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QCC *Connections*

THE PUBLICATION FOR FRIENDS AND ALUMNI OF QUINSIGAMOND COMMUNITY COLLEGE



**Alumna's
GlobalStrides
Brings Her
Back to QCC**



QUINSIGAMOND
Community College

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in this issue

Managing Director
Josh Martin

Editor
Karen Hutner

Photographers
Hillarie Jason
John Solaperto
Leon Granados

Design & Layout
Shannon Whitters

Published by
Quinsigamond Community College
670 West Boylston Street
Worcester, MA 01606
508.853.2300

*Cover Photo: QCC Alumna,
Andrea Siemaszko*

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June 2018 QCC Foundation Meeting

A Letter from the QCC Foundation

The Quinsigamond Community College (QCC) Foundation is pleased to present this Annual Report to the Community. What a year it has been! We have supported many ongoing and new initiatives to pair our students with the local business community where 90% of them will work. We would like to share some of our most exciting news updates.

The Foundation's goal is "to develop and promote resources to advance the mission of QCC." At QCC, we say, "we excite, we ignite, we open new vistas of opportunity" for our diverse and talented students. The Foundation accomplishes its objectives by raising the needed funds to supply scholarships, support staff development, and create innovative programs. With the help of our dedicated trustees led by Sue Mailman, the guidance from our new President, Dr. Luis Pedraja and his leadership team, and the support from our outstanding staff headed up by Karen Rucks, the Foundation Board of Directors is proud to report that

our financial support through transfers to the College has increased by 30% in FY18.

We want to say a very big THANK YOU to all our generous donors. While we highlight some individual donors in this report, please take the time to see the list of our benefactors found on pages 12 and 13. When you see these folks let them know they are QCC Heroes.

With the completion of the RISE campaign, our downtown Worcester campus is booming with courses in Healthcare, Workforce Development and Continuing Education. Approximately 700 students take courses in our downtown location. The U.S. Human Resources and Services Administration's Nursing Workforce Diversity awarded the College a \$2 million dollar multi-year grant. The purpose of our Associates Degree (AD) to Bachelor of Nursing degree (BSN) is to increase the number of registered nurses, public health nurses and nurse educators from underrepresented populations and disadvantaged backgrounds who reflect the diversity



QCC partnered with the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce to assist in the new Blackstone Valley Education Hub.



From left: Dr. Luis G. Pedraja; Dean Kathy Rentsch; COO Steve Marini and QCC alumna Stephanie Teixeira.

and socioeconomic backgrounds of the population they will serve.

QCC Foundation's efforts have expanded into many areas statewide. Our "regional reach" has included a Marlborough Chamber of Commerce event pairing our President with the President of Framingham State University. They talked to area legislators and business leaders about the opportunities for collaboration between the two-year and four-year institutions, such as education, healthcare, and hospitality

management. They highlighted the need for program expansion and recruitment of students into the hospitality programs in order to address the industry needs.

In addition to receiving a Capital Skills Grant from the Commonwealth, the QCC Foundation awarded the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce \$20,000, as well as furniture and equipment, to build its Advanced Manufacturing Program intended to

recruit high school students into the advanced manufacturing industry.

This past October, the Foundation hosted a Legislative Breakfast to introduce Dr. Pedraja to our local elected officials. In addition to Dr. Pedraja sharing his preliminary vision, we advocated for the legislators to take up Bill S.690/H.641 to support endowment matches. Additionally, this spring we had a follow up meeting where we talked substantively about support for the

statewide endowment match and how it could help QCC and other two-year public colleges build their scholarship endowments.

In March, an inaugural Literary Philanthropy Project (LPP) launched with author Roxane Gay as its first guest. Ms. Gay lectured on her new book *Hunger: A Memoir*. She shared her own thoughts on current issues, and answered questions from faculty and the audience. The event was a new initiative conceived by Assistant English Professor Nicole Payen and raised almost \$10,000 for scholarships. Thank you to our Platinum Sponsors: Anonymous Donor and Telegram & Gazette; our Community Sponsors: Bay State Savings and Unum and our Friends of



Dr. Pedraja speaks at the Annual Scholarship Luncheon.

QCC: Mayor Petty, YWCA, QCC Liberal Arts Distinguished Lecture Series and That's E Pop Culture Emporium.

Our Annual Scholarship Luncheon was held in May, giving us the opportunity to thank the many donors to our scholarships and recognize the hard work, goals and

ambitions of our worthy scholarship recipients. We invite and encourage all donors to attend this event to meet and to hear from our students the impact of their gift.

Recognizing food insecurity issues campus-wide, one of our Foundation's directors has made it



A highlight of the Community Connections Department in early 2018 was, "An Evening with Roxane Gay."



In late summer, QCC opened a food pantry to address food insecurities on campus.

his mission to raise the funds needed to support the creation and sustainability of a food pantry on campus, which recently opened.

We implemented a multi-pronged approach designed to increase current and new donors with the hope that they will consider us in their estate planning. We made appeals to our alumni, encouraging them to give to the Alumni Scholarship Fund. To increase the Alumni Scholarship Fund the QCC Alumni Association hosted a special dinner theater fund-raising event. We have also made direct appeals to local companies to give to our scholarship fund. As a result, private contributions this year increased by 31% from last year.

Two new named scholarships were created this past year, thanks to the generosity of new partners. SALMON Health and Retirement is offering two \$5,000

scholarships to current nursing students, with an invitation to join one of their Central Massachusetts locations in a variety of different roles. Dr. Roger S. and Mary E. LaBonte have established a new scholarship fund to support students who do not have the ability or resources to obtain a formal education. You can find their story on page 10.

Finally, we want to call your attention to the “President’s Circle.” Our energetic and visionary President, Dr. Pedraja, drives this new initiative. His challenge to us all is to consider joining him in this special group of donors, who pledge and give \$1,000 or more to help QCC successfully achieve its goal of 100% student success. We are particularly grateful to the initial President’s Circle Members.



