



ESCC NEWSLETTER

FOUNDATION

Fall 2023/Winter 2024



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The mission of the ESCC Foundation is to make a positive difference in the lives of all Eastern Shore citizens by helping to provide the best possible learning and teaching environment.

UPDATE FROM ESCC PRESIDENT DR. JIM SHAEFFER

YES!!!! It finally feels like fall here at Your Eastern Shore Community College! With the change of the seasons comes exciting news from the College and new ventures that are moving us forward to even brighter futures.

Our relationships with NASA Wallops, NASA Goddard, Virginia Spaceport Authority, and the Wallops Contractors Association are solidifying our goal of branding ESCC as the Aerospace College of the Eastern Shore. We have long recognized that many of our graduates are working in fulfilling careers in the aerospace industry. In addition to launching new degree programs in Engineering and Education, and with the support of a \$200,000 planning grant from the Virginia Department of Education, we are working with Accomack and Northampton County School Districts to submit a grant to establish the Aerospace Academy of the Eastern Shore.



ESCC Alums Kim Cherrix of Relative Dynamics and Harold Cherrix of Peraton Launch Solutions with Dr. Shaeffer

Our YES! Culture of hospitality, accountability, transparency, and inclusivity continues to be the foundation of all that we do. Moving beyond the "reboot," our vision is to be the national model of a community college serving a rural area through diverse programming that leads to better lives and a better Shore. To accomplish this goal, we must provide the best possible services and support to all students. Recently, we received great news that ESCC received a grant from the U.S. Department



Dr. Shaeffer with some of the 2023-2024 Johnsen Presidential Scholars

of Education Strengthening Institutions Program of \$329,433 to support our Contact to Career Program which provides students with workplace experiences to move into well-paying jobs and careers.

We could not do what we do without our amazing faculty and staff who are unsung heroes. And of course, we could not provide the assistance we do without the support of ESCC Foundation and our ESCC Foundation Board members who selflessly give of themselves in pursuit of our goals, and our generous donors.

Our Annual Oyster Roast fundraiser will be held Friday, January 26, 2024! We'll have delicious local seafood and BBQ, music, fellowship, a silent auction and more. Proceeds fund scholarships and support our students, so please join us.

We look forward to seeing you around campus and at our events! Take care . . . and say YES! to Your Eastern Shore Community College!!



MEET DR. JOEY WALTER



Dr. Joey Walter

As the new VP of Academic, Workforce and Student Support, I am excited to be part of ESCC's YES! team. While my family and I have only been on the Eastern Shore for a few months, I am overwhelmed at how welcoming, dedicated, and compassionate our college community is. I am so proud to be a part of this team, where faculty and staff greet everyone who walks through our doors, and they strive to make them feel at home on our beautiful campus.

ESCC is a community college in every way. Our doors are open to all. Whether you want to enter the workforce as quickly as possible, transfer to a four-year university, take college dual enrollment classes while in high school, earn your GED, up-skill in specific areas, gain a career studies certificate, earn a stackable certificate, earn a credential, or you want to become proficient in English, ESCC is the school for you!



NCCER Core Construction Class



PTK Honor Society students volunteer at ESCC events with club sponsor Ms. Christina Duffman.

Learning at our college is an investment in your future. Our programs are very affordable, and thanks to the support of ESCC Foundation and our generous donors, we have many scholarships and financial aid opportunities. We truly offer a multitude of programs to fit the needs of our community, and our faculty and staff can help you find your path or continue on your journey to a great job.

Our YES! culture is evidenced by our growing enrollment. As of 10-23-2023 our full-time enrollment (FTE) is up 10.32% over 2022, and total headcount is up 7.99% over 2022. We are also growing our workforce and adult education enrollment with a 9.68% increase in FastForward enrollments and 250 students enrolled in Adult ed classes, far surpassing our state goal (data as of 10-16-2023).

In October ESCC received the Outstanding Education Partnership Award from the Virginia Association for Adult and Continuing Education. This award is a testament to the great work that ESCC is doing to serve all students and the many community partnerships the College shares on the Shore and across the region.

President Shaeffer asked me what my YES! is, and it is being welcoming to everyone. Our faculty and staff are dedicated, compassionate, and committed to ensuring all ESCC students are successful, no matter what their goals are. That is what our YES! culture is all about.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: ESCC ALUM JOLYNN HART HOLLIS GIVES BACK

A native of Melfa, Jolynn Hart Hollis overcame numerous challenges to complete her Associate's degree at ESCC, and now serves as lead Integrated Education Training (IET) instructor in ESCC's Workforce/Adult Education programs.

