

BCC News For Alumni & Friends

PUBLISHED BY THE BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY COLLEGE FOUNDATION

FALL 2014

Welcome to Our Newest Alumni!

On May 30, the Berkshire Community College Alumni community grew by 362 members as we celebrated the 54th Commencement at Tanglewood in Lenox, Massachusetts.

Valedictorian **Shelby Meyers** of Stockbridge quoted author J.K. Rowling in her remarks as she acknowledged her fellow graduates for taking risks and completing their degrees and certificates.

"It is impossible to live without failing at something, unless you live so cautiously that you might as well not have lived at all—in which case, you fail by default." — J.K. Rowling

Keynote Speaker Congressman **Richard Neal** addressed the graduates, sharing the story of his start at Holyoke Community College.



Valedictorian Shelby Meyers with BCC Foundation President Eugene Dellea



2014 graduates celebrate with family, friends and faculty.



BCC Board of Trustees

Darlene Rodowicz, Cheshire
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Vice Chair

Jeffrey Hiltbold '09, Pittsfield
Elected Alumni Representative

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Appointed Alumni Representative

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Richard Rilla, Pittsfield

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Patricia Naventi Sinclair '74, Pittsfield

Arthur Stein, Pittsfield

Ellen Whittaker '79, Great Barrington

Dr. Norman Avnet, Pittsfield
Emeritus

Message from the President

Autumn Greetings Alumni and Friends!


Another academic year is well underway, and I continue to be inspired by the work of our students, faculty and staff each and every day.

We have been sharing news of the college's strategic plan in these newsletters and in the media. Over the next five years, we are focusing on five strategic initiatives designed to better help Berkshire Community College prepare students to succeed in an increasingly complex, diverse and changing world: **Engaged Learning, Student Achievement, Improved Infrastructure, Advancing the Institution**, and **Collaborative Partnerships**. In particular we will focus our attention in each of these areas around two overriding themes in the 2014–15 year—**Enrollment** and **Completion**. All of us will be working toward growing our enrollment, and just as importantly, helping students complete their certificates and degrees and move on to the workforce and further education.

Certainly your success as alumni is a striking example of what Berkshire residents can achieve when they make their start at Berkshire Community College. Please stay involved. Talk to students who might be interested in your career path. Share the great value that BCC provided you with potential students—and their parents. And consider a donation to the Annual Fund so that we can provide students and faculty with the best tools and equipment possible. Visit our new website at www.berkshirecc.edu to learn more.

On behalf of all of us at BCC, I wish you and yours the very best as we prepare to enter the holiday season, and I give thanks for your support.

Sincerely,



Ellen Kennedy
President

BCC Student Ambassadors Juan Jose Carrion-Almeida, Laura Szczepaniak, Gaby Brooks and Edson Chipalo helped new students get acclimated at New Student Orientation on August 28, 2014.



Global Engagement Fund Helps Students Broaden Their Horizons

A new fund was established with the BCC Foundation this year, with the purpose of helping students realize their dreams of experiencing different countries and cultures. Established by anonymous donors, and further funded by many friends, alumni and faculty, the Global Engagement Fund provides grants to help students offset the costs of international travel. Students submit proposals explaining the travel—either affiliated with a BCC course or a service or learning opportunity set up independently—and grants are awarded after review by a volunteer committee.

BCC student Dylan Carman, a double major in Biotechnology and Biology, was one of the first grant recipients.

