

QCC offers solutions for post-pandemic recovery

WORCESTER — A Community Conversation hosted by Quinsigamond Community College for government, social service and religious organizations in Worcester drew over 60 attendees this week. The hour-long virtual meeting addressed ways to accelerate economic and civic recovery post-pandemic, using education as a pathway to success. The College gave a snapshot into what it can offer the organizations, which serve the underrepresented populations in Worcester and surrounding communities that have been so devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We have the programs and the training and together with our community organizations' help we can thrive. We are counting on you and your partnerships to achieve this," President Luis G. Pedraja, Ph.D. said.

Chair for the QCC Board of Trustees Sue Mailman noted that as a community college, QCC has the unique ability to deliver pathways that will help Worcester communities grow and prosper.

"We need to get ahead of the game and lead the way in retraining and developing a stronger Worcester," Ms. Mailman said. "We need to create conditions for our underrepresented populations to succeed and community colleges have a real lead in this."

QCC's Vice President of Academic Affairs James Keane, Ed.D., said the pandemic proved to the world just how nimble a community college could be, and what was learned would be beneficial for years to come. He described the two-week timeframe in which QCC successfully transitioned to remote instruction and said the new virtual course modalities, coupled with increased online support services, have increased access and engagement in higher education, particularly for adult learners. Dr. Keane described new advisory boards that are a part of each college program. Board members advise on relevant workforce curriculum and course design to prepare students when they enter the workforce.

Lillian Ortiz, Ed.D., vice president for Enrollment Management and Student Engagement, highlighted the financial opportunities available at QCC. The College received \$13 million in Cares Act funds that have helped 3,800 students impacted by the pandemic with tuition, fees, laptops etc. An additional \$9 million is still to be awarded.

"The core mission of the College is to remove barriers that impede students from attending college," she said.

Other supports and resources of note include

the Student Success Center with its academic tutoring, QCC's Food Pantry that feeds approximately 50 families per week throughout the year, and the Resource Center that coordinates with local agencies to offer assistance for students in need.

"We have a strong mentoring program and our Accessibility Services Department that serves 1,000 students annually on campus, offering accessible, equitable and inclusiveness to all members of the community," Dr. Ortiz said, adding, "We have also been designated as a military friendly school."

Carol King, dean of College and Career Pathways told of QCC's 25 free English literacy programs from beginner to intermediate, as well as the HiSet and GED programs that even include a GED prep classes in Spanish.

"We understand the challenges of going back to school as an adult," she said. "We offer free college readiness classes virtually any day and time."

Kathie Manning, dean of Center for Workforce Development & Continuing

Education described the flexibility of the programs and training that is being offered such as a new online, self-paced, professional development training subscription model. She said the College offers numerous programs at low to no cost and many even support transportation and childcare. Recent programs have included nurse assistant/home health aide, help desk, medical assistant and lead teachers for early childhood programs, with some offered in Spanish.

"Programs generally take six months to complete and classes begin every week throughout the year," she said.

Nichole Wheeler, coordinator Career Services & Credit for Prior Learning mentioned the variety of ways students can gain credits for prior life experiences and save money and time.

"We meet with students and evaluate and match what they have with QCC courses to try and give them college credit," said.

According to Dr. Pedraja, the COVID-19 pandemic brought

unique conditions to community colleges that have historically seen an upsurge in enrollment during economic downturns. Today, on a national level 40 percent of students are now canceling their plans to enroll in college with 30 percent giving COVID-19 related reasons. Diverse populations have seen the steepest declines in college enrollment. However, He told the organizations in attendance there is reason to be hopeful as the region looks ahead.

"Hope is at the core of who we are at a community college. We are a beacon of hope for our students and our community. Losing students impacts us as an entire community and we cannot thrive if we leave anyone behind," Dr. Pedraja said. "It takes a community to help students succeed and you know where your needs are and with your help, we can reach out and find strategies to bring people to college."

For more information about QCC, contact Josh Martin, Director of Institutional Communications at 508-854-7513 or jmartin@qcc.mass.edu.

