

Sold on BC3 @ LindenPointe: Future sales rep graduates debt-free, praises small classes

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(Hermitage, PA) Butler County Community College's Class of 2020 will eclipse 560 graduates for a fourth consecutive year, and features a 61-year-old disabled veteran, an entrepreneurial 17-year-old and an ambitious BC3 @ LindenPointe student who foresees a future in sales because she thrives when chasing a goal.

Carlee Benedict, 19, of Hermitage, also thrived at BC3 @ LindenPointe, where she was recognized for academic achievements while serving in three of the college's clubs or organizations and working 24 hours each weekend in a department store.

Benedict as a Girl Scout sold cookies as a member of Troop 30359. As a Sharpsville school district choir soprano, candy bars. As a Sharpsville High club member, metal tumblers. And she herself was sold on attending BC3 @ LindenPointe because of its accessibility, quality of education and affordability.

BC3's additional location in Hermitage appealed to her because it was "five minutes from my house," has "a great selection of programs" and represented the possibility of graduating debt-free – which was "a big factor," said Benedict, who this month will receive an associate degree in BC3's general studies program.

It was BC3's small class sizes that sealed the deal, she said.

"I chose BC3 because of the (15:1) student-to-faculty ratio," Benedict said. "I feel like that gives you a more personalized experience and it encourages more active participation with the teachers versus just being like a number, in a sense."



Carlee Benedict, 19, of Hermitage, will receive an associate degree in general studies this month from BC3 @ LindenPointe and join the 70 percent of BC3 graduates who are debt-free.

Graduating debt-free “feels amazing”

She intends to transfer Youngstown State University and pursue a bachelor’s degree in business after joining the 70 percent of BC3 graduates who are debt-free.

“It feels amazing knowing that I won’t have those loan payments every month,” Benedict said, “because I know a lot of people who really struggle with it. And it sets them behind on a lot of things.”

Benedict this spring was among the 66 percent of BC3 students enrolled in two-year transfer programs. BC3’s credits transfer to public, private and online four-year colleges and universities. The college’s 60-credit general studies program is the second-most popular in its Class of 2020.

En route to what she envisions as a sales career in the pharmaceutical industry, Benedict three times attained BC3 president’s list, an honor recognizing students who have attained at least a 3.75 grade-point average.

She was also a member of BC3’s Rho Phi chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, an international academic honor society, and of BC3 @ LindenPointe’s social work and psychology, and gardening and beautification, clubs.

“Having a goal,” Benedict said, “really motivates me into trying my best. I like to set goals for myself and I try to accomplish them.”

Among 31 student-veterans, BC3’s most senior graduate in 2020

BC3’s Class of 2020 includes 563 graduates, 518 of whom will receive associate degrees in career or transfer programs, and 71 of whom will receive certificates or workplace certificates that take one year or less to complete.

Kathleen Cashaw, 61, of Butler, a disabled veteran, is the college’s most-senior graduate in the Class of 2020, with an associate degree in BC3’s medical assistant career program. She is also one of 31 student-veterans in BC3’s Class of 2020.

Saylee Grinnen, 17, of Wampum, is the youngest.

Grinnen is among nine students in the 2-year-old Riv-Ell Entrepreneurship Program for Lincoln and Riverside high schools. The program, a collaborative effort among BC3, the Community College of Beaver County and the Ellwood City Area Chamber of Commerce, blends classroom learning with real-world experience. Students who complete the program earn 16 tuition-free, transferable credits and a BC3 workplace certificate in entrepreneurship.

Students from Valencia and Kittanning earned two associate degrees and one certificate. Victoria Berzonski achieved degrees in criminology and in emergency services-police services option, and a certificate in emergency services-corrections option. Sara Peters earned degrees in business management and technical trades-cosmetology management option, and a workplace certificate in entrepreneurship.

BC3 will also graduate its second class of presidential scholars; 126 members of its Rho Phi chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, an international academic honor society; and 16 members of Delta Theta, its chapter of Kappa Beta Delta, an international honor society for business students.

Thirteen employees of Oberg Industries, a precision manufacturer in Freeport, will receive apprenticeship technology workplace certificates as a result of a program instructed onsite by BC3. Courses in the college's 26-credit apprenticeship technology workplace certificate program, launched in fall 2016, are taught entirely at Oberg Industries.

The top five associate degree programs pursued by students in BC3's Class of 2020 are business administration; general studies; Nursing, R.N.; psychology and criminology. Business administration, general studies, psychology and criminology are among BC3 @ LindenPointe's 15 transfer or career programs.

BC3 @ LindenPointe also offers a medical coding and billing specialist certificate that takes one year or less to complete.