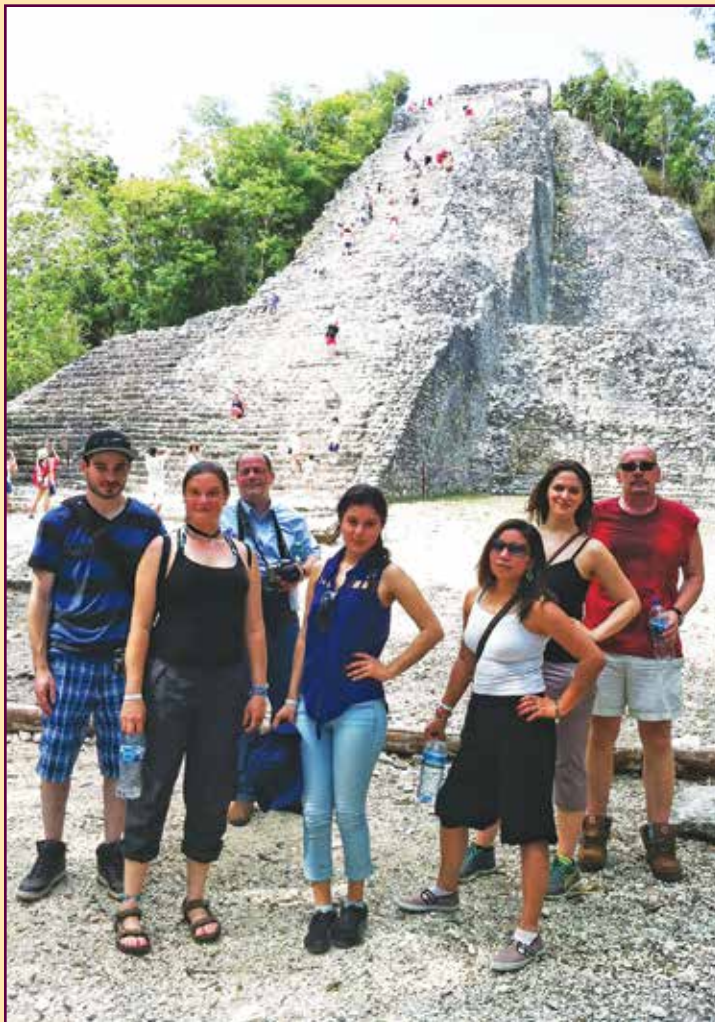
He enrolled in a travel study course led by Professor Frank Schickor which included a trip to the Yucatan Peninsula. He yearned for the opportunity to travel outside of the United States and experience a different language, climate and culture. An honors student with a demanding academic and work schedule, Dylan was nervous about taking on the additional credits, but knew a chance to go to Mexico was too good to pass up. He was humbled as he climbed the Mayan Ruins with his classmates and other tourists as he tried to imagine what it would have been like to build the pyramids.

Dylan's companion research project was on the critical condition of

the Mesoamerican Reef. His only regret is that his group was unable to swim with the whale sharks. The most amazing part of Dylan's trip was seeing in real life what he had previously only seen in pictures and textbooks.

Dylan will graduate from BCC in 2015 and is applying for transfer to pursue neuroscience and chemistry. Ultimately, Dylan wants to become a MD/Ph.D. focused on Alzheimer's disease.

For more information on the Global Engagement Fund, contact Jennifer Kerwood at 413-236-2188 or jkerwood@berkshirecc.edu



Dylan (on left) and his classmates with Professor Schickor after climbing the ruins.

GIRO Reunion

On August 31, Don and Merry Lathrop hosted a reunion of BCC students in Don's Peace and World Order program and GIRO in the 1990s. The students (pictured below) came from the Berkshires and all over the world to attend BCC—and now live and work in Western Massachusetts, New York, Canada, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Japan. Many of their updates are included in the Alumni Notes.



Front Row (L-R): Marion Lathrop, Yukari Miyake, Stacey Velez, Yuko Kandachi. Back Row (L-R): Donald Lathrop, Michael Buckley, Churchill Mensah, Shuichi Sekimoto.

2014 Annual Fund Campaign Underway

Alumni donations to the BCC Foundation Annual Fund are helping to improve the quality of the teaching and learning experience at BCC each and every day. With state support covering just 34 percent of BCC's operating expenses last year, the college increasingly needs your help to prepare today's students for further education and the workforce.

