



# ESCC NEWSLETTER

FOUNDATION

SUMMER 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 President Jim Shaeffer

Your Eastern Shore Community College completed another outstanding academic year. We celebrated our 53rd annual commencement in May – the largest in my tenure - with over 1,000 people in attendance on campus and another 5,700 attending via live feed. The Honorable Jamar Walker, a Nandua High School graduate and uncle of our own Kenny Walker, was our keynote speaker and his message “always pull someone up as you move forward” resonated not only with our graduates, but with those in the audience.

Enrollments continue to rise. With 417 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) students enrolled in academic year 2023-2024 and our headcount at 720 students, our FTE is up 26% and headcount is up 16% since 2019. The growth in workforce numbers since 2019 is simply astounding. In 2019 we had 157 enrollments in workforce programs, and this year we are on track to exceed 900 enrollments, an increase of well over 400%.

Support for our students remains a high priority. A \$1.7 million Title III grant from the US Department of Education is funding our first student Contact to Career Center which provides career services and matches students and alumni to internships and well-paying jobs in the community and beyond. Please see the next page for details.



Dr. Shaeffer and SGA President Jackson Thierfeldt



Dr. Shaeffer congratulates Medical Assistant graduates

Scholarship opportunities continue to grow. Through your support of our ESCC Foundation and our annual Oyster Roast, the numbers of scholarships, students served, and the amount awarded per student has grown tremendously. In 2023-2024, the Eastern Shore Community College Foundation awarded over \$235,000 in scholarships to help students enroll, in addition to providing critical supportive services to ensure that they can stay enrolled and complete their education.

Recruitment of new students and bringing back students who have “stopped out” is critical to support our continued growth. In addition to providing in-house services and support, we are pursuing creative ways of attracting new students. We are working with the Boards of Supervisors in Accomack and Northampton counties, along with ESCC Foundation, to launch a soccer program for men and women. Adding soccer will provide opportunities for students from our successful high school teams to play at the collegiate level while attending ESCC, and soccer will help us attract students from beyond the Shore.

As ESCC president, I encourage you to stop by to say hello and experience first-hand our YES! culture of hospitality, accountability, inclusivity, and transparency. We are here for the entire Eastern Shore community and we welcome you to our campus!



## ESCC's Moore Earns Doctorate and Awards



Dr. Emily Moore

Congratulations to Dr. Emily Hanson Moore, who recently completed her Ph.D. in Community College Leadership from Old Dominion University's Darden School of Education and Professional Studies. Dr. Moore was recently promoted to Associate Professor of

English and Communication Studies at ESCC and has served as Department Chair for Liberal Arts and Social Sciences since 2018. As a doctoral candidate, she successfully defended her dissertation titled, *Work-Life Balance Fantasy of Mothers Working in Community Colleges: A Glitch Methodology Using Artful, Intimate Inquiry*.

Dr. Moore was awarded ODU's Darden College of Education and Professional Studies Leadership Award for demonstrated outstanding academic performance and community involvement. She also received the ESCC Faculty Recognition for Scholarly and Creative Engagement for research related to her dissertation study and the ESCC Faculty Reward for Institutional Responsibility for extraordinary accomplishment in the leadership of her department and service to the institution. President Jim Shaeffer states, “All of us at Your Eastern Shore Community College are so proud of Dr. Moore. She has been the model for balancing school, work, and family, and we are so fortunate to have her as a leader on our faculty.”

Reflecting on her dissertation, Dr. Moore shares, “In my research and life, I’ve found that no one truly feels balanced when working and mothering, so maybe that shouldn’t be the goal. Connection and support are vital, especially for working parents who are also students. I’ve been fortunate to be supported by ESCC as part of my village, and I’m passionate about paying it forward through my work.”

## Vice President of Academic, Student and Workforce Programs: Dr. Joey Walter



ESCC is a community college in every way. Our doors are open to all members of our Eastern Shore community, and we offer a wide variety of affordable programs. Whether you want to enter the workforce as quickly as possible, transfer to a four-year university, earn your GED, upskill in specific areas, gain a career studies certificate, earn a stackable certificate or a credential, or you want to become proficient in English, ESCC is the school for you. Through our YES! culture, our dedicated and compassionate faculty and staff are committed to ensuring that all ESCC students are successful. We can also help you launch your career.



