BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY COLLEGE **IMPACT REPORT 2024-25** FOUNDATION YEARS OF BCC



DEAR FRIENDS,

As Berkshire Community College celebrates its 65th anniversary, we have so many reasons to be grateful.

We are grateful for the Commonwealth's MassEducate and MassReconnect programs, which allow us to provide free college to so many. We saw dramatically increased enrollment in 2025, making the powerful impact of these programs abundantly clear. I'm proud to say the door to higher education is opening wider, providing access to those who may never have considered it possible before.

We are grateful to have been named a 2025 Leader College by Achieving the Dream — a significant honor that recognizes the College's culture of continuous improvement and inclusivity — and for earning an Early College designation with Pittsfield High School. By providing a quality education to our students, we make a significant contribution to our workforce partners in Berkshire County and beyond. That contribution was evident at the State of Work Summit, presented by BCC and partners MassHire, Berkshire Innovation Center, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and 1Berkshire. With three tracks, 15 sessions and more than 40 speakers, the event drew more than 200 attendees.

We are grateful for all the exciting things that happened at BCC over the course of the past year, culminating in our commencement ceremonies with keynote speaker Dr. Noe Ortega, Massachusetts Commissioner of Higher Education and champion of equity and access in higher education. Under Ortega's leadership, free tuition at community colleges like BCC has become a reality.

We are grateful for the hire of a new vice president of Strategic Initiatives and Community Engagement, which emphasizes our focus on the importance of community relationships. Our commitment to relationship-building is also seen in our energized development team, particularly with the hire of a new executive director of development.

But most of all, we are grateful for you, our donors, who make everything we do possible. Your contributions to the BCC Foundation, which awarded more than \$400,000 in scholarships this year, funded nearly 200 scholarships.

There's a real momentum happening at BCC — an exciting momentum in philanthropy. We know this because we see measurable increases in giving participation and in total dollars raised.

As we face unprecedented need in affordability of and access to higher education, it's critical to keep that momentum going. I urge you to consider donating on a monthly basis if you can, but any donation helps. I am truly grateful for your support.

Warmly, Ella Kennes

Ellen Kennedy, President

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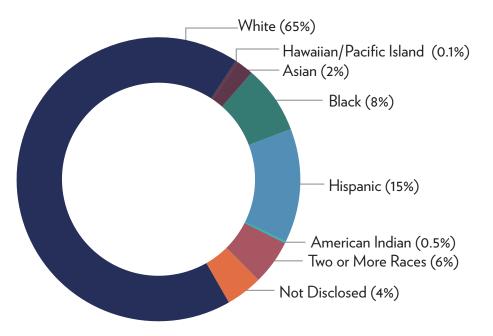
INTRODUCING JIM MANCALL AND THE DIVISION OF STRATEGIC INITIATIVES AND **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

BCC is excited to welcome Jim Mancall as Vice President of Strategic Initiatives and Community Engagement (SICE), a newly formed division designed to strengthen BCC's connection to both campus and community. SICE brings together key areas -Marketing & Communications, Development, Grants, Workforce Development, OLLI, Institutional Effectiveness, and Community Impact — to better align strategic efforts and deepen our impact in the Berkshires.

Jim joins BCC with a wealth of experience, most recently serving as Chief of Staff at Pikes Peak State College in Colorado, where he led strategic planning and institutional reorganization. His career also includes leadership roles at Wheaton College and Harvard University. Jim holds degrees from Trinity College, the University of Virginia, and New York University. His work is grounded in community engagement and institutional growth — making him an ideal leader for this new era of collaboration and innovation at BCC.

BCC BY THE NUMBERS

2024 FALL STUDENT ENROLLMENT



1,846
TOTAL STUDENTS

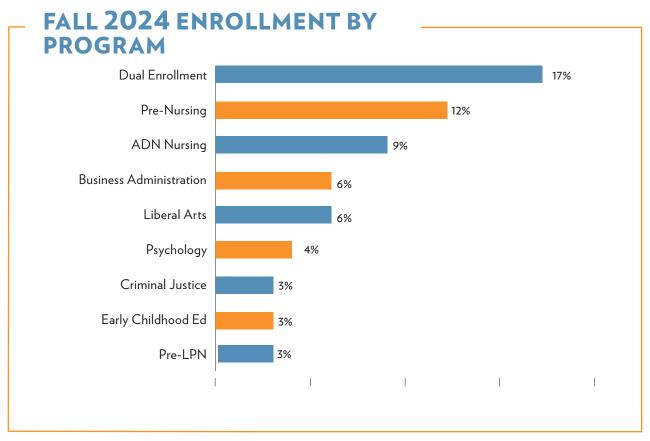
66% 34%

34.9%

BIPOC STUDENTS (BLACK, INDIGENOUS, PEOPLE OF COLOR)

57%
TRADITIONAL
STUDENTS
(AGE 22 OR UNDER)

45%
NON-TRADITIONAL
STUDENTS
(AGE 23 OR OVER)



MEET THE DEVELOPMENT TEAM!