After my mother's cancer diagnosis, I had to step into the role of family caregiver. I fast-tracked through high school at age 16, completed cosmetology school, and launched into adulthood by 17. Afterward, I cared for my family and grew my business. The path to higher education seemed out of reach.

After twenty years as a successful salon owner, I witnessed 9/11 in person and that led me to reevaluate. I wanted to reach beyond my comfort zone and serve something bigger than myself. The path to ESCC opened naturally, and I began by taking one or two classes at a time. ESCC Foundation scholarships were a blessing and showed me how much the Shore community cares. Life got in the way at times, but I never gave up!

I was able to break the self-imposed chain that was holding me back to complete my Associate of Arts and Sciences degree in 2010, graduating Summa Cum Laude as a First Generation student. The journey made me resilient, adaptable, and confident. I wanted to use my life experiences to help others, so I served as a licensed local pastor

in the United Methodist Church. I still work in bereavement and word ministry under Rev. Paul Nolz at Rock Church of the Eastern Shore. I am currently teaching ESCC's Integrated Education Training classes and also pursuing my B.A. in Professional Development.

One of our strongest tools in ESCC's Workforce/Adult Ed programs is the Road to Success in Virginia (RSVP) grant program. Administered through the Virginia Community College System, the RSVP grant helps students overcome barriers that can derail them such as transportation and childcare, and we leverage additional grants through ESCC Foundation to assist with food and housing insecurity. The goal is to give students tools to achieve self-sufficiency and advocate for themselves by creating gateway classes to career advancement. The program provides opportunities to earn stackable, industry recognized credentials, and is a game changer for students willing to do the work.

Classes support resilient employability through work readiness, soft skills, time management, professionalism and personal growth. Students review vital math formulas, sharpen their communication skills, and advance their tech skills through Northstar Digital Literacy certifications. They showcase their skills in a resume and cover letter and are introduced to Cognitive Behavioral

Therapy, Meyers Briggs Assessments, and other tools to develop self-understanding and self-regulation skills. Additionally, we partner with local banking professionals to provide financial literacy classes.

ESCC's IET vision continues to evolve to meet the needs of each student cohort as they prepare to transition into their chosen career pathways. ESCC is filled with faculty and staff who truly have a heart for people. Our "YES!" culture of hospitality, accountability, inclusion, and transparency helps our students thrive, and our community is definitely better for it.



ESCC Adult Ed Instructor and Alum JoLynn Hart Hollis.

BROTHERS SUCCEED ON DIFFERENT PATHS AT ESCC

Andy and Edson Gomez can often be seen on the ESCC campus, but usually not at the same time or together. The brothers are successfully pursuing their education and career goals, albeit in very different areas of study. Andy commented that “we know that the other is here and we’re supportive of one another, but we are concentrated on taking care of business.”

At one end of ESCC’s program offerings is Andy, who graduated from Nandua High School in 2020. “I have family members in healthcare, and friends too. My aunt is also in nursing school.” Andy will graduate from the LPN Program in August 2024, and plans to apply to the RN Program. “I have been working really hard to soak up every bit of experience. From clinicals and hands-on activities at the hospital and in local schools, our class of 14 students has been given opportunities in a variety of learning environments. ESCC instructors, Ms. Nordstrom and Ms. Bennett, are so supportive and there when we need reinforcement on the skills and materials.”

Andy’s brother Edson graduated from Arcadia High School in 2019. “I spent lots of time really researching careers and determining what I would find interesting, enjoyable, and rewarding.” Edson concluded that welding could cover all those bases. He explains, “Internships provide a great hands-on opportunity to perfect your skills. I’ve been able to work with Coastal Precast and gain valuable time and experience behind the torch. Welding is a skill that takes time to master, and I’ve been fortunate to grow my skills along with opportunities, as my internship resulted in a full-time position.” Edson graduated from ESCC in October with a Technical Studies degree in Welding and an HVAC Certificate. “I’m building up everything I need to meet my goals, and ultimately start my own business.”

Despite their different paths at ESCC, Andy and Edson are both seizing opportunities at ESCC to learn skills that lead directly to in-demand and rewarding careers.



Brothers Andy and Edson Gomez shine in their respective areas of study at ESCC.

ALUMNI AND HOMECOMING CELEBRATION

Over 200 ESCC alumni and friends gathered on campus October 6 to reconnect with former students, current students, faculty, and staff.

