

# BC3 president selected to discuss college's initiatives on PCN show

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Dr. Nick Neupauer, right, president of Butler County Community College, is shown during the recording of “Inside PA Boroughs” in Harrisburg on Wednesday, Nov. 14, 2018. At center is Chris Cap, host and moderator of the show, and at left, Victor Rodgers, associate provost of Workforce Development at Harrisburg Area Community College. The show will be broadcast on PCN at 5 p.m. Jan. 13; at 6:30 a.m. Jan. 20; at 2 p.m. Jan. 27; and at 6:30 p.m. Feb. 3.

(Butler, PA) Dr. Nick Neupauer will discuss Butler County Community College’s new downtown Butler initiatives and the advantages of a community college education when he becomes the first community college president in the state to appear on a cable television program that reaches 4 million Pennsylvania households.

Neupauer, president of BC3, will be one of two guests when “Inside PA Boroughs” opens its 2019 season at 5 p.m. Jan. 13 on PCN.

The half-hour show will “explore the vital role community colleges play in workforce development and economic development, and how these institutions must adapt to a changing workforce and expand access to underserved areas,” said Leslie Suhr, managing producer of the 4-year-old program and director of public affairs and new media of the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs, which created the show.

Neupauer is in his 12th year as BC3's president and is the longest-serving active president among Pennsylvania's 14 community colleges, its 14 State System of Higher Education institutions and its four state-related schools – Lincoln, Penn State and Temple universities, and the University of Pittsburgh.

The first community college president in Pennsylvania to appear as a guest on the show was selected, Suhr said, "after we learned about some of the initiatives spearheaded at Butler County Community College. Additionally, with many campuses, the college is identifiable regionally."

In addition to its main campus in Butler Township, BC3 has additional locations in Brockway, Jefferson County; Cranberry Township, Butler County; Ford City, Armstrong County; Hermitage, Mercer County; and New Castle, Lawrence County.

While many "Inside PA Boroughs" guests are municipal officials such as mayors, council members or managers, "We also engage other guests who are experts in their fields," Suhr said.

"In addition to topics like police management, fire service, blight or municipal budgeting, we feel it is important to explore other issues that could impact local communities such as tourism, the drug epidemic and town-gown relationships."

As part of its 2017-2022 strategic plan, BC3 created the position of coordinator of community leadership initiatives and, by moving that office in August to South Main Street, established its first presence in the city of Butler. The college in 2018 also launched a series of programming aimed at addressing opioid addiction; encouraged its employees to volunteer at a nonprofit organization for up to four hours a month on work time; and created professional development workshops that represent the first open programming in downtown Butler by the college's Workforce Development division.

Neupauer will also discuss his work with Mark Gordon, Butler County's chief of economic development and planning, in developing the Butler Growth Collaborative, which coordinates the efforts of county development leaders, and the benefits of attending a community college that include affordability, accessibility and quality of education.

"I often reference that in life we all have choices to make," Neupauer said. "If someone wants the overall college experience, and on the back end come out with the \$37,000 to \$40,000 average in student loan debt, that is certainly one's choice. The other path is that you save on cost and get the same quality."

Pennsylvania college students face an average of \$36,193 in student-loan debt, the highest in the nation, LendEdu reported Aug. 8. BC3's tuition is the most affordable among 42 regional colleges and universities, according to the U.S. Department of Education, and 75 percent of its graduates are debt-free.

"I like to talk about the proactive choice of selecting BC3 to keep debt down and cost down," Neupauer said. "What makes it even better is that we have such high quality."

BC3 has been ranked as the No. 1 community college in Pennsylvania in back-to-back surveys by Schools.com.

Neupauer will be joined as a guest on the show by Victor Rodgers, associate provost of Workforce Development at Harrisburg Area Community College. The program will also be broadcast at 6:30 a.m. Jan. 20; at 2 p.m. Jan. 27; and at 6:30 p.m. Feb. 3.