The Development Office at BCC, recently restaffed and restructured, is off to a strong start, with a focus on building meaningful relationships and strengthening support for the college. Get to know the team!

REBECCA WEHRY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

Hi! I'm Rebecca Wehry, your new Executive Director of Development at Berkshire Community College. I joined the team in October 2024 and bring experience from my time as Director of Development at Buxton School and as the Associate Director of Development at Simon's Rock, as well as development roles at MASS MoCA and Hancock Shaker Village. I've been fortunate to work with organizations that reflect the creativity and spirit of the Berkshires.

As a Berkshire County native and proud MCLA graduate, I'm thrilled to serve the community that raised me. I look forward to connecting with you, learning your stories, and working together to support BCC's incredible students. Outside of work, I love volunteering at Berkshire Humane Society, spending time with my family (including our dogs and chickens!), and getting lost in a good book. Don't hesitate to say hello!

MARY BUDZN, ALUMNI RELATIONS AND PHILANTHROPY MANAGER

I've lived in the Berkshires since 2018, working for Shakespeare & Company and, most recently, Bard College at Simon's Rock. Joining the Development team at BCC has given me a wealth of opportunity to deepen and appreciate my connection with the larger, and very special, Berkshires community. You don't have to go far to run into a BCC alum! At BCC, I focus on supporting the great work of the Alumni Association by creating opportunities for alumni and community engagement. I love that the work of the Development team also directly supports current BCC students, whose dedication to their education and authenticity is truly inspiring.

Originally from Cincinnati, OH, I earned my Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatre Arts from Boston University. I continue to perform as an actor throughout the Berkshires and truly value being part of such a caring community of artists in this beautiful place we call home.

AMANDA SAARELA, ANNUAL GIVING AND DEVELOPMENT OPERATIONS MANAGER

I joined BCC's development team in May 2024, bringing more than two decades of experience in fundraising and administrative roles at institutions including Darrow School, Miss Hall's School, and UMass Amherst. With a strong background in operations and database management, donor relations, strategic communications, and community engagement, I'm excited to support BCC's mission of expanding access to education and opportunity in the Berkshires.

Having called the Berkshires home for the past 10 years, I find deep fulfillment in nonprofit development work that directly benefits my community. Outside the office, I enjoy spending time with my family and dog, exploring new places, cycling local trails, and reading a good book.





THE BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY COLLEGE FOUNDATION

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

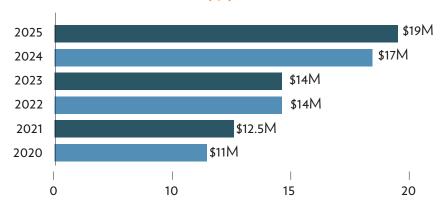
The BCC Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit advancing the mission of Berkshire Community College by raising and managing funds that support students, faculty, and programs.

Over the past two decades, with the support of donors, smart investing, and strategic stewardship, the Foundation's assets have grown from \$5.43 million to \$18.58 million. These strong assets provide over \$400,000 in scholarships annually, funds for special initiatives, and support for programs like the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute.

Powered by a dedicated Board and working closely with BCC's Development Office and Alumni Association, the Foundation helps build a stronger, more connected community — one gift, one student at a time.

Behind every student success story is someone who made it possible.

TOTAL ASSETS (\$)





ATHLETICS ARE BACK FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE '90S

For the first time in decades, BCC is reintroducing intercollegiate athletics with the launch of National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA)-sanctioned women's volleyball in fall 2025 and men's baseball in spring 2026. As a new NJCAA member, BCC will compete at the Division III level in Region 21, joining peer institutions across Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island.

This exciting step brings new energy to student life and opens doors for athletes to compete at the college level (often tuition-free) while staying on track academically and financially.