As an example, the Annual Fund recently provided:

- Enough microscopes for a full class to use at one time
- Equipment to teach Computer Information Systems students about network security
- A new piano, lighting and sound equipment in the Boland Theatre
- Video simulation and upgraded lab equipment in the Physical Therapy Assistant labs

Gifts of all sizes make a difference for students when they are pooled together. Did you know you can make a monthly gift of even \$5 or \$10 with your credit card online?

>VISIT www.berkshirecc.edu/give



Professor Tom Tynning works with Environmental Science students in the new Greenhouse, equipped by your Annual Fund donations.



Engineering students work with Professor Gary Bradway on equipment purchased with your donations to the Annual Fund.



Meteorology students work with faculty member Joe Kravitz. Your donations to the Annual Fund purchased software to link the weather forecasts prepared by faculty and students to the BCC website.

BCC Alumni Board

Cindy Shogry-Raimer '91

President

Ashlee Zanconato '10

Vice President

Jessica Russo '10

Secretary

Jeffrey Hiltbold '09

Elected Trustee

Sharon Connors '00

Dawn Dellea '88, '89

Daniel Dillon '62

Sue Fennell-Ivas '80

Kathy Gowdey '70

Kevin O'Hara '74

Christopher Richards '05

Bryan Stowell '08

Stan Walczyk '71

BCC Alumni Association

Thank you to all who participated in the online election in May. Twelve BCC Alumni representing various programs and years were elected to serve on the new BCC Alumni Board of Directors, governing the new Alumni Association. They join newly elected Alumni Trustee Jeff Hiltbold. Growing out of the longstanding former "BCC Alumni and Friends," the Alumni Association is a dues-free organization including everyone who has ever taken courses and/or graduated from BCC. Its mission is simple: work to promote Berkshire Community College and its alumni.

The new Directors have been meeting monthly since July, and have focused on creating bylaws, defining the Association's mission, and selecting activities and initiatives that will have the most impact for alumni. Members of the Board welcomed new students with gifts at Orientation and also planned the first full alumni association meeting on November 12.

Please join us! Visit the Alumni Association page at www.berkshirecc.edu, connect with BCC Alumni on Facebook and LinkedIn, and be sure we have your current contact information. For more information, contact Director of Development and Alumni Relations Jennifer Kerwood at 413-236-2188 or alumni@berkshirecc.edu.



40th Annual Awards and Honors Ceremony



A group of 2014 Awardees poses for a picture on stage with Eleanore Velez '06, Admissions Counselor and Multicultural Student Organization Advisor.

The BCC Foundation awarded a record \$291,000 in scholarship funds to 190 students on May 29th in the Boland Theatre. Awards are granted based on a competitive review of applications

by volunteer committees. Scholarship fund criteria include academic achievement, community service, specific career goals and financial need. The evening, which celebrates

BCC students' determination and resilience, includes the faculty and scholarship donors who are helping them reach their goals.

BCC Greenhouse Receives Hutchinson Collection

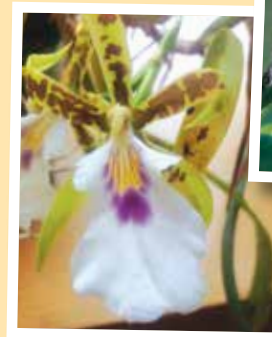
After the passing of **Dr. William Hutchinson**, a noted botanist and proprietor of Larch Hill Orchids in Amherst, Mass., BCC's Ralph Hoffmann Environmental Science and Sustainable Energy Center and Greenhouse was gifted the remaining contents of Dr. Hutchinson's greenhouse complex last June.

To date, 637 orchids have been catalogued, with work continuing on an estimated 300 more plants.

This amazing collection includes 72 different species/hybrids.

"We are honored to have received this magnificent collection for the benefit of our students and the community," noted Professor Tom Tynning.

