

Eastern Shore Community College

ESCC NEWSLETTER

FOUNDATION

Summer 2025



Lucy Hernandez and family celebrate her Associate of Science degree



*ESCC welcomes
President Dr. Daryl Minus!*



*Virginia Community College System
Chancellor Dr. David Dore' congratulates
outgoing President Dr. Jim Shaeffer
on his service to ESCC*

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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.

Welcome ESCC President Dr. Daryl Minus



Dr. Daryl Minus

I first visited the Eastern Shore in the early 1990's as an undergraduate at Hampton University. Now over 30 years later as I begin my role as President of Eastern Shore Community College, I am grateful for the opportunity to lead this outstanding institution and excited to join the fabric of this dynamic community.

It would be easy to say that hard work and preparation caused "stars to miraculously align" for over three decades, culminating in my appointment as ESCC President. While this sounds good, the reality of my journey to the presidency is deeply rooted in the examples set by my parents. Dad and Mom carved out impactful professional careers as teachers and administrators in the District of Columbia Public School System, and I credit them with showing me what it means to have a "servant's heart."

Growing up, my brother and I watched Dad and Mom exercise genuine care, concern, and courage on behalf of students from all walks of life. Little did I know, their examples would serve as the framework for my career trajectory and set a tone for the leader I would become: one that empowers others to be the greatest versions of themselves. As a result, my purpose eventually "found me," and I have proudly served as a community college leader and executive for almost two decades.

As I embrace this full-circle moment and transition from Southside Virginia to settle in Cape Charles, I reflect on what led me to apply for the ESCC presidency: the coastal charm, beauty and culture of the ESVA; my deep affinity for rural colleges and lived experience of what it means to lead in the communities these colleges serve; and the agility and innovation power of a smaller institution to meet the workforce, economic

development and higher education needs of our service area and region. I absolutely would not be where I am without the support and encouragement from my wonderful family: my wife Monica, son Daryl Jr. and daughter Loren. They are my inspirations.



***Hospitality ~ Transparency
Inclusion ~ Accountability***

I could not ask for a better "launch pad" to start my tenure as ESCC's sixth president. I am excited to build on the outstanding momentum generated by Dr. Shaeffer, ESCC faculty and staff, and our community partners. As we turn to a new chapter in ESCC's history, the Your Eastern Shore! (YES!) culture continues to thrive. As a college community, we prioritize our "culture of care" and put expanded focus on efforts that develop and empower students to be career-ready; no matter the pathways they take to reach their education, training, and employment goals. The future is bright at ESCC. Together, great things are possible!



Nursing instructor Beth Perry presents the Mary Jean Ring Adkins Tilghman Nursing Scholarship to first-year RN student Deyanira Sanchez for demonstrating the best bedside manner.



*EKG Technicians
Whitney Barnes and Nicole Mable*

Faculty Excellence and Recognition



Dr. Zhen Li, Ph.D.

We proudly celebrate Dr. Zhen Li on earning her Ph.D. in Computational Applied Math with a Concentration in Computer Science from Old Dominion University. A cornerstone of our STEM math team, Dr. Li's dedication continues to shape student success.

Update from Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs, Workforce, and Student Services: Dr. Ramzi Ockaili



Dr. Ramzi Ockaili

With the arrival of President Daryl Minus, Eastern Shore Community College enters an exciting new chapter. From expanded academic offerings to strategic investments in student success and faculty excellence, ESCC continues to advance with purpose, impact, and a steadfast commitment to serving our community.

Enrollment and Student Engagement

Under the leadership of Director of Student Services Amy Shockley, ESCC continues to build strong momentum with enrollment. Summer headcount is up 19% with Fall headcount surging 62% compared to 2024. Fall Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) has increased by 53%, significantly outpacing the statewide average of 5.94%. To sustain this positive trajectory, weekly Registration Rallies are held throughout summer with Student Services open until 7 p.m. Additionally, Registration Rallies & Financial Aid Open Houses—supported by ESCC Foundation—are scheduled for July 8, July 22, and August 5. Our Caring Campus initiative, developed from our YES! culture, reflects ESCC's unwavering commitment to student success, engagement, and community transformation.

ATD and Title III: Lifting Outcomes with Equity and Innovation

Selected in 2024 as an Achieving the Dream (ATD) institution, ESCC is focused on equity-minded transformation. This national network helps us implement data-informed strategies that improve student achievement, retention, and graduation. ESCC is Growing Our YES! culture, and this work is now being integrated across advising, instruction, and student services.