Leading the charge are newly hired head volleyball coach Evaguel Rhysing, a former standout player and dedicated local coach, and head baseball coach Michael Muscato, a former pro and experienced mentor. Both coaches are passionately focused on player development and community pride. Athletics are officially back at BCC... and the energy is building!

UPDATES FROM BCC

BCC NAMED ACHIEVING THE DREAM 2025 LEADER COLLEGE

Berkshire Community College has been designated a 2025 Leader College by Achieving the Dream (ATD), a national nonprofit committed to student success and equity in community colleges. This recognition honors BCC's progress in increasing student achievement, improving institutional practices, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

As part of the ATD Network since 2020, BCC has worked closely with expert coaches to implement data-informed strategies that support students holistically. Being named a Leader College places BCC among a select group of institutions recognized for driving impactful change in their communities through access, support, and student-centered innovation.



BCC and ATD staff accepting the ATD Leader College Award

BCC + PHS LAUNCH EARLY COLLEGE PROGRAM

Berkshire Community College and Pittsfield High School have been officially designated as an Early College partnership by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts! This game-changing program allows eligible PHS students to take college courses — for free — starting in 10th grade. These students earn dual credit toward high school graduation and a college degree. Focused on equity and access, Early College helps students build confidence, reduce the cost of college, and get a head start on their future.





BCC'S LYNDSAY ISHAM-MORTON WINS PRESTIGIOUS ADVISING AWARD

Berkshire Community College is proud to celebrate Lyndsay Isham-Morton, Director of Academic Advising and Coaching, winner of the Region 1 Excellence in Advising – Advising Administrator Award by NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising. Recognized for her leadership, innovation, and student-centered approach, Lyndsay has unified BCC's advising and coaching teams, created measurable advising outcomes, and implemented a new online navigation system to better serve students, especially those from historically marginalized communities.

PHILANTHROPY IN ACTION



AWARDS NIGHT: SEPT. 17 • 5:30 PM ROBERT BOLAND THEATRE

51ST ANNUAL AWARDS NIGHT

A CELEBRATION OF DONOR IMPACT AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Each year, the BCC Foundation proudly honors students who have received scholarships made possible by the generosity of our donors. These awards, ranging from \$250 to full tuition and fees, recognize academic excellence and help meet critical financial need.

In 2025, your support made a powerful impact:

\$400,000+

196
STUDENTS RECEIVED SCHOLARSHIPS

THANK YOU, DONORS!

YOUR GENEROSITY OPENS DOORS, EASES BURDENS, AND CHANGES LIVES.

NEW THIS YEAR! We are honored to welcome four new scholarships this year:

- The Klug Family Psychology Scholarship supports psychology students.
- The Representative Smitty Pignatelli Scholarship assists Third District residents committed to civic engagement.
- The Gobel and Hollister Scholarship Fund offers general support.
- The Joshua L. Weinstein Scholarship supports students pursuing a career in human behavior.
- The Zaffanella Family Scholarship aids students in STEM or business fields.

These gifts open doors and create lasting impact.



We love to support people who find themselves not where they wanted to be in life, but they are taking action to better themselves. When I see a single mother of three children receiving her scholarship, just trying to improve her life by taking classes, it's a very heartwarming experience all around. Those children are in the audience, clapping for her, and she's showing them what she can accomplish with hard work. BCC's commitment to students of all walks of life is truly inspiring.

-Dick and Sue Cetti, Scholarship for Excellence in STEM



STUDENTS FOR RECOVERY WELLNESS AND BELONGING AT BCC



Collegiate Recovery Week BCC Alumni Panel

Students for Recovery continues to grow as a vital support network for students in or exploring recovery, as well as their allies. Made possible by the generosity of a dedicated donor, the program offered more than 20 workshops, events, and wellness activities this past year, reaching a core community of engaged students through ongoing peer support, recovery resources, and inclusive programming.

Now in its fifth year, the program also celebrated key milestones:

- Hired a part-time Students for Recovery Coordinator to lead peer engagement and expand programming
- Offered one-on-one support, mutual-aid meetings, and student leadership opportunities
- Deepened partnerships with local recovery organizations for training and outreach
- Created a welcoming, shared lounge space in Melville 303 for connection and support

This work wouldn't be possible without donor funding, which continues to sustain and expand a compassionate, stigma-free space where BCC students feel seen, supported, and empowered as they pursue their academic and personal journeys.

HARVEST RUN

SAVE THE DATE FOR THIS YEAR'S EVENT: SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1.

