

Ice Cream Social caters to 300 BC3 students, clubs

September 7, 2016

(Butler, PA) An estimated 300 students got a taste of Butler County Community College's offerings Wednesday at an ice cream social that also served as a cool way for club representatives to meet and greet.

"This is a chance for us to promote the fact that there is a veterans group on campus," said Kurt Esman, 55, of Butler, who served 10 years in the Army and is a member of the Student Veterans Association.



The Butler resident, who is studying film/video and photography, sat at a table with 29-year-old James Manning, also of Butler. Manning is an eight-year Army veteran who served two tours in Iraq and is president of the Student Veterans Association. He and Esman distributed black Wounded Warrior Project bracelets and pins, and American flag key chains, pins and magnets.

"This is a very military-friendly college," Esman said between conversations with students who later approached the two canopies where volunteers scooped the free "Birthday Cake," "Cookie Dough," "Peanut Butter Chocolate" and "Cookies and Cream" ice cream into cones or bowls.

"The kids recognize and appreciate the veterans," Esman said. "I've had a lot come up and shake my hand and say, 'My dad, or my brother or my uncle were in the military.'"

Also trying to enlist support were students Danni Ortiz, of Butler, for the Gay-Straight Alliance and Social Work clubs; Alyssa Martin, of Kittanning, and Olivia Cox, of Butler, for the Pioneer Players, the resident theater group on campus; and Cierra Shirley, of Kittanning, for Clubs and Activities.

"This is a good chance to get the word out," said Ortiz, a social work major. "And the ice cream entices people."

Sherri Osborne, assistant director of student activities, walked back and forth between the canopies and the Student Success Center, where nearly two dozen 10-gallon containers of ice

cream were stored. She's been at BC3 for 20 years, and said the ice cream social has been held since at least 2001.

"It's always popular," she said. "Free ice cream. It gives the students a chance to see one of the first big events of the semester after Welcome Day. It engages the students and shows them some of the other things that are happening on campus, like clubs, activities and athletics."

An hour before the midday temperature reached 82 degrees, she looked through the windows of the Student Success Center. "They're standing in line already," she said with a laugh.

Among them was Nicole Balk, of Butler, a business student who then took her bowl of "Birthday Cake" ice cream and sat under an umbrella near Dave and Whitney Campbell, a Nashville duo who performed country, pop and rock music songs on the patio outside the Student Success Center.

"This gives people a chance to meet each other," Balk said as she awaited her 2:30 p.m. marketing class. "It's good for the community because a lot of times you get to meet other students but this gives you the chance of knowing the different employees."

Like Laura Wiest, an accounting instructor and one of 15 volunteers to spend a 30-minute shift dishing out the ice cream, and dishing with students.

"It's important to have fun," Wiest said. "The students get to see us in a different light. Many of our students work full time, or a lot. It's important to care for them."

Said Zach Rodgers, a network administration major from Butler as he worked on a bowl of "Cookie Dough": "This gets people together. Everyone gets to see what goes on at BC3 and that BC3 cares about its students."

Upcoming events include:

- Leadership: Leading with a Purpose from 12:45 p.m. to 2 p.m. Sept. 15 at Founders Hall. Free to all students. Lunch included.
- "Project 22," 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Sept. 22 at Founders Hall. Light refreshments will be provided at free event.
- Involvement Fair, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sept. 28 at Founders Hall.
- The student faculty vs. staff softball game, 2 p.m. Sept. 29 at BC3 baseball field.
- Oktoberfest, 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Oct. 5 at the Student Success Center lounge. Free root beer floats.

For more information about BC3 Student Life & Activities, call 724-287-8711, ext. 8249 or visit bc3.edu.