Linda Maykel, Luis Pedraja, and Maurice Boisvert

To all of you who have contributed in so many ways—
THANK YOU! For those of you who are thinking of
getting involved—we need you now! There are limitless
opportunities to help. We need all of you to do
your share.

A few important shout outs go to the QCC Trustees and
the Foundation's Board of Directors for 100% giving

and exceeding their goal. Shout outs also, to the staff
of QCC for dramatically increasing their commitment
to fund scholarships, to the individuals who have set
up Named Scholarships to continue their legacy, to
James Harrington and the Harrington Foundation,
as well as other foundations that support QCC, and
MOST important, to all the Alumni who supported this
campaign, many for the first time.

Remember our QCC motto: Making a difference, one student at a time!

Gratefully Yours,

Maurice J. Boisvert
President
QCC Foundation

Linda A. Maykel, DDS
Vice President
QCC Foundation

Dr. Luis G. Pedraja
President
Quinsigamond Community College



Quinsigamond Community College alumna shares information on her non-profit, GlobalStrides.

Alumna's *GlobalStrides* Brings Her Back to QCC

For Quinsigamond Community College alumna Andrea Siemaszko, "home is where the heart is." The alum has come full circle since graduating from QCC in 2010, working with the college to expand its classroom walls and creating a student and faculty exchange experience in Ecuador through her non-profit organization, *GlobalStrides*.

The goal of the program is to bring students from the University de Las Americas (University of the Americas), located in Quito, Ecuador to QCC to take an accelerated English course and for QCC students to visit Ecuador and take a similar Spanish language course for a semester. These courses could be coupled with a week-long service learning project at the end of the semester. Service learning projects integrate meaningful community service (local and abroad) and are designed to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility and strengthen communities. The anticipated start date of this exchange program is Spring 2019.

Ms. Siemaszko said she equates her passion and avid social consciousness back to her time at QCC.

Beginning at QCC

She began her educational career as a pre-med student at a college in Florida, before moving back to Massachusetts (she had attended high school in Dudley, MA) to figure out if medicine was what she really wanted to do. She decided to take some core classes at QCC and said it was a decision that changed the trajectory of her life.

"I felt I had a plan for my future before QCC stepped in and gave me the time and opportunity to seek the best path for me based on my interests and strengths," Ms. Siemaszko said. "QCC gave me the ability to dabble in different studies and I learned my passion was really in helping others and connecting people to resources."

At QCC, Ms. Siemaszko became entrenched in community service life both on and off campus, working in the college's Disability Services Office, becoming an active member in the college's Alpha Zeta Theta Chapter of The Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) Honor Society, the Future Leaders Club, and as a member of the Student Senate. A native of Venezuela, Ms. Siemaszko, who is bilingual, also volunteered at the Latino Education Institute and made helping those within the Latino community one of her priorities. Through her social service work and her academic accomplishments at QCC she received the Women of Distinction Award, as well as the 2010 Meredith Wesby Award from the United Way - an award given to a young woman who serves in the community and is considered a role model.

"QCC was a place where I could explore different pathways," Ms. Siemaszko continued. "Working in the community and seeing the needs of youth made me realize I wanted to be that person who gives back to youth."

The power of mentoring

She said the faculty and staff at QCC helped give her the support and guidance she was looking for and credits mentors PTK Advisor Bonnie Coleman and Director of Community Bridges Dr. Deborah Gonzalez, with helping to steer her in the right direction. She said they gave her valuable advice that she still uses today.

"The first aspect of being a mentor is one's ability to be conscious that you're a role model. For me being a mentor is the person who works behind the scenes, generously sharing their time, expertise, and insights to nurture our potential, keep us on track, and help us grow personally and professionally. This is something I felt was a consistent part of my life while a student at QCC," she said.

After QCC, Ms. Siemaszko went on to earn her bachelor's degree in International Development and her master's degree in Community Development and Planning at Clark University.



Andrea Siemaszko and Heidi Coronel discuss a service learning project.

She said the savings she received from QCC enabled her to afford to attend Clark.

"If it wasn't for QCC I don't think I would have experienced the same amazing life path I now happily live," she said.

In 2014, Ms. Siemaszko was honored by the college and was named one of QCC's 50 Guardians to celebrate QCC's 50th anniversary. Guardians are QCC alumni who have made significant strides in their personal life, as well as in their community by acting as a "guardian protector" in keeping with the spirit of the college's mascot, the Wyvern (a mythical winged dragon that is a symbol for community guardianship).

"I want to inspire QCC students in a way that they see there is a plethora of endless opportunities by being here. I want others to see they have just as much of a possibility to succeed as I did," she said. "The school is a resource for the rest of your life."

GlobalStrides is a one-of-a-kind service learning program that enables people of all ages to grow and enrich their own world by traveling to a myriad of places across the globe. As students, they participate in service-based projects that make a direct and positive impact on the quality of life for under-resourced countries. To learn more visit, www.globalstrides.org.



Quinsigamond Community College alumnus David Chapin Jr.

Alumnus Found Wealth of Resources at QCC

Quinsigamond Community College alumni David Chapin Jr. is a true student success story. Today, he is a Wealth Advisory Associate at Morgan Stanley Wealth Management in Boston, where he (and his team) help professionals and business owners make informed, confident decisions about their plans for retirement; college savings, as well as assisting startups on deciding whether to sell or go public. It's different for every client and he must be adept at knowing how to relate to a myriad of people and circumstances.

"The public speaking and presentation opportunities I had while at Quinsigamond Community College provided me with a great opportunity to work on skills that are vital for my industry. These opportunities helped me figure out how

to work a room and network with different people. This gave me the ability, strength and courage to know that I can do anything," he said.