Hayleigh Bradbury, ESCC's Career Services Mentor, received the 2025 Excellence in Education: Developing Virginia's Talent Award at the April New Horizons Conference for her leadership in launching and growing ESCC's Career Services Center. Funded by a \$1.87 million Title III grant, the center has already served over 500 students and alumni, facilitated 20 work-based learning placements, and grown its mentor program to 19 mentors and 31 mentees. The center continues to gain regional recognition, bolstered by career fairs, partnerships, and Career Coach Heather Coleman's recent certification.

Eastern Shore Community College Celebrates Record-Breaking Year of Workforce Achievement

During 2025, Eastern Shore Community College's Workforce programs reached a milestone, serving 1,124 students through industry credentials, job training, GED completion, and ESL advancement. FastForward enrollments hit a record 500+, with 140 in non-credentialing courses and over 470 supported through Adult Education; WIOA assisted 50+ clients.

Major developments include: the launch of a Hospitality Management program, a \$200,000 gift from Perdue Farms to support ESL students, and a \$1.8 million donation of Uncrewed Aircraft Systems to enhance drone training. In 2026, ESCC will introduce Machining & Additive Manufacturing certification and expand access through partnerships with the Aerospace Academy and the Cape Charles Rosenwald School Initiative.

Looking Ahead

Under Dr. Minus's leadership and with continued support from our generous donors, alumni, and community partners, the future is bright for Eastern Shore Community College. Your gifts make transformative programs like engineering which will begin in Fall 2026 possible (details on page 3). Your belief in our students fuels dreams and drives change. Together, we are building opportunity—for our students, for our region, and for generations to come.

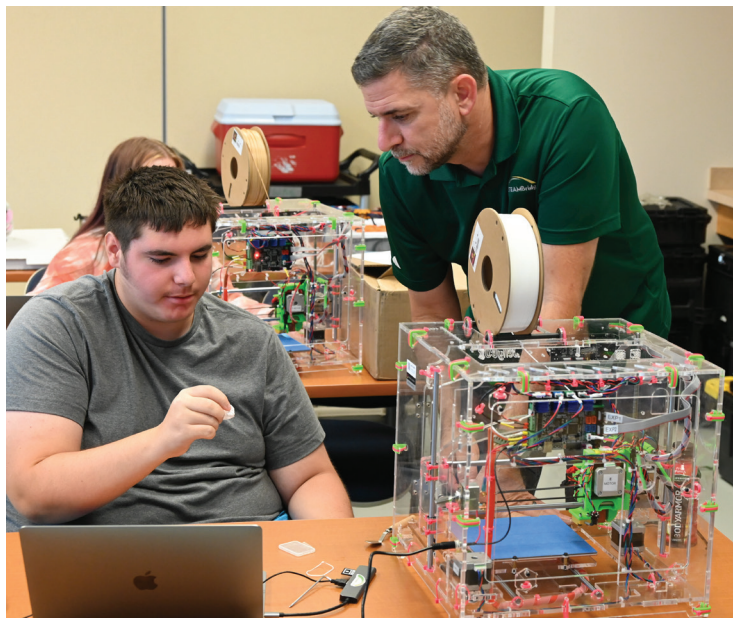


Nursing student Lakisha James (L) refines her resume with Hayleigh Bradbury, who was recognized by VCCS for her leadership in growing ESCC's Career Services Center



ESC's Class of 2025 RN graduates. L to R: Maynor Cifuentes, Heather Gardner, Jackie Hernandez, Sharon Panuco, Kerstin Moyano, Chyna DiMartino, Jessica LeCato

Transformational Gift will Launch Engineering Program



Joel Scharlat of STEAMBridge guides a student through 3-D printing activities

ESCC will launch an Associate of Science degree in Engineering in Fall 2026. The new program is made possible by a lead gift of \$1.25 million from Jane Batten to establish the Batten Engineering Fund at Eastern Shore Community College Foundation. ESCC is an important partner with NASA Wallops, and the college signed MOUs with Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority and Space Act Agreements with NASA Goddard and NASA Wallops to formalize their history in providing internships, as well as a direct pipeline of highly skilled technicians.

With a large percentage of the workforce at Wallops starting their education and job training at ESCC, the college is positioned to become the Aerospace college within the Virginia Community College System. Ms. Batten's investment in innovation and opportunity will prepare Eastern Shore students for high-demand STEM careers and even brighter futures.