In partnership with Integritus Healthcare, the 2024 Harvest Run once again raised critical funds to support BCC's Nursing and Allied Health programs, preparing the next generation of skilled, compassionate healthcare professionals.

Through the incredible generosity of our sponsors, donors, and participants, students are now better equipped with the tools, training, and confidence they need to step into essential healthcare roles across the Berkshires.

It's not just a run. It's also a free indoor festival with family-friendly activities, food tastings, and costume contests, open to all!

www.berkshirecc.edu/harvestrun



PHILANTHROPY IN ACTION

BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY IMPACT FUND

The Berkshire Community Impact Fund, BCC's newest source of long-term, flexible support, was established through the incredible generosity of an anonymous donor offering a dollar-for-dollar match. Now exceeding \$300,000, this endowed fund is growing steadily and is designed to provide meaningful, sustained impact for years to come. Once fully matured, it will support student scholarships, emergency aid, program enhancements, and other critical needs, ensuring BCC can respond to challenges and opportunities as they arise. The fund reflects a powerful belief in the future of our students and the strength of community. With \$40,000 still available in matching funds, the donor's vision continues to inspire a stronger, more resilient future for our students and our community.



PTK Honor Society Induction Ceremony



Rezeda Kohlenberger, EMT

Rezeda emigrated from Russia in 2018 with a biotechnology degree but faced challenges transferring her credentials and finding work. With determination and support from BCC and a MassHire grant, she completed the EMT program and passed her certification in early 2025. Now working as an emergency department technician at Fairview Hospital, Rezeda balances her career with family life and plans to pursue nursing at BCC. She credits the affordability, flexibility, and strong community at BCC for enabling her to advance her healthcare career locally — proving that with dedication, opportunity is within reach.

Our community is a beautiful place to live and raise kids, but major medical centers can be far away. We have good local hospitals, but if something really serious happens, you might need an EMT to take you. It's important to have EMTs in the area. Things happen. EMTs help the community tremendously.

- Rezeda Kohlenberger, EMT

WHY RECURRING GIFTS MATTER

STEADY SUPPORT. LASTING IMPACT.

Recurring gifts provide something every student needs: stability. When monthly gifts come in regularly, BCC can plan ahead, respond quickly to urgent needs, and make sure resources are there when students need them most.

In FY25, just six percent of donors gave monthly, yet those 40 supporters contributed \$16,000. That steady stream of funding helped students cover essential costs like tuition, meals, laptops, and other expenses that could have disrupted their education.

Monthly giving is a simple, meaningful way to make a difference throughout the year. It helps ensure students have what they need — not just to get to college, but to thrive while they're here.



2025 BERKSHIRE STATE OF WORK SUMMIT: FROM HIRING TO THRIVING



In June 2025, Berkshire Community College convened more than 200 attendees for the Berkshire State of Work Summit. In partnership with MassHire, 1Berkshire, the Berkshire Innovation Center, and the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, this daylong event explored the most pressing workforce issues facing employers across the region.

With 15 sessions and more than 40 speakers, the summit tackled everything from multi-generational workplace dynamics to employee readiness, recruitment, and retention strategies. Keynote speaker JD Chesloff, President & CEO of the Massachusetts Business Roundtable, and Cheshire, MA native, urged attendees to think differently about hiring, support employee needs, and seek bold partnerships.

As a catalyst for collaboration and innovation, the summit offered a platform for honest dialogue, practical solutions, and shared momentum toward building a more resilient, inclusive, and thriving local workforce.



CELEBRATING OUR INCREDIBLE DONORS

Each year, hundreds of generous donors step up to support BCC, and we couldn't be more grateful. Your gifts help power everything from scholarships and lab equipment to workforce programs, disability services, and even lunch for students who need it.

Thanks to you, students have access to life-changing opportunities, whether they're pursuing a degree, learning English, gaining hands-on STEM experience, or getting back on their feet with emergency aid.

When you give to the BCC Annual Fund, you're not just donating — you're also investing in futures, fueling ambition, and making our vibrant, diverse community stronger every day.

From all of us at BCC: Thank you for believing in our students and our mission.

You're making magic happen.





