

BC3 awards nursing pins to 55 in Class of 2019

May 13, 2019



Kenneth DeFurio, president and chief executive officer of Butler Health System and a Butler County Community College trustee since October 2017, addresses 55 graduates of BC3's Nursing, R.N. program from the stage of Succop Theater on BC3's main campus in Butler Township on Thursday, May 9, 2019.

(Butler, PA) The president and chief executive officer of Butler Health System twisted a 39-inch-wide lectern on the stage of Butler County Community College's Succop Theater 90 degrees clockwise on Thursday evening, away from the crowd of 430 and toward the 55 BC3 registered nursing graduates seated behind him, and challenged each to "never stop learning."

"There is so much to learn," said Kenneth DeFurio, whose health system, with 2,500 workers, is the largest employer in Butler County. "There is so much to learn.

"You will, as graduate nurses, know just enough to get around. But you have so far to go. And I want you to embrace that. If you see a doctor rounding, ask if you can go with him or her. When you see nurse practitioners rounding, ask if you can go with them and learn from him or her. When you see a lab test that you have never seen before, ask what it is, why it is being done and what the results mean. ... Never stop learning."

Ashley Bailey accepted the challenge, as did Christopher Hornberger and Thuy Tran, and their 52 classmates from six counties who Thursday evening received BC3 pins for having learned the 20 courses representing 70 credits in the associate of applied science degree program in Nursing, R.N.

Human anatomy and physiology I. And II. Nursing I, II, III, IV and V. Pharmacology for nurses I through IV. Medical terminology and general microbiology, and human growth and development, also among them.

Courses that eliminate 30 percent of the students before they would graduate from BC3's program.

Courses that, if passed, are followed by the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses, in which BC3 graduates had a 90 percent success rate in 2018 and a 93 percent rate over the past two years.



Graduates of Butler County Community College's associate of applied science degree program in Nursing, R.N., from left, Ashley Bailey, of Cranberry Township; Christopher Hornberger, of Cowansville, Armstrong County; and Thuy Tran, of Pittsburgh; are shown Thursday, May 9, 2019, in front of Succop Theater on BC3's main campus in Butler Township.

“Stories of how demanding it was”

“It was very personal that he turned to us and directed it toward us,” said Bailey, 25, of Cranberry Township. “It put into perspective that no matter how much experience you have, to be humble, keep going and keep learning as a professional.”

DeFurio, also a BC3 trustee since October 2017, was the keynote speaker at the 45th anniversary of a BC3 program that graduated its first class of registered nurses in 1974.

It's a program, said Hornberger, 22, of Armstrong County, that takes “professionalism to a whole new level.

“I had heard so many stories of how demanding it was and the challenges it would bring to the table. I decided that it was a challenge I was willing to accept.”

As did Thuy Tran, 23, of Allegheny County, a native of Vietnam who moved to the United States at age 17 and is excited in that “Once we pass our NCLEX exam, we can start working and gain experience as an R.N. right away.”

Registered nursing is expected to see a 15 percent increase in jobs through 2026, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. It was among the Top 20 paying

occupations in 2018 that require only an associate degree, with a median salary of \$68,450, according to GetEducated.Com.

Ninety-six percent of 2018 BC3 graduates who sought registered nursing positions have been successful, said Patty Annear, dean of BC3's Shaffer School of Nursing and Allied Health, a division renamed after a \$1 million gift to BC3's health care programs in February 2018 from former state Sen. Tim Shaffer, of Prospect.

A \$1 million gift in September 2017 from Janice Phillips Larrick, of Butler Township, will help to create the proposed state-of-the-art Victor K. Phillips Nursing and Allied Health Building at the south end of BC3's main campus.

"I know you may be thinking onstage, 'I graduated a couple of years too early,'" said Dr. Nick Neupauer, BC3 president. "But I want to emphasize this to you. None of this is possible without your tremendous success. I brag about it constantly. I hear Mr. DeFurio doing the same. We are forever indebted to each of you."

BC3 in 2020 will graduate its first class of those with registered nursing degrees at BC3 @ Brockway, Jefferson County, following a program that began in August. BC3 offers pre-nursing courses at its main campus and BC3 @ Brockway, at BC3 @ Armstrong in Ford City; at BC3 in Cranberry in Cranberry Township; at BC3 @ Lawrence Crossing in New Castle; and at BC3 @ LindenPointe in Hermitage.

55 registered nursing graduates from six counties

BC3's Class of 2019 registered nursing graduates are Thomas Amato, Clarion; Amethyst Ash, Bessemer; Ashley Bailey, Cranberry Township; Sarah Baird, Cheswick; Natalie Barkus, Butler; Nichole Barry, New Castle; Rachael Beck, Eau Claire; Jassimyn Broe, Portersville; Isabella Chiodo, Grove City; Carlie Comer, Lyndora; and Joshua Cranmer, Butler.

Emily Daum, Mars; Mitchell Davis, Butler; Alan Davis, New Castle; Cassandra Dinger, Kittanning; Jacklyn Donley, Ellwood City; Katelynn Gourley, Worthington; Christine Heinsberg, Slippery Rock; Destiny Holt, Butler; Christopher Hornberger, Cowansville; Taylor Hoscheid, Sarver; and Marisa Irwin, Shippenville.

Olivia Iseman, Ford City; Maren Jones, Karns City; Kathryn Kline, Valencia; Tina Koss, Fenelton; Ricki Lichanec, Ford City; Marissa Marsh, Butler; Lisa McCloskey, Butler; Sydnie Mershimer, West Sunbury; Lauren Mitchell, Seneca; Jonathan Morgan, Evans City; and Jake Morrison, Freeport.

Thanh Ngo, Cranberry Township; Leah Osche, Butler; Ashley Painter, Adrian; Andrea Paradis, Leechburg; Kendra Perkins, New Castle; Cecelia Pellegrino, Butler; Candice Pennington, Renfrew; Alyssa Plyler, Butler; Christina Ray, Stoneboro; Jennifer Reamer, Sarver; and Kiersten Rothen, Butler.

Morgan Sandusky, Butler; Tisha Sharrer, Kittanning; Jensen Slagle, Kittanning; Katie Speranza, Butler; Rose Stafura, Harmony; Jonatha Staniech, Volant; Amber Toner, Lyndora; Thuy Tran, Pittsburgh; Kaitlyn Turney, Hilliards; Brooke Walters, Evans City; and Stephanie Watterson, Butler.