bachelor’s degree from Capital University, post-master’s certificates from St. Louis University and University of Missouri St. Louis, and a Doctor of Nursing Practice from St. Louis University. She also served in the Army Reserves and in active duty, retiring as a Lt. Colonel from the Army Nurse Corps after 21 years of service.

The Foundation transformed the 15th annual Gala to a curbside event called “Behind the Scenes,” securing $80,000 in net revenue.

To thank scholarship donors during a pandemic year, the Foundation held a Scholarship Donor Appreciation Drive-Through on the Springfield campus. In the pouring rain, approximately 120 scholarship recipients lined the campus, socially distanced, wearing masks and holding signs to convey their sincere thanks to donors as they drove by.

Major gifts to the LLCC Foundation included:

• In-kind gift from Terry Travis of sculptures that were installed on the front lawn of campus with the help of highway construction careers students.
• $45,000 in-kind gift from RPS Imaging, $20,000 from OCI Foundation and $12,000 from Susan Cook House Educational Trust for diagnostic medical sonography equipment.
• $25,000 from the Kilton Foundation for Litchfield High School students’ participation in LLCC’s College Now program.
• Dr. Thomas Carey, an LLCC alum, donated his late father’s Piper Cherokee Tail aircraft to the LLCC aviation program.

New scholarships established:

• Dennis Shackelford Scholarship
• Capitol Radio Broadcasting Scholarship
• Sarah Mildred Scott Memorial Scholarship
• Light of Friendship: Maureen Curry Memorial Scholarship
• Peggy Coleman-Phelps Memorial Scholarship for nursing students
• Sheriff Neil Williamson Scholarship
• Dr. and Mrs. Thurman L. Smith Scholarship
• Ashley Karaianis-Lucas Memorial Scholarship

2021 Honored Alumna
Catherine A. Creighton Kush, DNP

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