Dr. Hutchinson previously taught at the community college level and his family believes he would have been happy to have BCC's students learn from his life's work.



Two blooming orchids in the Hutchinson collection



BCC Alumni Notes

1979

Paula (Seymour) Farr (Executive Secretarial) is an Elected Trustee to the Board of Directors of the Village of Matteson, Illinois. She is also an Assistant to the Assessor for the Rich Township Assessor's Office. Paula credits her BCC education, especially the speech class, with preparing her for a career in public service. She previously worked for a staffing company for 25 years, starting as Executive Assistant and ultimately as Director of Corporate Compliance.

1989

Kari Dupuis (Selected Studies) has joined the BCC faculty in Human Services. After BCC, Kari earned a B.S. in Psychology from UMASS, a MSW from UCONN and a Ph.D. from the School of Social Welfare at SUNY Albany. Most recently, Kari was a School Counselor at Herberg Middle School in Pittsfield.

Pasquale "Pat" Morabito (Liberal Arts) is President of Abacus Distributing, LLC, distributing wine, beer and liquor throughout Massachusetts. Pat transferred to Westfield State University after BCC and earned a B.A. in History in 1991.

1990

Michael Buckley transferred to UMASS before graduating, earning a B.A. in English with a minor in Astronomy from UMASS Amherst in 1993. Michael now works as a technical editor and writer. His best memory of BCC is the high quality of the

classroom discussions, which he credits to the quality of BCC's faculty coupled with the diversity of the student experiences.

Thomas Simon (Business Administration) has been named Interim Elementary Principal for the Southern Berkshire Regional School District. He transferred to Westfield State University from BCC, earning bachelor's degrees in Business Administration and Liberal Studies/Special Education. He also earned a master's degree in Education from Cambridge College.

1991

Bunrath Math (Human Services) works for the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations. Bunrath transferred to Georgetown University, and then Temple University where he earned a bachelor's degree in Social Work in 1998. He completed his MSW from the University of Pennsylvania in 2007. Bunrath came to the Berkshires as a refugee orphan in 1983, and acknowledges many people, including Don and Merry Lathrop for helping him find his path.

Churchill Mensah (Selected Studies) is a Senior Systems Analyst at Cigna in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He transferred to West Chester University after BCC, earning a Bachelor of Science in Accounting in 1993. He also earned a Master of Science in Management Information Systems from Penn State University. He is the proud father of two girls and one boy.

Stephanie (Stacey) Velez (Peace and World Order) is Director of Business Development at the independent, twin-screen movie theatre she owns with her husband in South Hadley, MA. After BCC, Stacey earned a B.A. in Government with a concentration in Political Theory from Smith College Magna cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa. Stacey also enjoys her grandchildren, ages 4 and 2 and is excited to have twin grandbabies due in February.

1993

Sharon Sharry (Bailey) (Liberal Arts) is Library Director of The Jones Library in Amherst, MA.

1998

Linda Evans (Human Services) works at Eagleton School. After BCC, she earned a B.A. in Sociology at MCLA. In 2010, she earned her Educational Administration license at American International College, and is currently completing a CAGS in Special Education.

Jason Luscier (Environmental Science, '97 Fine Arts/Theatre) performed in last summer's Hartford Stage production of *All's Well That Ends Well*. Jason was an active member of the BCC Players and is teaching in the Environmental Science field in Missouri.

1999

Lisa Laramy (Nursing) is the Wellness at Work Program Manager at Berkshire Health Systems, managing and providing wellness services for corporations. Lisa

transferred to UMASS from BCC to earn her BSN. Lisa also uses her certifications in personal training and in diabetes education in her work. She believes her start in BCC's ADN program, and earning her RN, prepared her well for this position.

2001

Mauricio O'Connell (Engineering) is Global Business Leader, CPG at Google. This past summer, his first case study was published in conjunction with Professor Rucker from Kellogg with Ivey Publishing: *Old Spice: Repeating Success in the Face of Competitive Threat*.