Robert McLaugherty and Hayleigh Bradbury welcome students and alumni to ESCC's Contact to Career Center

ESCC's **Contact to Career Center** opened in March 2024 to provide students and alumni with resume and cover letter creation and review, mock interview practice, and connections to mentors, internships, and employment opportunities. Career Services Mentor Hayleigh Bradbury and Career Services Coach Robert McLaugherty offer career assessment opportunities to help students plan their academic and career paths. The center hosts workshops on professionalism in the workplace, resumes, cover letters, and transitioning to college. NASA, Virginia SpacePort Authority, and Community Services Board led Lunch & Learn events for students in April, and a new schedule of Lunch & Learns will begin in September. Since March, the center has served over 160 unique students through outreach events, one-on-one coaching sessions, classroom visits, a job fair, and more. The center is open year-round and located on the first floor near the Neville Student Lounge. For more information, contact [hbradbury@es.vccs.edu](mailto:hbradbury@es.vccs.edu).

ESCC is proud to have been named as one of seven community colleges nationwide in the second cohort of **Achieving the Dream's (ATD) Accelerating Equitable Outcomes** initiative. This cohort is made up of only rural-serving institutions and focuses on transforming students' experiences and outcomes. From the ATD website: <https://achievingthedream.org/our-work/>

*"Achieving the Dream is a partner and champion of hard-working leaders at more than 300 community colleges across the country. The community colleges we work with are distinct: They choose transformation over tradition, curiosity over inaction, innovation over status quo. Drawing on our expert coaches, groundbreaking programs, and national peer network, we build customized growth plans to address the unique challenges each institution faces."*

We are honored that ESCC was selected from a competitive field, and we look forward to developing actionable solutions that will help our faculty and staff reach our goal of ESCC becoming the model community college serving a rural underserved population.

On October 18, ESCC will welcome all 10th graders from across Accomack and Northampton Counties to campus for our first-ever **Career Adventure Day**. Students will explore various career fields through hands-on learning activities. Many local business partners have already registered for what should be a great day to engage Shore youth and our future students. For more information, contact [jwalter@es.vccs.edu](mailto:jwalter@es.vccs.edu).

As I begin my second year at ESCC, I am excited for our future, and I hope that you will consider ESCC as part of your YES!



NCCER Core Construction Trades students built a doghouse as a class project and donated it to the Eastern Shore SPCA

## Triple Alumni Success Carlens Jean: Headed to Medical School!



Growing up in Haiti, Carlens Jean tutored young children to help give them tools to build brighter futures. In that role he saw the many health challenges they faced such as limited access to healthcare, lack of proper nutrition, and inadequate living conditions.

Wanting a fresh start after one of Haiti's devastating earthquakes, Carlens followed his mother to the Eastern Shore in 2018 when she took a job at Perdue Farms, and he began working there part-time. He enrolled in ESCC's English as a Second Language class in Fall 2018, and quickly learned English by studying many hours outside of classes while transitioning to GED classes.

Carlens passed all four GED tests in only two months, enrolled in college classes in Fall 2019 and graduated with his Associate's Degree in Spring of 2021 with a 3.8 GPA. ESCC's Professor of Biology, Dr. Alex Foxworthy, encouraged Carlens' passion for science by connecting him with a paid internship at UVA's Coastal Research Center in Oyster. There, Carlens conducted research in seagrass meadows.

Carlens says he is a triple alumni of Eastern Shore Community College. After moving to Florida to help his father, he transferred to Florida International University (Honors College) where he received his BS in chemistry in the Pre-Med track. He is now on the path to fulfill his dream of being a physician. He is currently doing research at Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine in the department of immunology and nanomedicine lab and preparing to go to Kansas City University Medical School for the next step of his academic journey. He is well on his way to becoming "Dr. Carlens Jean" and is grateful for getting his start at ESCC and to the ESCC Foundation for scholarships and paid internships along the way.