ESCC Students Rock On at NASA Workshop



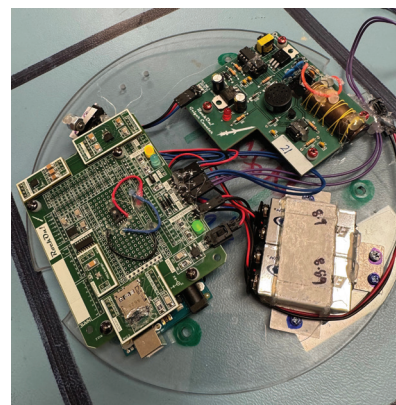
ESCC students Jessica Pedersen and Eduardo Cux Saquic joined Biology instructor Dr. Alex Foxworthy at NASA's RockOn workshop at NASA Wallops June 20-26. ESCC was one of 28 college teams from around the country to gain hands-on experience with rockets and to learn about programs and opportunities at NASA as part of the National space program. Jessica and Eduardo assembled, soldered and programmed the electronics device that was launched in a sounding rocket on June 26. They had front row seats for the 5:00 a.m. launch, then collected and viewed data from their electronics which made the trip to space and back. Students reflect on their week at NASA Wallops:

It's inspiring to see people traveling from all over the U.S. to experience something that we have right here on the Shore. It makes me think that our reach and opportunity as residents of this area is greater than we sometimes think it is. This steppingstone program opens the door for opportunity and gives you the motivation to advance in personal projects on our own or even continuing to Rock Sat C.

Jessica Pedersen

This event inspired me in so many ways - seeing people coming here from all over the country, gaining coding and electronics experience, seeing all the different jobs at NASA, and hearing the direct experiences of an astronaut.

Eduardo Cux Saquic



ESCC students assembled this device that traveled to space and back on a sounding rocket. The electronics include a Geiger counter, magnetometer, accelerometers and sensors measuring humidity, pressure and temperature. It enabled them to view data that captured various aspects of the rocket's June 26 flight.

Ms. Michelle Tinner creates New Health Care Scholarship

ESCC Foundation is honored to award the new \$10,000 Michelle Tinner Scholarship to students pursuing careers in health fields. Ms. Tinner is the proud owner of Love Thy Neighbor Home Care in Hampton Roads and the Eastern Shore, where she employs ESCC students and graduates in home health services. She also owns Pretty Girl Scrubs in Onley and founded Love Thy Neighbor Kares Foundation.

As a Registered Nurse who has worked in the field for over 25 years, Ms. Tinner began her career as a Certified Nursing Assistant. She knows firsthand the challenges that many students face. While taking classes toward becoming a Nurse Aid, working full-time, and caring for her mother who suffered from dementia, she fell short on rent one month, and it was concerned faculty members who stepped in to help so she could complete her coursework and stay enrolled. Ms. Tinner later received her B.S. in Nursing and a dual master's degree in business and health administration, but she never forgot the kindness of others who helped in her time of need.

She recently started the Michelle Tinner Heath Care Scholarship to assist students with tuition, fees and supportive services to help them stay enrolled and complete. She was a keynote speaker at our 2025 Scholarship Luncheon, and we are proud to partner with her to support students in health care.



Workforce Career Coach Quantez Baines, Nursing instructor Tonya Martin, Ms. Michelle Tinner, Love Thy Neighbor's Kenyatta Hall, ESCC Foundation Exec. Director Patty Kellam, Director of Workforce Scott Hall

Workforce IT Students Explore Wallops NOAA Station

Workforce CompTIA TECH+ students visited the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) satellite tracking station at Wallops in June. The tour provided real world exposure to local careers in Information Technology. Students viewed the Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite and Low Earth Orbit IT server room and operations floors, and they met operational personnel. ESCC students observed an actual satellite data pass and watched a 13 meter antenna acquire the JASON3 satellite, track the satellite, receive data and park itself when the satellite pass was completed.

ESCC's CompTIA TECH+ class introduces basic IT knowledge and skills needed to perform tasks by advanced end-users and entry-level IT professionals.

Upon class completion, students can achieve

TECH+ certification when they pass the CompTIA exam which is intended for advanced end users, and/or those pursuing professional-level certifications or careers in IT.



