

BC3 @ Cranberry's \$1.2M makeover underway

July 19, 2018



Jim Levundusky, of Greensburg, operates a mini-excavator while digging a trench for an acid waste and neutralizing tank inside what will be a natural science laboratory at BC3 @ Cranberry in Cranberry Township on Tuesday, July 17, 2018.

(Cranberry Township, PA) A \$1.2 million makeover to BC3 @ Cranberry will bring an ultra-modern learning environment to Butler County Community College's oldest additional location, adding infrastructure to permit chemistry classes and delivering to students personal and group workspaces against a trendy backdrop of warm blues and cool grays with aluminum and wooden accents.

Wavy panels will diffuse energy-efficient LED lighting in a lobby that will showcase two laptop bars and three glass-faced study rooms, amenities that will appeal to the site's nearly 200 students between its 61 credit and six noncredit classes this fall, said Lauren Buchanan, BC3 @ Cranberry director.

BC3 @ Cranberry, she said, responded to results of a survey in which students reported they sought more study or meeting spaces and access to electrical outlets.

“We took all of that into consideration,” Buchanan said. “We often had students sitting in the lobby at tables. We’d see them move the tables over to an outlet. These areas are going to help. They are not going to have to move anything. They will be able to sit down and plug in. We are meeting their needs. They would prefer to stay here instead of going home or somewhere else between classes.”

Upgrades to the south side of the 22,500-square foot building, which opened in January 1990 at 250 Executive Drive in Cranberry Township after courses were held for three years in a rented office in a nearby plaza, will be completed by Aug. 27 – the first day of BC3 @ Cranberry’s 2018 fall semester, said Brian Opitz, BC3’s executive director of operations.

Work will then begin on the north half of the facility and be finished by Oct. 31, Opitz said. The project, which began June 25, also includes new carpeting and paint, he said, and new heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems that are being installed by BC3 employees.

“Stay and study and socialize”

The south side of the building will include centralized instructor offices for BC3 @ Cranberry’s graphic design program, the addition of a studio for its photography program and of an acid waste neutralizing tank to a natural science laboratory that will enable BC3 @ Cranberry to offer Chemistry 112. The course is required for the site’s pre-nursing students who previously traveled 20 miles to BC3’s main campus in Butler Township to attend the four-credit class.

“The lab was the highest priority,” Opitz said, adding that the science room will include 20 seats and five work stations.



Jay Dees, of Pittsburgh, an employee with East End Plumbing, Pittsburgh, measures a 4-inch PVC pipe to be used for discharge of plumbing inside what will be a natural science laboratory at BC3 @ Cranberry in Cranberry Township on Tuesday, July 17, 2018.



Paul McCullough, left, of Sandy Lake, a supervisor with general contractor Fred L. Burns, Shipperville, discusses blueprints with Steve Hawk, of Clarion, and also of Fred L. Burns, inside BC3 @ Cranberry in Cranberry Township on Tuesday, July 17, 2018.

The laboratory may also be utilized for chemistry instruction by programs other than BC3's, Buchanan said.

Two glass-faced study rooms adjacent to the main lobby will accommodate up to four students and the third, which can seat up to six, will feature state-of-the-art technology enabling users to connect computers to a flatscreen monitor on a wall to view presentations or to link with conferences, Buchanan said.

A pair of 55-inch flatscreen TVs will also be available for students to watch in a common area of the main lobby, Opitz said.

“At a community college, you are a commuter campus,” Opitz added. “Your class may end at 1:30, and an hour and a half later, you have another class. So what do you do? Do you leave? We are trying to give them entities within the building to stay and study and socialize. The lobby and the study rooms will provide students an area to be in when they are not in class.”

“It will have a whole new look”

BC3 @ Cranberry will have 11 classrooms, the natural science lab, a photo studio, a multi-purpose room, a tutoring center, five administrative offices and suites, Buchanan said. It will also include a new information center with two computer stations where prospective students can research BC3 and its programs, Opitz said.

To accommodate construction on the north end of the building, three credit courses – abnormal psychology, business ethics and yoga – are tentatively scheduled to be held this fall at the Cranberry Township Public Safety Training Center two miles north and along Route 19, Buchanan said.

BC3 @ Cranberry is the only of BC3's additional locations to offer associate of applied science degrees in digital audio and visual production, graphic design and in photography, programs that will allow graduates to develop the professional and technical skills necessary to start a career upon graduation. It also offers an associate of applied science degree in business management.

BC3 @ Cranberry also offers transfer programs in business administration, criminology, early childhood education (Pre-K), general studies and psychology, in addition to coursework for pre-



Ray Edwards, of Harrisville, an employee of general contractor Fred L. Burns, Shipperville, removes screws from 3 ½-inch metal studs while demolishing a wall inside BC3 @ Cranberry in Cranberry Township on Tuesday, July 17, 2018. The area will be converted into a study room.



Artist renderings depict the future of the main lobby of BC3 @ Cranberry in Cranberry Township on Tuesday, July 17, 2018.

nursing, after which its students can pursue an associate of applied science degree in registered nursing from BC3's main campus.

An open house for the renovation project may be held in November, Opitz said, months after students' initial surprise at their new learning environment.

"It will have a whole new look," Buchanan added, "and a whole new feel."