## Perdue Foundation Funds Summer ESL Program

ESCC Foundation is proud to partner with the Franklin P. and Arthur W. Perdue Foundation to support ESCC's growing population of English language learners. With a Perdue Foundation grant of \$17,000, the college is teaching summer classes for English as a Second Language (ESL) learners,

minimizing traditional gaps in instruction time over the summer months. The grant also funds translation and evaluation of transcripts from students' native countries, as well as Burlington Online English Licenses, a standards-based curriculum that offers flexibility and support for adult English language learners.



ESL Instructor Heather Littlefield (front) poses with ESCC ESL students. Perdue Foundation is funding ESL classes for Summer 2024.

*"Perdue's critical funding provides two daytime ESL classes for 5-week sessions, in addition to two night-time ESL classes for five weeks. We are grateful to Perdue Foundation for the partnership to expand services for our adult learners. ESL classes are the first step students can take to launch their education at ESCC as Carlens Jean illustrates."*

*Scott Hall,  
Director of ESCC  
Workforce Programs*

## Launching Careers at NASA



Desiree Watson, ESCC 2024

Desiree Watson graduated from Nandua High School in 2019 without a clear plan. After working in retail for a year, she met with a Success Coach at ESCC and learned about career opportunities at Wallops and the classes needed to pursue them. She explains, “Technology is so present in today’s world that I felt the possibilities would be great, so I started electronics at ESCC.”

With scholarship assistance from the Philip E. & Carol R. Ratcliffe Foundation, Desiree enrolled in the Electronics Certificate program. Her interest was sparked when she toured various departments and operations at Wallops on an ESCC class trip. “We had access to NASA professionals, and they explained the wide range of opportunities for ESCC student interns and graduates. Mr. Bob Jameson (Wallops Deputy Director) explained an overview of operations and encouraged us to take advantage of internships.”

ESCC Vice President Dr. Joey Walter explains, “The pipeline of student talent from ESCC to Wallops continues to grow, and our alumni network there is strong. NASA and Wallops contractors provide scholarships and internships, and they want our students. They are hiring not just engineers, but also want technicians, welders, office administrators, and others.”

Desiree obtained her Certificate in Electronics and also completed her Associate of Applied Science in Electronics Technology at ESCC in May 2024. “I’m very excited about opportunities at Wallops, and I’m working with ESCC’s Career Services Center to launch my career there.”



ESCC Foundation is proud to partner with the Ratcliffe Foundation to support students in Workforce programs in the trades.

Ratcliffe CEO Carlene Cassidy visited ESCC in April to meet some of our Ratcliffe Scholars who graduated in May 2024.

Pictured L to R: Electrician Assistant Osiris Gomez-Tinoco, Carlene Cassidy, Electrician Helper Dillon Ruane, ESCC Director of Student Services Amy Shockley, President Jim Shaffer

## Students of All Ages Can Reinvent Themselves at ESCC

No matter your age or experience, Your Eastern Shore Community College can help prepare you for a new career. A Virginia Beach native, Sherry Lockwood relocated to the Eastern Shore in 2011. She recalls, “I had been out of school for 34 years, and I’m not ashamed to say that I found the prospect of returning very intimidating.”

Having pursued cosmetology out of high school and successfully earning state certification, Sherry was interested in changing direction after a few years. “I worked 15 years on the assembly line in the Ford Truck plant in Norfolk until the physical nature of the job required me to have multiple surgeries on my hands.”

Sherry’s husband at the time was moving to the Shore for a job at NASA Wallops Island. She decided to take a buyout as opposed to relocating to another plant when the Norfolk location closed. “My husband encouraged me to follow him to the Shore and return to school. This led me to ESCC!”

“I started with General Studies as I launched back into education after many years away. I immediately connected with ESCC faculty and was amazed to achieve more than I expected.” Sherry earned her Early Childhood Education Support Specialist certificate, in addition to her Uniform Certificate of General Studies and General Studies Associate’s degree.