Mr. Chapin began his higher education career at another college before withdrawing following his first year due to financial constraints. He spent the next several years working full-time in banking and bartending before becoming unemployed. It was then that he turned to QCC.

"When I first came to QCC I was at a point where I wasn't really sure what direction I was going in," Mr. Chapin said.

He said he felt comfortable at QCC because it was a community where he didn't feel like an "outlier" because he was an older student.

"QCC catapulted me and allowed me to take off and get into fields I really enjoyed," he added.

Those opportunities included becoming actively involved within the school's student government, thanks to the support and encouragement of his professors, administrators and staff.

"I cannot recall a professor who was not available for support during my time at the college," he said.

He said it was the people at QCC who truly made the difference.

"Professor Flo Lucci was my mentor. She provided clear and explicit guidance to tough questions, which has been vital to my progression as a person. For example, she recommended that I explore the Student Trustee position at QCC," he said. "Her recommendation led me to additional opportunities as the Chair to the MA Department of Higher Education Student Advisor Council and eventually resulted in my election as a Student Advisor to the MA Board of Higher Education."

As the Chair to the MA Department of Higher Education Student Advisor Council, Mr. Chapin was able to advocate



David Chapin was chosen as one of QCC's 50 Guardians in 2014.

for community colleges and was one of the student leaders who delivered a letter to then Governor Deval Patrick and members of the Massachusetts Legislature, asking for more of an investment in public higher education. He said the experience gave him a new level of confidence that he took with him in his career.

After earning his associate degree in Business Administration, Mr. Chapin went on to earn his bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Nichols College, taking advantage of the Mass Transfer program.

"The articulation agreement program with Nichols College provided a cost-effective pathway to achieving my degree and catapulted me into opportunities that were unobtainable without a degree," he said.

In 2014, Mr. Chapin was chosen as one of QCC's 50 Guardians. The honorary distinction was given to 50 men and women who have made huge advances in their own career, as well as invaluable contributions to their community.

"Currently my career is paramount, but as opportunities arise I connect with the college, current students or alumni and provide any assistance I can," he said.

One of those opportunities recently arose at QCC's first Annual Alumni Event held on May 7. Mr. Chapin came to the event to offer his advice and insights.

"QCC was the smarter choice for me because it helped me hedge against the growing cost of tuition in the higher education industry. Much like many of the students currently at QCC, I was an adult student, working around 30 hours per week, and paying for college myself," he said. "QCC was and still is clearly the smarter choice for those operating within certain limitations."

Mr. Chapin sums up his experience at QCC with one of his favorite quotes by Mahatma Gandhi, which states, "In a gentle way you can shake the world."

"I feel that QCC has been able to do that with how they've positioned themselves in Worcester through their offerings and cost. Finding a way to mitigate that cost (of college) yet still not lose any level of professionalism or curriculum... QCC definitely hit a home run," he said.





Dr. Roger & Mary LaBonte

Philanthropists Roger & Mary LaBonte Show QCC Some Southern Hospitality

Dr. Roger LaBonte and his wife Mary, of Tennessee, consider learning to be a lifelong endeavor. They also recognize the challenges many people may have due to inadequate resources, which is why they've established the Roger S. & Mary E. LaBonte Scholarship Fund.

The scholarship, named in memory of Dr. LaBonte's mother, Anna (Boehnke) LaBonte, was developed to help those who do not have the ability or resources to acquire a formal education. Dr. LaBonte remembers stories told of his mother coming from Poland in the early 20th century to begin a life in America at the age of 13. A voracious reader and listener, she was unable to obtain a formal education due to societal limitations, which discriminated against women and immigrants at that time.

"Our educational system still makes it difficult for many of our citizens, especially the less financially well-off and vulnerable among us, to acquire a formal education," he said.

An avid lifelong learner himself, early in his youth Dr. LaBonte left high school in Manachusug (a village in Sutton, Massachusetts) without completing his sophomore year, in order to work in a shoe factory before joining the U.S. Navy. Eventually he married his wife Mary, had two children and decided to complete high school at Hayward Adult & Technical High School in Hayward, California. He went to earn his associate degree, bachelor's degree and finally his medical degree from the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis, Tennessee. Dr. LaBonte said the support and encouragement of his family, the Navy, and



A QCC student in the Respiratory Care Program practices what she's learned as her instructors look on.

numerous mentors enabled him to reach his educational goals...something not always accessible to everyone.

"This motivated us to help deserving family members and others who may have inadequate resources to stay in school and complete their formal education," he continued.

Dr. LaBonte said the scholarship gives preference to students who are in a healthcare program, who are single parents, or a minority. This preference holds a particularly poignant significance for the LaBontes. Their niece, Megan Romero, tragically lost her husband just before the birth of their second child. Ms. Romero wanted to enter QCC's Respiratory Therapy program and according to Dr. LaBonte, her entire family wanted to help her.

"Megan worked very hard to get scholarships and financial assistance to achieve her goal on her own and has required minimal financial assistance from her family," he said, adding that she is an inspiration to the entire family. "In honor of Megan's efforts, we chose QCC and consider her



QCC offers a General Studies - Pre-Pharmacy program.

a partner in our efforts to help others through scholarships from this fund."

Today, the first Roger S. & Mary E. LaBonte Scholarship has been awarded to Fordley Kernisant, a general health science major. He is working to complete his degree at QCC, with the goal of transferring to Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Services (MCPHS) and one day becoming a pharmacist.

"Receiving this scholarship will help me pay for books and supplies. It means a great deal to me and will help me so much," Mr. Kernisant said.



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QCC Radiologic Technology Class of 2018

QCC Radiologic Technology Class of 2019

State Street Corporation



Friday, April 13 was a special day at QCC with the inauguration of the college's sixth president, Dr. Luis G. Pedraja.

