

Be open to creative workplace solutions, BC3 Lunch & Learn presenter says

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Cathy Jones, a Butler County Community College instructor, is shown Saturday, Nov. 3, 2018, near her home in Ellwood City. Her Outside the Box-Creative Thinking Seminar as part of BC3's Lunch & Learn Series is set for Nov. 16 at the Butler Public Library.

(Butler, PA) A Butler County Community College instructor who since 2007 has taught courses such as general psychology, drawing and creative thinking will advise participants in BC3's Lunch & Learn Series presentation on Nov. 16 that time- and cost-saving solutions to workplace obstacles can be found within the very imaginations of an organization's staff members.

"All people are creative," said Cathy Jones, whose Outside the Box-Creative Thinking Seminar at the Butler Public Library will be the second of six Lunch & Learn professional skills workshops to be held in downtown Butler locations through June as part of the first open programming in the city by BC3's Workforce Development division.

The 90-minute Lunch & Learns begin at 11:30 a.m. with a chance to network, followed by a light lunch and the presentation.

Jones will encourage participants to redefine their understanding of creativity – “They have this little box in which they feel creative people are only those who are artists or musicians or writers. And that is not true” – and to overcome hesitancy to suggest ideas to co-workers and supervisors that stimulate efficiency and productivity in their workplace.

“You might have this great idea that might streamline a process, but you are not going to say anything because you don’t believe it’s a good idea,” Jones said. “Your inner critic comes out and says, ‘That is a stupid idea.’ So you don’t say anything.”

Such ideas, Jones said, could be “fantastic” and enhance operations in accounting procedures, mailroom distribution and interdepartmental communication.

Jones will help participants recognize blocks to creativity that include perfectionism, workaholism and obeying that “inner critic.”

“We have many ways to stop ourselves,” she said. “No matter how many ideas you come up with, you must take action. There has to be an action step, something that moves you toward your goal. It doesn’t have to be huge, just something that keeps you moving. If you don’t take action, you will always ‘just have ideas’ that you are ‘working on.’”

BC3’s Lunch & Learn Series represents the implementation of an initiative in BC3’s 2017-2022 strategic plan in that it is intended to build relationships to advance economic development and quality of life in the community, said Kelly McKissick, BC3’s coordinator of professional education and certificate programs.

4 additional workshops set for 2019

Kelly Connolly, of Lutheran SeniorLife’s Visiting Nurses Association of Western Pennsylvania, will address common grief reactions, triggers and rapidly changing emotions in Grief in the Workplace, set for Feb. 6 at ConnectWork on Main.

Christopher Yco, an instructor with BC3’s Workforce Development division, will discuss Goal Setting during an April 17 Lunch & Learn at The Grand Ballroom.

Kiley Cribbs, BC3’s coordinator of EMS and police training programs, will educate participants on the signs and symptoms of a person in cardiac arrest and in need of CPR, and the management of the first few minutes of a cardiac emergency, in Hands-Only CPR – Save a Life, scheduled for May 22 at Springhill Suites by Marriott.

Tricia Pritchard, a BC3 faculty member, will help participants develop listening practices that will help them influence others, reduce conflict and increase productivity in Active Listening, to be held June 12 at The Chop Shop.

The cost for each Lunch & Learn will be \$10 per person. Seating is limited, and registration is required. To register, visit bc3.edu/lunch-learn or call 724-287-8711, Ext. 8476 for corporate billing. Lunch & Learn participants interested in additional information or training on the topics can contact BC3's Workforce Development division, McKissick said.

BC3's Lunch & Learn Series follows the realization of 2017-2022 strategic plan initiatives that include the creation of a coordinator of community leadership initiatives position and, by moving that office in August to a South Main Street location, establishing BC3's first presence in the city of Butler. The college in 2018 also launched "Reset Your Brain: A Revolutionary Approach to Opioid Addiction & Recovery," whose three monthlong "Hope is Dope" programs this year were held in downtown Butler.

BC3 has also promoted service to nonprofit organizations among its employees, which has resulted in 44 workers serving a combined 256 hours since Jan. 1 at the Light of Life Community Outreach on West North Street. The college this fall is also offering the most noncredit Lifelong Learning courses in the city in 10 years.