At 56, with the help of your Eastern Shore Community College, Sherry found her “YES!” in working with children with special needs. “I may even pursue my bachelor’s and ride this wave of confidence that my time at ESCC has given me.” Sherry urges fellow students and those contemplating returning to school, “Do not let anything hold you back. Do it!”



Sherry Lockwood

## Project Horizons/Project Discovery Students Soar



Project Horizons students hone their communication and leadership skills at YMCA Camp Silver Beach.

Project Horizons students enjoyed a busy year of enrichment activities, field trips and events with Coordinator Miriam Cornwell and ESCC staff volunteers. Project Horizons delivers college-track mentoring to 59 students in grades 7-12 in Accomack and Northampton Counties. The program provides an extra academic, social, and cultural boost for economically disadvantaged students, most of whom would be first generation college students.

2024 highlights include exploring careers in health care at Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital, hands-on outdoor adventures and team building at YMCA Camp Silver Beach, dance workshop with Latin Ballet of Virginia, college tour to Goldey Beacom College in Delaware, trampoline park outing for middle schoolers, and a year end party at ESCC with awards, rock wall and outdoor activities.

All 12 Project Horizons seniors graduated in June. Four will attend ESCC in the fall, and eight will enroll in four-year universities including: UVA, Virginia Tech, Radford, VCU, Virginia State, and Longwood. Two Project Horizons seniors from Northampton High School were awarded competitive full scholarships to attend engineering programs.

Desmand Wessells (pictured right in red sweatshirt) will attend UVA's School of Engineering as a prestigious Gates Scholar, where he will study electrical engineering with 100% of his tuition, fees, and expenses paid for four years. Desmand joined Project Horizons in Fall 2023, and has put in many long hours with Program Coordinator

Miriam Cornwell, completing college applications, applying for scholarships, and attending a job shadow day at NASA Wallops, as well as other field trips.

Desmand explains, "If it weren't for Ms. Miriam keeping me on track, I would not have been able to complete the application for the Gates scholarship. I am excited to attend UVA Engineering, and my goal is to work as an engineer at NASA Wallops in the future."

Fellow Northampton senior Leonel Rodriguez (pictured below top row, fourth from L) will enroll in Virginia Tech School of Engineering on a full scholarship through VT's highly competitive Presidential Scholarship Initiative (PSI). In addition to 100% of his tuition, fees, and expenses paid, Leonel will also receive extra support, faculty mentoring, and other opportunities as a Virginia Tech PSI Scholar. Project Horizons seniors received total scholarship awards of \$760,722.

Miriam reflects on the year, "We are so proud of our Project Horizons students, and I enjoy seeing them benefit from the program whether they are getting scholarships, an internship, starting to explore future careers, or joining the workforce."

ESCC Foundation guarantees two years of free tuition, fees and books at ESCC for Project Horizons high school graduates. The program is funded through generous donations to ESCC Foundation and operated in partnership with a grant from Project Discovery of Virginia.



Coordinator Miriam Cornwell celebrates Project Horizons seniors. All will attend college in Fall 2024, with four enrolling at ESCC.

## Beth and Charlie Walker: ESCC's 2024 Leaders in Philanthropy



L to R: ESCC Advisory Board Chair Ray Wood, Dr. Jim Shaeffer, ESCC Foundation Exec. Dir. Patty Kellam, VCCS Chancellor Dr. David Dore, Beth Walker, Charlie Walker, ESCC Foundation President Jeremy McLean

ESCC Foundation recognized Beth & Charlie Walker at the 2024 Chancellor's Award for Leadership in Philanthropy event. Beth & Charlie Walker established the Walker Family Scholarship in 2019 to help Eastern Shore students enroll and complete. Their generous support assists DACA and Undocumented students, as well as others with demonstrated financial need. The scholarship recognizes Charlie's mother Mary Walker, who worked at ESCC from 1990-2005 as an instructor in Adult ED/GED, Continuing Education, and as Coordinator of Workforce programs. The flexibility of the Walker Family Scholarship enables ESCC to enroll students who are not eligible for federal or state aid and has helped boost enrollment. The Walkers are also generous sponsors of ESCC fundraising events through their business, and we are grateful for their leadership in philanthropy.