The Inauguration of Quinsigamond Community College's Sixth President

Friday, April 13 became a historical moment for Quinsigamond Community College with the inauguration of its sixth President, Dr. Luis G. Pedraja.

Senator Michael Moore, Representative James O'Day, Massachusetts Secretary of Education James Peyser, Worcester Mayor Joseph Petty and other community leaders, along with QCC students, faculty and staff were on hand to extend Dr. Pedraja their congratulations at the morning ceremony held on QCC's main campus in Worcester. Keynote speaker for the event was Framingham State University's President Dr. F. Javier Cevallos, a friend who worked closely with Dr. Pedraja when he was the vice president for the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

"Dr. Pedraja's inauguration comes at a time when a college degree must be accessible and affordable," said Senator Michael Moore, a QCC alumni who credits the college with starting his own career.



Dr. Pedraja's inauguration included performances by cultural dancers.



Assista Castilla

The inauguration parted ways from the typical pomp and circumstance with a procession of ethnic dancers from the community that included: Ritmos Dance Academy, Scared Earth Singers/Drummers, Island Vybe Dance Fitness and music from QCC's Student Ensemble and the QCC Chorale group.

While many noted the unusual timing for such an event, Friday the 13th, a historically unlucky day, Dr. Pedraja explained the timing.

"I chose this date intentionally. My father was one of 13 brothers and they had a store in Cuba named, '13,' ...13 is a lucky number in my family. They were able to turn a negative into a positive," he said, adding that he even defended his dissertation on a Friday the 13th, at the 13th hour. "We must turn negatives into positives and turn obstacles into opportunities."



Assistant Professor of Music/Coordinator of the Music Program Jose [Name] (center) performs with the QCC Student Ensemble.

QCC Board of Trustees Chairperson Susan Mailman and Secretary of Education James Peyser help to place the medallion on Dr. Luis G. Pedraja at his inauguration ceremony.

He has taken that very message and implemented it throughout his life, discussing the challenges many community college students may face, especially first generation students and those who live in poverty. He said there must be shift in the way people think about community colleges and their students.

“These students are determined, resilient and high achievers. They have aspirations and hope for the future,” he said, adding, “Receiving an education is not for a community of a few, but a basic human right.”

In his inaugural address, Dr. Pedraja said 100 percent student success is his goal and everything the college will do now and in the future is designed to reach this goal. He outlined many of the programs currently underway from the creation of community-based learning centers in Worcester, the formation of a multi-faceted Student Success Center on QCC’s main campus, to increasing mentorship programs, expanding partnerships with communities such as Blackstone and

Marlboro, and creating scholarships with business partners.

“He has all the qualities that make a great leader. Throughout his career he has demonstrated wise leadership and his commitment to students is exemplary,” said Dr. Cevallo. “You have found a real Wyvern (QCC’s mascot—a protective mythical dragon-like creature). You have found a leader who will watch over the college and it will thrive.”

In addition, since taking office Dr. Pedraja has worked to expand partnerships with colleges and universities that include Framingham State University among others, as well as the recent partnership with Worcester Polytechnic Institute for a multi-million dollar state-of-the-art integrated photonics lab. He also addressed shifting the focus of teaching for the future instead of teaching for today.

“We must be daring, agile and innovative. I will not rest until our present and future students achieve their dreams,” he said.



Community Events



*Left: Excited 2018 QCC graduates are prepared to face the future.
Right: Graduation Keynote speaker Senator Elizabeth Warren*

QCC's 53rd Commencement is One for the Record Books

On May 18, students from 11 states, two countries and 134 cities and towns became a part of history as Quinsigamond Community College's Class of 2018 became the largest in the school's annals. Dr. Luis G. Pedraja presided over his first commencement as the college's president; a class that graduated 1,522 students, 978 with honors and 348 students with highest honors.

The ceremony, held in the DCU Center, was a combination of solemnness and joy as the graduates listened to words of encouragement while their families and friends looked on.

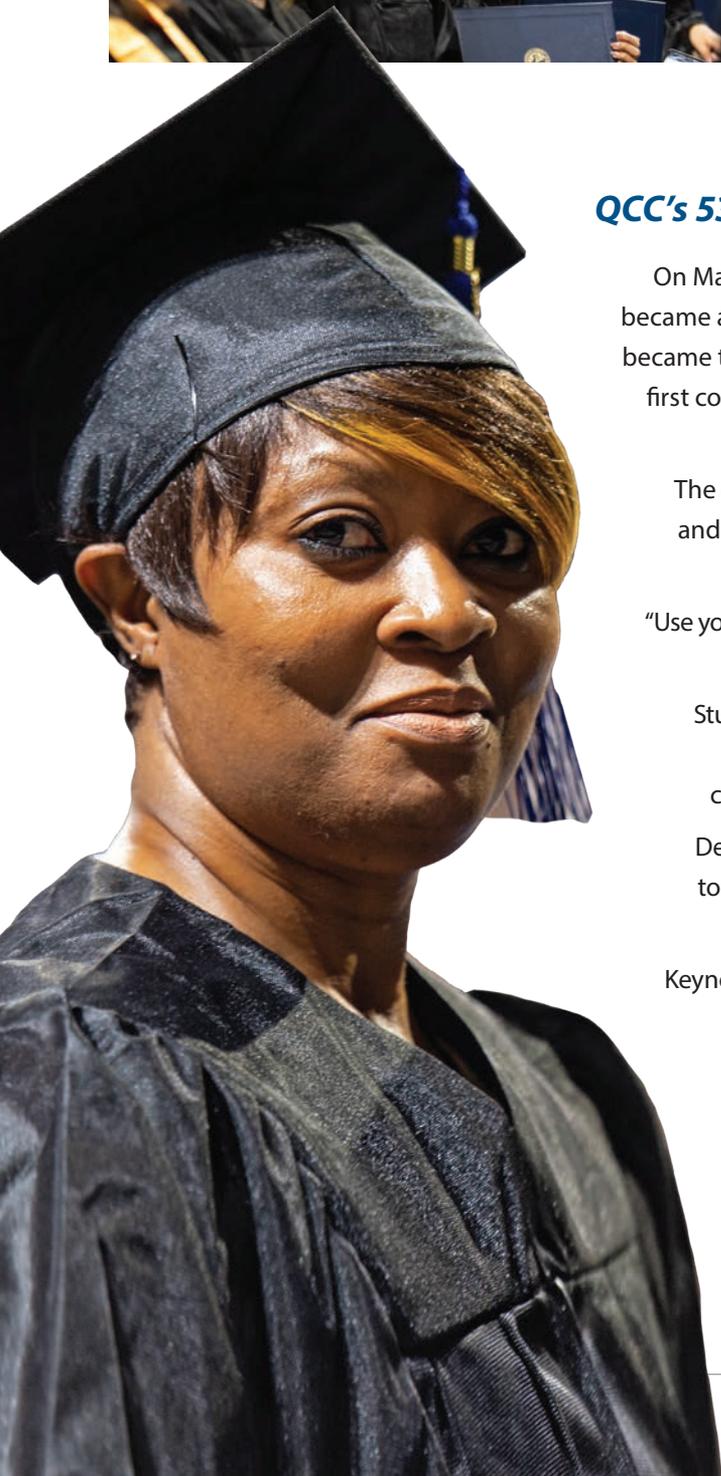
"Use your super powers for good, QCC grads, our world needs you," said Deputy Commissioner for Administration and Finance, Tom Simard.

