

BC3's 'thriving' nursing and allied health school appoints 2 to new roles

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(Butler, PA) A Butler County Community College nursing and allied health school that has expanded to Jefferson County, that will establish Butler County's only licensed practical nursing program and that will educate students pursuing a new bachelor's degree at a Mercer County private institution has appointed two faculty members with more than three decades of combined clinical practice to new positions.

Julia Carney, of Zelienople, has been named as the Shaffer School of Nursing and Allied Health's assistant dean of nursing and Jessica Lasanich, of Evans City, as director of a licensed practical nursing program that could debut at BC3 as early as summer 2021.



Julia Carney, left, of Zelienople, has been named as Butler County Community College's Shaffer School of Nursing and Allied Health's assistant dean of nursing and Jessica Lasanich, of Evans City, as director of a licensed practical nursing program that could debut at BC3 as early as summer 2021.

BC3's new licensed practical nursing program will result from an up to \$10 million commitment in June from Concordia Lutheran Ministries, one that includes a \$1 million gift designated toward the planned state-of-the-art Victor K. Phillips Nursing and Allied Health Building on BC3's main campus.

Grove City College in December committed \$500,000 to BC3 toward the planned 30,000-square-foot, two-story building, whose construction could begin in May 2021. Second- and third-year students in the private four-year institution's new bachelor's degree program in nursing next fall will begin to receive clinical and technical training through BC3's associate degree program in Nursing, R.N.

BC3's two-year career program in Nursing, R.N., in 2020 graduated 62 students representing Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Clarion, Clearfield, Elk, Jefferson and Lawrence counties, and its first class at BC3 @ Brockway in Jefferson County.

“It is going to be very exciting”

“These are thriving times for BC3’s nursing program as we address the needs of the communities we are serving, and there’s such a need for nurses right now,” said Dr. Patty Annear, who as dean of BC3’s Shaffer School of Nursing and Allied Health will supervise the new assistant dean of nursing and the director of the licensed practical nursing program.

“Julia and Jessica are members of a nursing staff at BC3 that has been highly essential and instrumental in helping to get to where we are.”

Nearly 93 percent of BC3’s Nursing, R.N., graduates who took the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses for the first time in the past year were successful.

Carney will manage the logistics of the Nursing, R.N., program, which will include working with clinical agencies and keeping BC3’s curriculum current with health care’s changing needs, Annear said. Lasanich will develop a plan for the curriculum and the policies of the licensed practical nursing program, Annear said.

Carney spent 12 of her 14 years of clinical practice at UMPC Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh before becoming an educator in what is now BC3’s Shaffer School of Nursing and Allied Health, created in 2018 following a \$1 million gift to BC3 from former state Sen. Tim Shaffer.

Carney, who has been a nursing, clinical and lead instructor at BC3 for eight years, earned master’s and bachelor’s degrees in nursing from Carlow University, Pittsburgh, and studied to become a registered nurse at UPMC Shadyside School of Nursing.

“It is going to be very exciting to work with Dr. Annear with the changes that are coming to BC3 nursing,” said Carney, whose practice at Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh included a position in its emergency room. “It has been great working with the new instructors, teaching the new instructors, teaching the students and seeing how BC3 nursing is evolving.”

The growth of BC3’s nursing program, Carney said, “is unprecedented.”

“The program is great,” Carney said, “and we will keep it going with the great name that we have out there with BC3 nursing.”

“I wish I went to BC3”

Lasanich became an emergency medical technician in her senior year at Seneca Valley High School through a program offered by BC3. Her 18 years of clinical practice include service at UPMC Passavant and in the neonatal intensive care unit at UPMC Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh.

Lasanich, who as a BC3 educator has trained licensed practical nurses pursuing BC3's 70-credit registered nursing degree, earned master's and bachelor's degrees in nursing from Carlow University. She achieved a registered nursing degree from the Community College of Allegheny County in a program held at California University of Pennsylvania.

"I wish I had gone to BC3," Lasanich said. "(BC3's program) is extensive. Our nurses are very well-prepared and have a great reputation in the area hospitals. Grove City was the first partnership excitement. And now this LPN program in partnership with Concordia. The expansion is great. It's great for this area because colleges and universities are showing signs of decrease, but we are talking about increase – and reaching health care in the areas that are most needed."

Lasanich and her husband, Steve, have two daughters, ages 8 and 5, and a son, age 4.

Carney and her husband, Craig, have sons, ages 17 and 12.

BC3 this fall will launch a Health Care Pathway opportunity for high school sophomores through seniors and whose 26 credits will transfer to select BC3 health care programs.

Pre-nursing offered at all BC3 locations

BC3's Shaffer School of Nursing and Allied Health will be located within the proposed \$9 million Victor K. Phillips Nursing and Allied Health Building, named in 2017 following a \$1 million gift to BC3 from Janice Phillips Larrick.

The Shaffer School of Nursing and Allied Health in 2020 graduated 124 students in the two-year career programs of medical assistant; Nursing, R.N.; physical therapist assistant; technical trades-massage therapy management option; and technical trades-radiologic technology; and in the certificate or workplace certificate programs of massage therapy, medical assistant and medical coding and billing specialist. Collective enrollment in those programs increased 3.2 percent in fall 2019 compared with fall 2018.

Students in BC3's career programs can develop skills needed to enter the workforce immediately after graduation.

The \$10 million commitment to BC3 from Concordia Lutheran Ministries includes Concordia offering tuition assistance to BC3 nursing students who agree to work for the healthcare provider after graduation, and operational support to BC3 associated with helping to finance salaries of additional BC3 staff hired to administer the registered nursing and licensed practical nursing programs.

BC3 offers pre-nursing courses at its main campus, and at BC3 @ Armstrong in Ford City, Armstrong County; BC3 @ Brockway; BC3 @ Cranberry in Cranberry Township, Butler County; BC3 @ Lawrence Crossing in New Castle, Lawrence County; and BC3 @ LindenPointe in Hermitage, Mercer County.