Community members elected to Health Foundation

WORCESTER — The Board of The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts recently elected the following individuals to serve three-year terms as Community Members on Board Committees:

Elvis Mendez, MS, Co-Director of Neighbor to Neighbor Massachusetts, was elected to serve his first three-year term on the Community Outreach Committee.

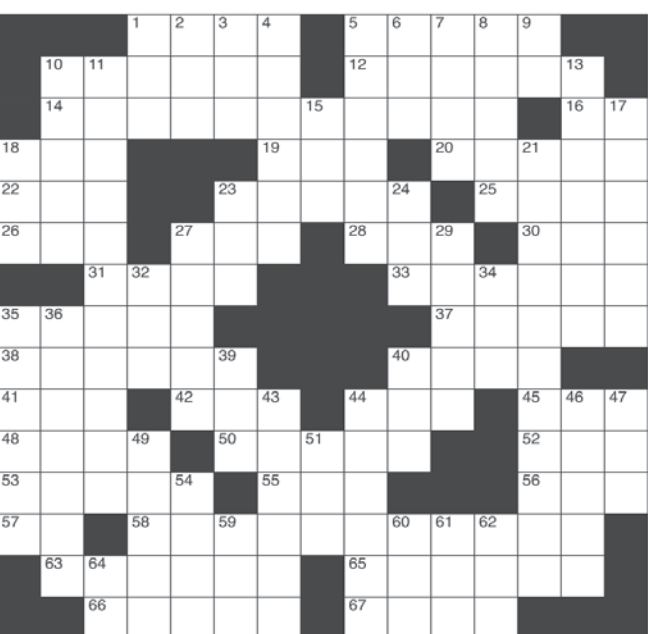
Daniel P. Ricciardi, MBA, Interim Chief Investment Officer and Assistant Treasurer at the College of the Holy Cross, was elected to serve his first three-year term on the Investment Committee.

B. Joyce Gilmore, RN, community activist, was elected to serve her first three-year term on the Nominating Committee.

The Foundation was established in 1999 with the pro-

ceeds from the sale of Central Massachusetts Health Care, Inc., a physician-initiated, not-for-profit HMO. The Foundation currently has assets of around \$90 million and has awarded grants totaling almost \$48 million to improve the health of those who live or work in Central Massachusetts. For further information about the Foundation's grant programs, please visit The Health Foundation's website at www.hfcm.org or call (508) 438-0009.

For more information about the state's COVID-19 regulations and target reopening dates, visit www.mass.gov/reopening.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Large, flightless birds
- 5. Lifts and moves heavy objects
- 10. Hyundai sedan
- 12. Wear away by erosion
- 14. Arranged alphabetically
- 16. Top prosecutor
- 18. ___-de-sac: Dead-end street
- 19. Digital audiotape
- 20. Linguistics pioneer
- 22. Singer DiFranco
- 23. Arms of the sea
- 25. Near-reach weapon (abbr.)
- 26. Ballplayer's accessory
- 27. You get one at the beach
- 28. U.S. founding father
- 30. W. Australia indigenous people
- 31. Amounts of time
- 33. Put on the shelf
- 35. Russian dynasty member
- 37. City along the Elbe River
- 38. A peninsula between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf
- 40. Actor Damon
- 41. ___ King Cole, musician
- 42. Company that rings receipts
- 44. Scatter
- 45. Basics
- 48. Part of a door
- 50. Indicates silence
- 52. Moved quickly on foot
- 53. Monetary units
- 55. A place to crash
- 56. Many subconsciouses
- 57. Group of countries
- 58. About line of latitude
- 63. Female follower of Bacchus
- 65. A dentist can treat it
- 66. Dull brown fabrics
- 67. Int'l nonprofit