# Many thanks to our January 2024 Oyster Roast Sponsors

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Delicious local seafood and BBQ, live music, a great silent auction, and many student helpers and volunteers make our Oyster Roast a great community event and help us raise funds for scholarships and services for students.

## Mark your calendar for next year's Oyster Roast Friday, January 31, 2025!

## LEAVE A LEGACY FOR FUTURE STUDENTS

The ESCC Legacy Society encourages all who support the College's mission to use their financial and estate planning to help us maintain the affordable access and educational excellence that help our students succeed. When you include ESCC Foundation in your long-term planning, you are making a difference for generations to come.

Foundation scholarships are critical in helping students reach their full potential and achieve fulfilling careers.

If you have included ESCC Foundation in your estate planning, or would like details on how to do so, please contact Patty Kellam at (757)789-1749 or [pkellam@es.vccs.edu](mailto:pkellam@es.vccs.edu). Info is also posted online at: [es.vccs.edu/about/escc-foundation/](http://es.vccs.edu/about/escc-foundation/)



**We invite you to show your support by giving online here or in the attached envelope to help all students access ESCC's great programs.**



Nursing instructor Bonnie Nordstrom with LPN graduate Alicen Doughty. ESCC can launch students into allied health careers all the way to Registered Nurse.



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**ESCC Homecoming and Alumni Celebration: October 11th from 5-8pm**  
Live music, food trucks, prizes and more. *Stay tuned for details!*

## ESCC PTK Honor Society Recognized



ESCC'S PTK Honor Society members inducted in 2024:

L to R back: Brady Gibbons IV, Wesley Eberts, Jackson Theirfeldt, Kentrell Walker (Co-Advisor), Ella Shotwell, Amaya Young, Naima Tucker, Kylie Hewitt, Shanyah Gerald. L to R front: Indyah Davis, Dsani Ray, Akhyah Collins, Maria Jimenez, Christina Duffman (Co-Advisor), Kirstin Estelle (PTK President). Not pictured: Sarah Baugh, Panisha Johnson.

ESCC's Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society took home multiple awards from the Spring 2024 Regional Convention, with 50 chapters representing community colleges across Virginia and West Virginia. Our chapter was honored for: Most Distinguished Chapter, Rising Star, First Place in Distinguished Theme: "Nostalgia as Play," and others. ESCC faculty co-advisor Kenny Walker received the prestigious Horizon Award for an advisor who goes above and beyond in being impactful at their local chapter and in their region.

PTK's fifteen active members give back through community service by assisting with ESCC Foundation's Oyster Roast fundraiser, organizing the Contact to Career clothes closet so students have professional clothes for interviews, preparing and selling concessions for ESCC's Indoor Winter Art

Walk, and giving campus tours during open houses.

Kenny is quick to highlight PTK chapter president and LPN student Kirsten Estelle as a driving force in the club's success. He explains, "Kirsten works tirelessly to organize community service activities for ESCC students and to engage at PTK's state and regional conferences. She and Kaydence DeFrees, Tonychia Copes and Ke'Aria Reid are the Fantastic Four of PTK."

Kirsten was recently elected vice president of the VA/WV region and will attend PTK's Summer Leadership Conference with Maria Jimenez and Indyah Davis. Kirsten will present on "Mental Health and Preventing Student Burnout."

Kenny notes, "PTK Co-Advisor Christina Duffman and I thank President Shaeffer and Vice President Walter for their continued

support of PTK. ESCC Foundation and the college business office provide important additional support." Upon reflecting on the club's success, Kenny, an ESCC PTK alum himself, adds, "I would be remiss if we did not mention our former advisor, the late Ms. Robin Rich Coates. Her spirit of PTK lives on, and we hope we make her proud."



PTK Co-Advisor Kenny Walker and PTK President Kirstin Estelle