Student Senate President Edward Reitz, told his class, "Today is our day and today we bask in our achievement. We now own our own futures. These certificates and degrees are the keys that will unlock the doors to success."

Degrees and certificates were awarded in a total of 106 unique programs to graduates who came from 134 cities and towns, with 686 degrees and certificates conferred to 619 Worcester residents.

Keynote speaker for the event was Senator Elizabeth Warren, whose speech was interspersed with humor, politics and her own personal story.

"I went to a school a lot like this one, so I know that you're leaving campus with a quality education that will help you take the world by storm," Senator Warren said. "America gave me a chance, and I'm grateful down to my toes. I ran for the Senate because I want the next Quinsig student to have that same chance. To grow up in an America full of possibilities. You are the future of America. I'm honored to fight alongside you."





Top: Students are honored at the 2018 QCC Annual Honors and Awards Ceremony. Lower Left: QCC PTK students Toby Ajayi and Stephanie Teixeira. Lower Right: Some of the many QCC Annual Honors and Award recipients.

Honoring Those Who Make a Difference

Family and friends came out to celebrate those students who have made exceptional achievements during their time at QCC at the Annual Honors and Awards Ceremony, held at Hebert Auditorium in early May. The event recognized students for their high academic achievements, college and community involvement.

Students who were honored included those in the Honors Program;

graduates who are Veterans; members of the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) Honors Society; members of the Psi Beta Psychology Honor Society; Engineering Student Distinction Award; Distinguished Service Awards for Clubs & Major Organizations, and students who completed the Student Leadership Academy and Academic Achievement awards. This year, 92 PTK Honor Society students earned their gold stoles. To qualify a student must have a minimum of two community service events, while maintaining a 3.5

cumulative GPA received a gold stole. "A total of 150 PTK students graduated this year and approximately 87 percent of them are transferring to a four-year institution," said PTK Advisor Bonnie Coleman.

Special recognition awards were given to 10 students who were honored for their achievements and contributions to the college that occurred outside the framework of student organizations and whose individual efforts might otherwise go unnoticed.





PTK Student Ashley Forhan receives a Distinguished Service Award from QCC Associate Professor of Criminal Justice Kristy Glover.

Other awards conferred that evening included:

- The Francis X. Gardner Psychology Achievement Award - Ethan Brochetta-Platt
- The Nancy O'Han Memorial Award - Corey Ball
- The Rose Caprioli Memorial Award - Leslie Soto
- The Jean Smelewicz Award for Computer Information Systems – Elias Slaybi
- The Robert J. McDonald Award – Thomas French
- The 2018 Wyvern Award – Dana Peary
- The 2018 Outstanding Male Student Athlete - Johnny Dombrowski
- The 2018 Outstanding Female Student Athlete – Shelby Maiorana
- The 2018 James H. Harrington Outstanding Citizen Award – Tony Sanders
- The 2018 Outstanding Student Leader Award – Ashley Forhan



QCC's Practical Nursing students at their pinning ceremony.

Pinning Ceremonies Cap off a Stellar Time at QCC

Quinsigamond Community College held a variety of pinning ceremonies throughout the month of May. Ceremonies were held in the Hebert Auditorium and the Worcester Senior Center.

Pinning ceremonies date back to the 1800s and also include a symbolic lighting ceremony to remind students to carry out the ideals of the nursing tradition. All nursing schools have a unique pin that identifies where nurses earned their degree. QCC nursing students wore traditional white nursing uniforms and were presented with a special pin to mark their achievement.

May QCC pinning ceremonies included students who graduated in August 2017, December 2018 and May 2018. They include:

- **Registered Nursing** – 112 students received their associate in science degree in Nurse Education.
- **Surgical Technology** - Seven graduates received their Surgical Technology Certificate.
- **Radiologic Technology** – 14 students received their Radiologic Technology associate in science degree.
- **Dental Hygiene** – 14 students received their associate in science degree in Dental Hygiene.
- **Respiratory Care** – 10 students received their Respiratory Care associate in science degree.



QCC alumni (from left) Deb Noble and Suzanne Graham-Anderson listens to current student Benjamin Aryeh.

Alumni Share their QCC Experiences at S.H.E. Event

Quinsigamond Community College and Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) alumni have never forgotten their roots. In early May six alumni came back to QCC to share their unique stories, experiences and offer current students insights into QCC and beyond.

