

BC3 to showcase advantages at Oct. 17 open house

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(Butler, PA) Visitors to Butler County Community College's Oct. 17 open house can learn how 75 percent of BC3 graduates are debt-free, how BC3 has the highest salary-to-cost ratio among 42 regional colleges and universities, according to U.S. Department of Education, and why BC3 has been ranked the No. 1 community college in Pennsylvania in back-to-back surveys by Schools.com.

Those who attend the open house can also learn about BC3 partnerships that allow students to earn a bachelor's degree on BC3's main campus or online, about BC3's flexible course scheduling options that meet students' needs, and about associate degree programs that enable students to transfer to a four-year college or university or to start a career upon graduation.

BC3 will waive its \$25 application fee for those who apply for admission during the open house, scheduled from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on its main campus in Butler Township.

The open house will be held in Founders Hall. Information sessions will take place in Succop Theater at 5 p.m. on BC3's registered nursing program and at 6:30 p.m. on financial aid and scholarships.

Eighty percent of BC3 students receive grants and scholarships to help them pay for their education. U.S. Department of Education data also show that BC3's tuition is more affordable than that of 41 other regional colleges and universities.

Seventy-one percent of Pennsylvania college graduates have student loan debt, according to The Institute for College Access & Success. The average student loan debt in Pennsylvania is \$36,193 – the highest in the nation, LendEdu reported Aug. 8. The Pittsburgh metropolitan area also leads the nation with nearly 13 percent of borrowers owing more in student loan debt than they do on their homes, MagnifyMoney reported Oct. 3.

Seventy-five percent of BC3 graduates are debt-free.

Among them, Jocelyn Guy, of Prospect, and Ryan Simmons, of Zelienople.



Jocelyn Guy, left, of Prospect, and Ryan Simmons, of Zelienople, are shown during Butler County Community College's Class of 2018 Commencement on May 16, 2018. Each graduated debt-free from BC3, Guy with an associate degree in business administration and Simmons, with an associate degree in criminology.

“The affordability and convenience of going to community college is amazing,” said Guy, who in May earned an associate degree in business administration. “I got to transfer without any debt. The teachers and administration were so helpful and would do anything to help students succeed.”

Simmons earned an associate degree in criminology in BC3’s Class of 2018.

“The professors are some of the best around and are always available to help you succeed in whatever you want to accomplish.” Simmons said. “Overall, BC3 has changed my life for the better and I have become a stronger individual from my experiences here.”

The BC3 Education Foundation awards nearly \$200,000 in scholarships each year. BC3’s top-ranked salary-to-cost ratio means graduates will earn the most compared to what they spend to attend BC3.

BC3 offers 56 two-year career and transfer programs and 21 certificate and workplace certificate programs in business, humanities and social science, nursing and allied health, and in STEM.

Public, private and online four-year colleges and universities recognize BC3 credits. Students who complete an associate degree at BC3 in one of 12 select programs can transfer to any Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education institution with junior standing. Representatives from BC3’s most popular transfer destinations will attend the Oct. 17 open house.

Students can pursue bachelor’s degree-completion programs on BC3’s main campus in psychology and in information technology, with a minor in management, from La Roche College; and in accounting from Clarion University of Pennsylvania through classes broadcast live to BC3.

BC3’s unique partnerships also enable students to complete a bachelor’s degree online in communications-public relations, and in nursing, from Chatham University; in business administration, from Franklin University; in human resource management, from Point Park University; in administration of justice, from the University of Pittsburgh; and in nursing, from Waynesburg University.

5 scheduling options available

Traditional and nontraditional students can capitalize on BC3’s 14- and 10-week sessions, and its five-week Fast Tracks, held consecutively throughout the semester and in which students can take three-credit courses that are among the college’s more than 100 online classes.

High school students attending BC3’s open house can learn how to earn transferrable college credits through BC3’s College Within the High School and College Pathways programs.

Visitors can RSVP to the open house at bc3.edu/open-houses.