MICHAEL MORSE, VALEDICTORIAN, CLASS OF 2025

Michael's journey to becoming BCC's valedictorian was anything but traditional. After 11 years in retail, an unexpected job loss inspired him to pursue his passion for engineering through BCC's new Mechatronics program. Supported by MassReconnect tuition funding and dedicated faculty mentorship, Michael balanced a challenging course load while running a small business. His perseverance and hard work earned him a 4.0 GPA, and he plans to transfer to UMass for his bachelor's degree. Michael credits his success to the support of his professors and his own determination, proving that it's never too late to take a chance and pursue your dreams.

told myself, if this MassReconnect thing happens, and I can go to school for free, that seals the deal. I'm going to do what I have to do to pursue engineering."

-Michael Morse, Valedictorian, Class of 2025



YOU CAN ENROLL IN BCC FOR FREE!

With the support of MassReconnect and MassEducate, most BCC students now qualify for free tuition and fees. Whether returning to school after a break or starting fresh, now is the time to earn a degree or certificate — without the financial burden. BCC's enrollment is soaring, and students of all ages are jumpstarting careers in business, healthcare, skilled trades, and more. From small business owners to veterans, our students are proving that free college changes lives. Ready to join them? Visit berkshirecc.edu/apply to get started today.



40 UNDER FORTY AWARDS

HONORING EMERGING LEADERS AND POWERED BY DONOR SUPPORT

The 2025 40 Under Forty Awards celebrated 40 exceptional young leaders who are making the Berkshires a better, stronger, and more inclusive place to live and work.

With the generosity of Mill Town Foundation, each honoree received \$1,000 to donate to a Berkshire-based nonprofit of their choice, extending the spirit of giving even further.

Proceeds from this year's event, totaling more than \$20,000, supported Workforce & Community Education Programs at BCC, helping to train and uplift individuals across our region.

This event — and its impact — would not be possible without our generous sponsors, donors, and supporters. Thank you for investing in our community's future.



OLLI AT BCC

OLLI at BCC continues to thrive as a dynamic, volunteer-driven learning community, offering more than 200 classes, workshops, lectures, and affinity groups to more than 1,500 members annually. In FY25, OLLI's liberal arts-based programming reached a broad and diverse audience — locally, nationally, and internationally reflecting its strategic commitment to expanding and diversifying its offerings.

In 2024, OLLI celebrated its 30th anniversary with a special event honoring its founding volunteers, many of whom remain active leaders and teachers today. Here's to three decades of curiosity,

connection, and community... and to many more ahead!



An OLLI "Antiques Roadshow" program with Master Conservator Troy Amuso

Philanthropy continues to play a vital role in sustaining and expanding OLLI's impact. In FY25, more than 100 donors gave to support OLLI's programs, and the OLLI Annual Fund brought in over \$30,000, ensuring this community of curiosity, connection, and learning will thrive for decades to come.

I've gotten lots of training, but I wanted something more. I wanted to continue my education. Sometimes people think in-home daycare providers are babysitters and that we don't have expertise. It didn't matter how much training I had — I didn't have a degree in early education. I wanted to feel more qualified... BCC has really taught me that no matter what, we're not done learning. Being an early educator, I want to be a lifelong learner — and I want to create lifelong learners."

- Jessica Hall, Early Childhood Education graduate

THANK YOU, DONORS!

FOUNDERS CIRCLE \$25.000+

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Annie Amato

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Dr. Constance Berman

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Bob Braddick and Hope Bavis

Austin '72 & Lynda '00 Brazee

Rachel Brier

Kristen Brouker-Botelho

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T:((),4

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Celia Norcross, Dean of Students, face-painting



The "Let's Play" activity in the Education Lab



President Ellen Kennedy during the retiree tour

BCC'S COMMUNITY FEST - AUGUST 16, 2025

CELEBRATING 65 YEARS OF BRINGING COLLEGE TO THE PEOPLE!

Over 2,000 people attended the Berkshire Community College 65th anniversary celebration called Community Fest on August 16 this year to honor BCC's commitment of bringing College to the people. Guests were treated to face painting, Touch a Truck, food trucks, beer and wine vendors, soccer and pickleball tournaments, Build a Burke workshops, free community college information sessions, tarot card reading, live music, educational programming, and so much more! It was a spectacular event that highlighted how much has changed at the College and how BCC has earned its middle name by always putting the Berkshire community first.







AND NOW FOR MY SECOND PIECE OF ADVICE: REMEMBER THAT Your path is your path, and no one else's. -2025 COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER DR. NOE ORTEGA, MA COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER This year, we've added even more content online highlighting the impact of your giving. Scan the QR code or visit our website to learn more.