The event was made possible by S.H.E. (Support, Help, Encourage), an innovative female mentoring initiative designed to increase retention and educational success of female students at the college. Alumni who attended the event included: Chad Bleakney, Nancy Bohan-Broderick, Miranda Craig, Suzanne Graham-Anderson, Kim Lawrence, Monique Manna and Deb Noble.

“It all started here at QCC,” Mr. Bleakney said. “I can honestly say I would not be fulfilled in the way I am now without having started at QCC.”

Many of the students could relate to what they were hearing from the speakers, asking the panelists if there were ways in which the alumni could help them.

“Get on LinkedIn. I see someone who is from QCC and I immediately reach out and get connected,” Ms. Graham Anderson said.

Discussion also included establishing an alumni database and mentoring program.



Author and Cultural Critic Roxane Gay Kicked off New QCC Collaborative

A highlight of the Community Connections Department in early 2018 was, “An Evening with Roxane Gay,” event held on March 23 at Mechanics Hall in Worcester. The event was presented by the Literary Philanthropy Project (LPP), a new initiative that was conceived by QCC Assistant English Professor Nicole Payen. The LPP is a collaboration between the QCC Foundation, the Community Connections Department and the English Department to partner with established authors to raise scholarship money in their name, encouraging retention of current students and promoting recruitment of prospective students. Proceeds from this event will benefit merit and need-based scholarships for QCC students.

“Our mission is to help our community,” QCC’s President Dr. Pedraja said at the event. “Thanks to all our sponsors for their contributions ...they do a wonderful job supporting our programs and we want to continue that partnership that has helped to make this event a reality.”

QCC’s Executive Director of Advancement Dr. Karen Rucks gave Ms. Gay a powerful introduction that segued into a no-holds barred discussion.



Top: QCC English Professor Margaret Wong (left) and QCC Assistant Professor of English Nicole Payen (right) discussing issues with Roxane Gay. Bottom: Author Roxane Gay signs books after her talk.

“Roxane Gay is the mind and voice that has emerged full from this time and age,” she said. “She comes to our event this evening with a generosity of heart. Thank you Roxane Gay, for using your voice.”

Ms. Gay spent the evening answering questions from QCC Professor of English Margaret Wong and Professor Payen on a myriad of subjects. In the final segment, she opened up questions to the audience, answering some questions about her book, *Hunger*, a memoir that details her own emotional and psychological struggles with consumption, appearance and health.

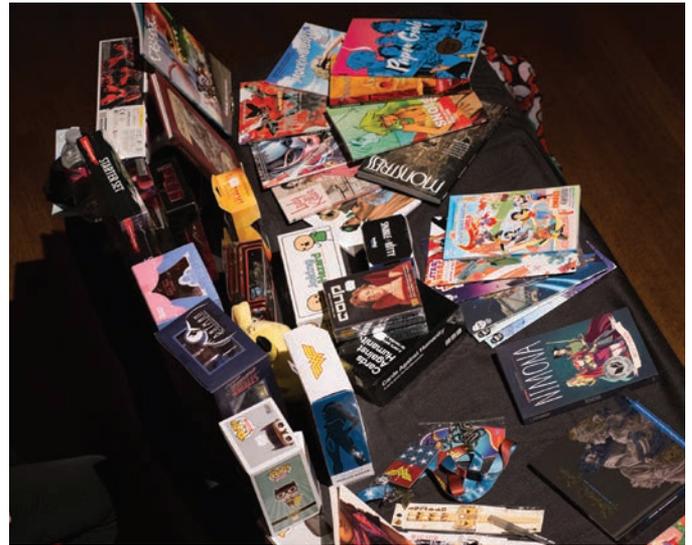
“When you live in a fat body people have horrible opinions of you and you become vulnerable,” Ms. Gay said.

In addition to her book *Hunger*, Ms. Gay discussed racism in today's world, feminism, the current administration, and how she motivates herself when the haters come at her.

"It's hard to resist the bigotry and dehumanization," she said, adding that she has a good support system of friends and family.

Ms. Gay told the audience that part of that support system comes from her 6-year-old niece and being a role model for her, "without even trying."

"Just having her in the world and wanting her to have a world that's better keeps me going," she continued. "We have a responsibility beyond ourselves."



A sampling of Roxane Gay's many written works.

QCC President Honored with the Key to the City at MLK Annual Community Breakfast

Quinsigamond Community College hosted over 700 people at the 33rd Annual Community Breakfast honoring Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Worcester Attorney Polly Tatum was the master of ceremonies for the program, which included QCC President Dr. Luis G. Pedraja as the keynote speaker and speeches by Lt. Governor Karyn Polito, U.S. Representative James P. McGovern, Worcester Mayor Joseph M. Petty and Susan M. Mailman, Chairwoman of the QCC Board of Trustees. The Gospel Choir Association of New England, led by Eric Edmonds also performed throughout the program.



QCC President Dr. Luis Pedraja was the keynote speaker at this year's Annual MLK Community Breakfast.

Lt. Gov. Polito told the crowd that she felt it was particularly special that the community breakfast was held at QCC. "I want to say how awesome it is we are on this campus celebrating the great Martin Luther King Jr. because

on this campus there are amazing things happening to lift us up and move us forward," said Lt. Gov. Polito.

During the program Dr. Pedraja was presented with the key to the City of Worcester by Mayor Petty in

recognition for his commitment to the City.

One of the highlights of the program was Dr. Pedraja's keynote speech.

QCC's President gave an impassioned talk echoing Dr. King's sentiments of

standing up against racial inequality and asking those in the audience, "I ask 'dare we dream, and I say YES because if not us, then who?'"

"Today education still marks a great divide where some communities have

greater access than others," he said. "If we are to achieve equity, education must be a part of the solution. Education cannot be a commodity reserved solely for the wealthy and the elite. Education is a basic human right," Dr. Pedraja said.