In addition to food trucks, music, and ESCC club demonstrations, our Alumni Celebration honored the late Robin Rich-Coates, former Biology and Chemistry instructor and Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Advisor. A tree was dedicated in Robin's memory and a plaque unveiled in the Learning Resource Center to acknowledge her many contributions to the ESCC community.

From ESCC alumni aerospace professionals reuniting with our electronics instructors, to former administrators visiting with college leaders and students helping with the event, our Homecoming Celebration celebrated ESCC's vital role in student success on the Shore.

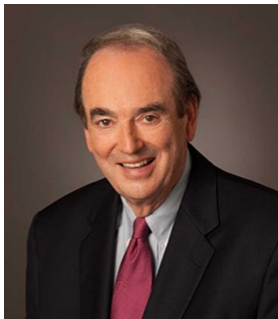


Family and friends of Robin Rich-Coates at the dedication of her memorial tree.



Students, Alumni and families enjoy gathering on campus.

NEW MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP HONORS DR. "BILLY" GREER



The ESCC community lost a good friend with the passing of former Interim President, Dr. William T. Greer, Jr. on August 30, 2023.

Following his retirement as President at Virginia Wesleyan

University, Dr. "Billy" Greer joined the ESCC Foundation Board of Directors in 2016 where he was a key contributor and fundraiser for ESCC's capital campaign. He served as guest speaker at ESCC's 2016 Commencement, and upon departure of outgoing ESCC President Dr. Linda Thomas Glover, Dr. Greer served as interim president for 18 months until our current president, Dr. Jim Shaeffer, came on board in July 2019.

Dr. Jim Shaeffer reflects, "I think I speak for so many of us at the college and in the community

that Dr. Greer truly loved serving and supporting the Shore's diverse population. He was a friend to so many and will be greatly missed."

The Greer family has dedicated memorial gifts to ESCC Foundation, earmarked for the Dr. William Thomas Greer, Jr. Scholarship Fund for Deserving Students.



LPN graduates celebrate their accomplishments.

PROJECT HORIZONS/ PROJECT DISCOVERY

Fourteen recent Project Horizons high school grads are currently enrolled at ESCC, our highest number ever! After receiving top ratings from the Project Discovery team that administers the federal grant in Virginia, our 2023-2024 Project Discovery grant nearly doubled from \$20,000 to \$39,000 to serve 57 students in Accomack and Northampton Counties in grades 7-12. Leaders from ESAAA/CAA continue to serve on our Advisory Board.

Coordinator Miriam Cornwell (ESCC Class of 2006) explains, "Increased funding enables us to provide more individualized connections tailored to each student's interests and needs." Miriam meets regularly with seniors to assist with scholarship applications, college essays, career exploration, and goal setting.

Field trips are an important component. Project Horizons high schoolers toured Eastern Shore Rural Health's Onley facility in August, and middle schoolers traveled to Hog Island with The Nature Conservancy in November. Older students will tour Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital to explore careers in health care. Several college tours and an adventure day at YMCA's Camp Silver Beach are in the works for Spring 2024.

Project Horizons provides a direct pathway to ESCC where two years of free tuition is guaranteed by ESCC Foundation. Miriam explains, "We are thrilled to have such a large cohort of grads attending ESCC. We meet regularly to help them stay on track, and connect with mentors through our career services program."

Leave a Legacy

The ESCC Legacy Society encourages all who support the College's mission to use their financial estate planning to help ESCC maintain the affordable access and educational excellence that help our students succeed.

If you have included ESCC Foundation in your estate planning, or would like details on how to do so, please contact Patty at 757-789-1749 or pkellam@es.vccs.edu. Information is also posted online at es.vccs.edu/about/escf-foundation/

We invite you to show support by giving online or in the attached envelope to help students access great programs.



Project Horizons students practice leadership skills through hands-on activities



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DON'T MISS OUR OYSTER ROAST FUNDRAISER



ESCC Foundation will host its annual Oyster Roast with all proceeds funding scholarships and supportive services for students such as tutoring, healthy snacks and emergency aid.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 26, 2024 FROM 5:30 TO 8:30 PM

Join us on campus for live music, local seafood roasted and steamed on site, chowder, BBQ, sides, craft beer and more, plus a fun silent auction! This is our primary fundraising event, and sponsorships are available.

Thank you to our Lead and Major Sponsors:



TICKETS ON SALE AT [ES.VCCS.EDU](https://es.vccs.edu) OR 757-789-1749