2002

Liam Bresnahan (Business Administration) works at URS Corporation in Germantown Maryland. He transferred to Wake Forest University after BCC earning a Bachelor of Science in Finance in 2005.

Rodolfo Moran (Liberal Arts-International Studies) is the Volunteer Services Manager at the Council on Accreditation in New York City, a non-profit accreditor of human services organizations. After BCC, Rodolfo transferred to the University at Albany, where he earned a B.A. in Political Science in 2004.

2005

Nell McCabe (Liberal Arts) has just joined BCC's full-time faculty in the English Department, after teaching part-time for the last two years. She transferred to MCLA after BCC where she earned a B.A. in English/

BCC Alumni Notes

Communications, and she also earned a M.A. in English (Creative Writing) from the University of Missouri. She most recently founded the New England Writers Collective.

2007

Kelley Curley (Business Administration) is at PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP in the financial services practice in Boston. She has completed the CPA exam and is completing the coursework to earn her CPA license. Concurrently, she has almost completed a Master of Science in Taxation.

2008

Katie Cassavant (Business Administration) is engaged

to Jason Smegal. She is a marketing consultant at Gamma Broadcasting.

2009

Erin Mahoney (Liberal Arts) completed a grades 5-12 English teaching licensure this past summer, and is enrolled in the English graduate program at Central Connecticut State University with an expected graduation in 2015. Erin earned a bachelor's degree in Continuing Studies from UCONN after BCC. She works in marketing and promotions at the Haymond Law Firm, and as a substitute teacher and Cheerleading Coach at Mount Everett Regional High School.

Amanda Sayers (Computer Information Systems) works for Anetics, a technology company based in Pittsfield, Mass.

2013

Philip Williams (Environmental Science) completed a summer 2014 internship with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation in the Project Development Division. Working with the District's Environmental Engineer, Phil reviewed critical ecological and environmental applications, attended conservation commission meetings, and interacted with other government agencies. He presented a final project entitled Construction and the Environment in Boston.

Phil transferred to UMASS Amherst after BCC where he is currently working on his bachelor's degree.

2014

Joanne Rosier (Liberal Arts) has been notified that two of her poems have been accepted for publication in the *Nota Bene*.

DO YOU HAVE NEWS TO SHARE?

Please visit the alumni page at www.berkshirecc.edu or contact Jennifer Kerwood at 413-236-2188 and we'll include you in the next edition of Alumni Notes.

In Memoriam

James H. Andersen, faculty member • Jeffrey Baran '85 • Peter E. Bell '82

Amy Louise Carroll '89 • Daniel J. Flaherty '67 • Gladys Grady '89 • Patricia Anton Groves '75

Rebecca A. Haskell '10 • Colin C. LaCasse '06 • Karen Marie Patch '96 • Mark D. Robertson '73

John Skumin Sr. '70 • Deborah Horgan Spring '74 • Steven D. Wilbur '75

Emily Jahn

We share with sadness that **Professor Emeritus Emily Lamson Jahn** passed away on July 12 after a courageous battle with multiple myeloma. Emily was also a BCC Alumna, earning an Associate of Art degree in Liberal Arts in 1965. She went on to earn an A.B. in English from Clark University, and a M.A. in English from UMASS Amherst. Emily taught English composition and literature at BCC from 1970 until her retirement in 2008, guiding and inspiring generations of students. She was dearly loved and admired by her students and fellow faculty members.

As a testament to her dedication to students, Emily made a bequest in her will to create a scholarship fund with the BCC Foundation. The fund will be endowed and scholarships will be provided to BCC students in perpetuity. To add your gift to this fund, you may use the envelope enclosed in this newsletter, designating Emily Jahn Scholarship Fund, or visit www.berkshirecc.edu/give.





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