Massachusetts Manufacturing Innovation Initiative Grant Awarded to Collegiate Partnership

In January, the partnership between Quinsigamond Community College (QCC) and Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) was strengthened with the awarding of a \$4 million Massachusetts Manufacturing Innovation Initiative (M2I2) grant by Lt. Governor Karyn Polito. The grant is designed to support the emerging and future technology of integrated photonics through the launch of an AIM Photonics Academy Lab for Education & Application Prototypes (LEAP). This is the second LEAP in the Commonwealth.

Photonics is a technology that allows for a faster transfer of data than traditional electronic circuits. The technology is used in a vast array of industries and applications such as telecommunications, data storage, flat screen TVs, radar and autonomous vehicles.

The new LEAP facility is being developed as a collaboration between AIM Photonics, AIM Academy, QCC, WPI, the Mass Tech Collaborative through the Massachusetts Manufacturing Innovation Initiative (M2I2),



QCC President Luis Pedraja, WPI President Laurie Leshin and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito visit one of the labs at WPI.



Top: Lt. Governor Karyn Polito discusses the LEAP initiative and its impact on the future of manufacturing in the Commonwealth. Bottom: From left: QCC Board of Trustees Chairperson Susan Mailman, QCC President Dr. Luis Pedraja and COO/CFO Stephen Marini.

and the Department of Defense. The first LEAP facility is located at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), which is home to AIM Photonics Academy. The Academy's mission is to provide a skilled workforce for the integrated photonics industry. These LEAP facilities are designed to be a pipeline from Boston to Rochester, NY in order to foster photonics education, research, and workforce development that will meet the needs of the industry now and in the future.

"What sets this (LEAP) apart from MIT is that it has a connection to a community college," Lt. Gov. Polito said. "I'm really happy that WPI can be a catalyst along with Quinsigamond for this innovation hub of connectivity in Central Massachusetts."

Quinsigamond Community College Awarded \$84K State Grant

Quinsigamond Community College received an \$84,100 Performance Incentive Fund (PIF) grant from the commonwealth to provide accelerated English classes to students eligible for remediation in English. The college will use the grant to increase its Accelerated Learning Program (ALP), which focuses on improving the success of developmental education students by working to accelerate these students into college-level English courses.

QCC has already piloted this program with noteworthy results. Between 2014 and 2016, 75 percent of QCC students who completed an accelerated English course by taking both remedial and college level English, received a "C" or higher, compared to 66 percent of QCC students who only completed the traditional college level English course.

"This innovative model is particularly beneficial to those from underserved populations such as low English Language Learners (ELL)," said QCC President Dr. Luis G. Pedraja. "This PIF grant will help us to increase the number of high quality English reading, writing and critical thinking courses we offer to these students to help them succeed in college."

The Performance Incentive Fund is a competitive grant program that supports public campuses in creating or strengthening programs that advance the goals of producing the best educated citizenry and workforce in the nation.



Alumni Has a Lifelong Relationship with QCC

Quinsigamond Community College has been making a difference in people's lives since it was established in 1963 and no one knows this better than QCC alumna, Paula (Gagnon) Moore. Mrs. Moore attended QCC from 1964 -1966 when the college was located at Belmont Street in Worcester (the main campus moved to West Boylston Street in 1971). She was in one of QCC's first graduating classes.

Mrs. Moore said she attended QCC because it was accessible by bus and she was able to pay the tuition herself. At the time she attended QCC, Mrs. Moore said she had no idea what she wanted to do with her future, so she enrolled in a Liberal Arts program at the college.

"The college provided me with an excellent grounding for further education," she said. "While at QCC, I jumped into school activities, representing my classmates and enjoying the camaraderie."

In fact that enjoyment and camaraderie translated to lifelong friendships and even a future husband, Doug Moore.

"Doug was at QCC for one year before transferring to Nichols College," Mrs. Moore continued. "We met in the cafeteria and married in 1968."

Mrs. Moore said her husband was also unsure of what he wanted to do with his future and QCC offered him the opportunity to figure out his career path. He attended QCC for one year before transferring to Nichols College

and then going on to Suffolk University for his Master's Degree in Business Administration.

"So you can see that he too benefited from QCC," she added.

Mrs. Moore graduated from QCC in 1966 and then transferred to Eastern Nazarene College in Wollaston, Massachusetts, where she earned her Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education. In semi-retirement, Mrs. Moore became a special needs aide at Algonquin Regional High School in Northborough, where she used her talents and education to assist students. She said she never forgets the educational foundation QCC gave her.

"I would highly recommend QCC to high school students, as I already have done so with several special needs students, who have gone on to successfully begin their own educations," she added.

Mrs. Moore still stays in touch with two women from her QCC days, Janyce Forhan Sheehan and Donna Nordquist Hagglund, both QCC Liberal Arts graduates. She met the women when they all attended QCC and the three women get together monthly and reminisce about the "old days."



From left: QCC alumna, Paula (Gagnon) Moore with QCC Business Development Specialist Christine McNally.

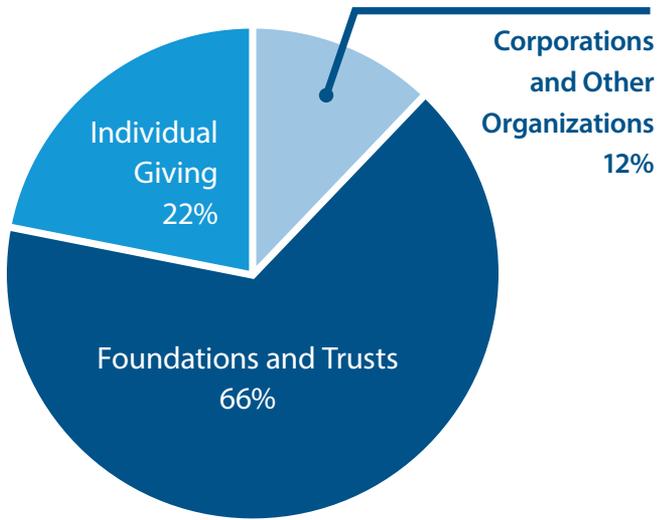
Her friends also went on to very productive careers, thanks in part to QCC.