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Midway between northeast and east
- 2. Partner to cheese
- 3. One from Utah
- 4. A way to move
- 5. Playing cards
- 6. Baseball stat
- 7. Long river in western Asia
- 8. Grandmothers
- 9. Entertainment legend Sullivan
- 10. Steam bath room
- 11. One who kills
- 13. Food
- 15. Swiss river
- 17. Fleet
- 18. Taxi
- 21. Working class
- 23. More (Spanish)
- 24. High schoolers' test
- 27. Heavily built goat antelope
- 29. Murdered in his bathtub
- 32. Tease good-naturedly
- 34. Morsel
- 35. Cause persistent resentment
- 36. A radioactive element
- 39. Perform in a play
- 40. Witty remark: Bon ___
- 43. A great place to kayak
- 44. Conclude by reasoning
- 46. In an unfavorable way
- 47. Complex of nerve tissues (abbr.)
- 49. Machine for making paper
- 51. Feline
- 54. Yugo's hatchback
- 59. Check
- 60. Press against lightly
- 61. Wind-pollinated plants
- 62. ___compoop
- 64. Commercial

REOPENING

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stay, and no dance floors will be permitted to reopen.

On Aug. 1, the following industries are slated to reopen: dance clubs and nightclubs; saunas, hot tubs, and steam rooms at fitness centers and health clubs; indoor water parks; and ball pits.

Also on Aug. 1, capacity for all industries is expected to return to 100 percent. Pending approval from health officials, all gathering limits will be lifted.

Residents are reminded that all target dates are dependent on continued positive health trends. This includes declining COVID-19 numbers statewide through the spring and summer.

State officials also urge all eligible residents to schedule their vaccinations. This will help further combat the virus and allow industries to reopen sooner, officials said. If statistics trend positively earlier than expected, the August 1 date could be pushed up.

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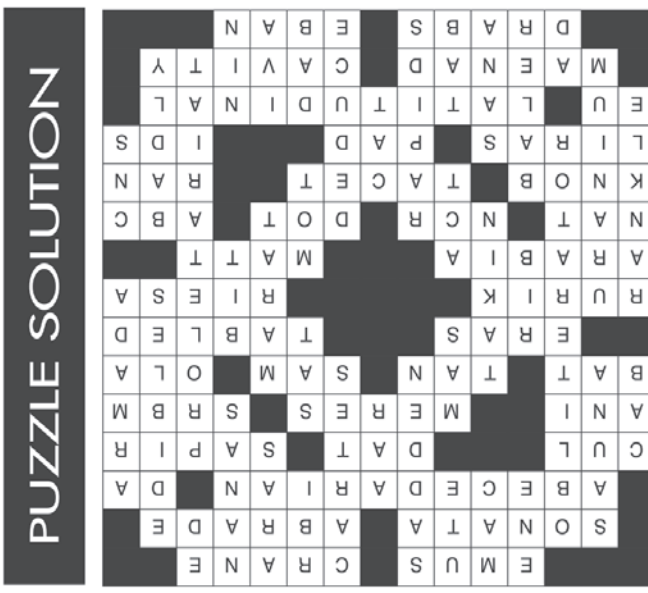
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CHURCH LISTINGS

- **Charlton Federated Church**, 64 Main St., 248-5550, Sunday worship 10:30 a.m. www.fedchurchcharlton.org
- **Charlton Baptist Church**, 50 Hammond Hill Road, 248-4488, www.charltonbaptist.org, Sunday worship 10 a.m.
- **Charlton City United Methodist**, 74 Stafford St. 248-7379, web site: CharltonCityUMC.org Sunday worship and Children's church 10am
- **St. Joseph's Church**, 10 H. Putnam Ext, 248-7862, www.stjosephscharlton.com, Saturday Vigil Mass 4:30 p.m., Sunday Mass 8 a.m., Sunday Family Mass 10 a.m., Sunday Life/TEEN Mass 5 p.m., Weekday Mass Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8:30 a.m.
- **Hope Christian Fellowship**, 6 Haggerty Road, 248-5144
- **Assemblies of God Southern New England District Headquarters**, Route 20, 248-3771, snedag.org, Office hours Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- **Living Word Church of Charlton**, 10 Main Street - Grange building 1st Floor, Charlton, MA 01507, Pastor Craig Belisario, (508) 233-8349 Sunday Service 10:00am. www.livingwordcharlton.com info@livingwordcharlton.com
- **New Life Fellowship A/G, SNED Chapel**, 307 Sturbridge Road, Rt. 20, Charlton, MA, Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m.