‘See How We’ve Grown’ at Upper Bucks

Bucks County Community College, which has served the Upper Bucks area with a 14-acre campus since 1999, is growing to meet the needs of the community by nearly doubling the size of its East Rockhill Township facility.

The 28,000-square-foot addition to the Upper Bucks Campus officially opened this spring with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on April 8 and celebrations throughout the month. The project also includes extensive renovations of the existing 33,000-square-foot facility, which has seen enrollment surge from 150 students when the campus opened in 1999 to more than 1,000 students in 2010. In fact, the campus was cited as among the “fastest-growing community colleges in the country” by Community College Week.

The $15 million project will be a LEED-certified “green” building, meaning that it meets the highest standards for energy efficiency. Features include:

- Geothermal heating and cooling system
- Indoor and outdoor commons areas
- Vegetation-covered roof to reduce storm water runoff
- More visible entrance from Blooming Glen Road
- Library, science lab, five computer labs, and several quiet study rooms
- Training facilities for Continuing Education and Workforce Development, including a nursing lab for the practical nursing program

Construction began in the summer of 2008. The project is supported in part by the BCCC Foundation, which invites individuals and businesses to join its fundraising campaign to sustain the expansion. For more information, contact Gail Acosta at 215-968-8416, e-mail foundation@bucks.edu or visit www.bucks.edu/foundation.

Fun Expansion Facts

- Excavation required 800 truckloads of dirt to be removed. If lined up end to end, those truckloads would stretch nearly four miles.
- Sixty-eight truckloads of concrete were poured for the foundation and structure.
- There are 7,623 pieces of structural steel; total weight of structural steel frame is 254 tons.
- There are 9,000 bricks, 356 large windows, two elevators, and enough electrical wire to extend 100 miles from Bucks County to Hershey to power the building, equipment, and computers.
- Building products were purchased within 500 of Bucks County.

First Federal of Bucks County Supports Lower Bucks Campus

Bucks County Community College recently unveiled a plaque at its Lower Bucks Campus, located in Bristol, Pa., in recognition of First Federal of Bucks County’s long-standing commitment to the institution. BCCC President Dr. James J. Linksz (right) thanked First Federal’s President Bruce Iacobucci (left) for helping the College fulfill its promise to the Lower Bucks County community.

“We are pleased to honor First Federal for the role it played in helping us expand our educational offerings in the community,” said Linksz. “The bank has been a strong supporter of our students, and an advocate for the community college’s mission.”

“We are pleased to partner with organizations that are critical to the long term success and viability of the Bucks County community which we serve,” added Iacobucci.

“Clearly Bucks County Community College plays such a role in today’s economy as it educates both younger and older students to be better prepared to find and improve their career opportunities in our community.”
Trustees Approve Modest Increase In Tuition & Fees to Balance Budget

At its March meeting, Bucks County Community College’s Board of Trustees approved a tuition increase of $6 a credit for county residents effective with the fall semester. In addition, the technology fee will increase $1 a credit.

The College has been faced with a mixed blessing of a surge in enrollment that increases strain on facilities and services, while funding from local and state governments has remained steady. A national study by the Education Policy Center at the University of Alabama found that despite unprecedented praise and attention, community colleges nationwide face shrinking resources, temporarily forestalled by the stimulus package of the American Recovery and Relief Act of 2009.

“Our Board of Trustees is very concerned about keeping a Bucks education affordable, especially during this difficult economy,” said BCCC President Dr. James Linksz. “The board is reluctant to raise tuition but this increase is needed to help balance our budget. We remain committed to high quality education and we cannot sacrifice that primary goal.” Linksz noted that many institutions throughout the region are facing severe budget problems and are considering capping student enrollment and other cost-cutting measures in addition to raising tuition. “The college is appreciative of the support we have received from the state and continuing support from our county commissioners,” he added.

BCCC Foundation Approved for Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania recently approved the BCCC Foundation as an educational improvement organization under the Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program (EITC).

What is the EITC? On May 7, 2001, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania made history by becoming the first state to pass an education tax credit aimed at corporations by an overwhelming bi-partisan majority. The REACH Foundation (Road to Educational Achievement through Choice) administers the tax credit for the commonwealth.

What does this mean for your company? The EITC provides companies with a 75% tax credit for donations to a non-profit scholarship or educational improvement organization. The tax credit increases to 90% if the company commits to making the same donations for two consecutive years. A business paying taxes in Pennsylvania can receive up to $300,000 in tax credits annually.

For more information on what BCCC programs need your support, contact Gail Acosta at 215-968-8241 or acostag@bucks.edu. Visit www.paschoolchoice.org/reach for a list of approved EITC organizations and sample tax computations.

Marble Bench in Tyler Gardens Replaced

The new marble bench on the first tier of the Tyler Formal Gardens is the fruition of much research, persistence, planning and support by members of the BCCC Foundation’s Tyler Restoration Committee. It is designated as a memorial to former committee members Faith Bertolet and John E. Long, Jr., who both served as influential and tireless patrons of Tyler Hall and Tyler Formal Gardens as well as the College.

The bench was installed last December, and now serves as an example of taste and elegance of George and Stella Tyler’s early estate and a fitting memorial to Bertolet and Long. It also brings the garden one step closer to completing its restoration vision.