Ms. Sheehan earned her Bachelor's Degree in Education and English from Fitchburg State University, then went on to Worcester State University and obtained her Masters of Education, English. She was a teacher of English Language Arts and English for the Clinton school system for 32 years and was Clinton High's English Department Chairperson. She retired from the school in 2013.

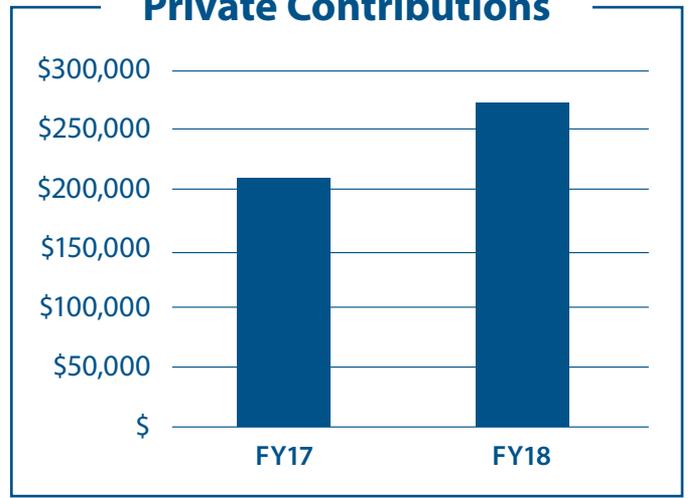
Ms. Hagglund went on to Fitchburg State University before graduating cum laude from Worcester State University with her Bachelor's Degree in English. She was in pharmaceutical sales for 15 years with Bristol Myers-Squibb and Sanofi Aventis.

"We often speak about the school that provided us with our grounding to further our educations," Mrs. Moore added.

QCC Foundation Financial Statements Fiscal Year 2018*



Private Contributions



\$178,530 awarded in scholarships to QCC students.

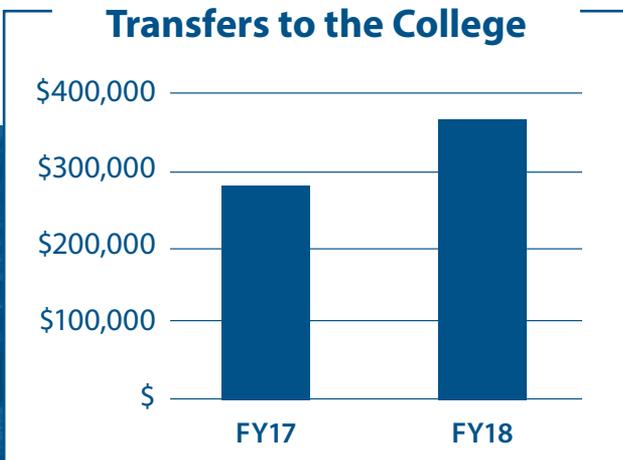
\$48,064 provided to various QCC programs and activities.

\$140,293 transferred for RISE Capital Campaign Projects.

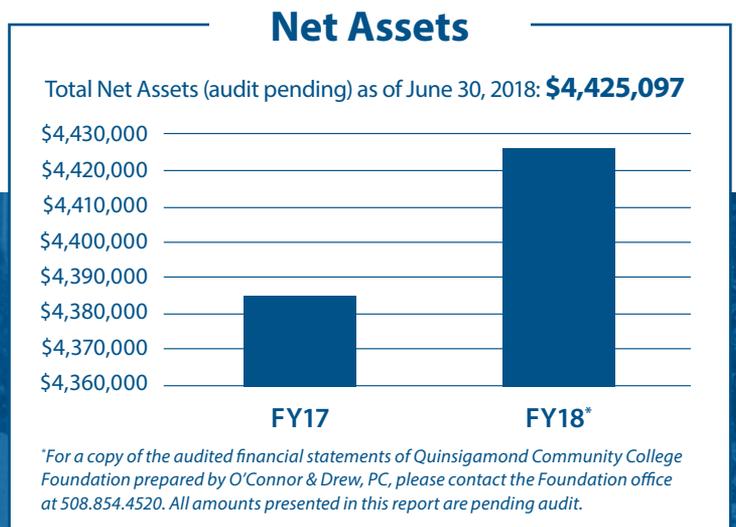
Supporters of Quinsigamond Community College Foundation

Photo: Luis Pedraja, President; Vanessa Hanger, Scholarship Recipient; Jacqui Diggs, Chair of QCC Foundation Scholarship Committee; Mary Sylvester, Scholarship Recipient; Benjamin Aryeh, Scholarship Recipient; Oluwatobiloba (Toby) Ajayi, Scholarship Recipient; Jennifer Bemis, Scholarship Recipient; Moe Boisvert, QCC Foundation President

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QCC Foundation

The mission of the QCC Foundation is to develop and promote resources that advance the mission of Quinsigamond Community College.

Upcoming Events:

- ✓ **January 21, 2019 – MLK, Jr. Breakfast**
- ✓ **March 2019 – Literary Philanthropy Project**
- ✓ **April 2019 – Stand Against Racism**
- ✓ **May 20, 2019 – QCC Foundation Scholarship Lunch**
- ✓ **May 23, 2019 – Commencement**
- ✓ **June 2019 – QCC Employee/Alumni Lunch**

Please visit www.QCC.edu/foundation-events for updates and additional event listings