L to R: Johnny Gibbons, Abraham Chatus, ESCC instructor Vernon Dyke, Asia Hall, Ricco Hall

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. Info is also posted online at: es.vccs.edu/about/escc-foundation/

We invite you to show your support by giving online here or in the enclosed envelope to help all students access ESCC programs.



Project Horizons/Discovery Opens Pathways

Project Horizons/Discovery students enjoyed a busy year of enrichment activities, field trips and events with Coordinator Miriam Cornwell and ESCC staff volunteers. Project Horizons/Discovery (PH/D) delivers college and career track mentoring to 51 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.

2025 highlights included hands-on outdoor adventures and team building at Camp Occohannock, Virginia Tattoo at Norfolk Scope, college tour to St. John's College and exploring the Banneker Douglas Museum in Annapolis, and year-end awards parties to celebrate seniors.

All 15 Project Horizons/Discovery seniors graduated in June. Nine will attend ESCC in the fall, and five will enroll in four-year universities including: Virginia Tech, University of Maryland College Park, and Goldey Beacom College. Another recent graduate is joining the Marine Corps. Nandua High School PH/D senior Iris Martinez was awarded a competitive full scholarship to attend Virginia Tech's Engineering program.



Northampton High School Project Horizons/Discovery seniors received year-end awards

Project Horizons/Discovery seniors received total scholarship awards of \$658,304 as of June 30, and all of our seniors will attend their first year of college without having to incur any student debt.

In addition to the Project Horizons Scholarship that guarantees two free years of tuition, books, and fees to graduates who attend ESCC, we continue to support our PH/D alumni. This year, two alumni were hired as interns: one to tutor a younger student and another to assist the Project Horizons/Discovery Coordinator. Some of our alumni at four-year universities participated in a panel to describe their college experiences with current students at our year-end celebration.

Miriam reflects on the year: "It was a privilege to work with each and every Project Horizons/Discovery student this year. I am honored to be a small part of their journey, and it is wonderful to watch students grow as they experience new things and to help them plan for their futures."

The program is funded through generous donations to ESCC Foundation and operated in partnership with a grant from Project Discovery of Virginia.



PH/D students enjoyed team building and hands-on outdoor activities at Camp Occohannock

John Custis: ESCC's 2025 Leader in Philanthropy

ESCC Foundation recognized attorney John Custis for the 2025 Chancellor's Award for Leadership in Philanthropy. Under John's leadership on the Board and as former Chair, ESCC Foundation completed a successful capital campaign and more than doubled the assets of our Foundation. As a generous and loyal supporter of ESCC Foundation, John works with a number of our donors on planned gifts and continues to help ESCC Foundation build its Legacy Society and attract community leaders and businesses to support our mission. John understands the obstacles that some of our students face like food insecurity, transportation, housing and childcare, and his support helps us meet these challenges. He and his wife Abbi give generously to the Foundation, and we are grateful for their leadership in philanthropy.



L to R: ESCC Foundation Exec. Dir. Patty Kellam, Bunny McLean, ESCC Foundation President Jeremy McLean, VCCS Chancellor Dr. David Dore, Board member Paula Dombek, and John Custis

Thank you to our January 2025 Oyster Roast Sponsors

Delicious local seafood and BBQ, live music, a fun silent auction, and many student helpers and volunteers make our Oyster Roast fundraiser a great community event. ESCC Foundation's January Oyster Roast raised over \$40,000 for scholarships and services for students.

Special thanks to top sponsors:

Taylor Bank, Clearstead Advisory Solutions, and Coastline Chemical
for their lead support, and to all who helped make the event a success.



Save the date: January 30, 2026 Oyster Roast

New YES! Fund for Student Success Honors Dr. Jim Shaeffer

ESCC Foundation hosted a celebration May 31 honoring retiring President Jim Shaeffer and raising over \$65,000 to create the new endowed Dr. Jim Shaeffer YES! Fund for Student Success. The sell-out event at Eastern Yacht & Country Club featured a musical tribute by ESCC students who presented him with a painting by recent grad and Eastern Shore Art League member Ma'Lique Gray. At ESCC's May 14 commencement, VCCS Chancellor David Dore saluted Dr. Shaeffer's transformative six years of leadership and success that put the college on a sustainable course to serve our community for years to come.

Dr. Shaeffer reflects:

I'm not sure there are words to describe the support, joy, and love that Peggy and I felt with our family the evening of May 31st. I was humbled by the outpouring of community support. As I leave my position at Your Eastern Shore Community College, I am struck by living proof that YES! is more than a catch phrase. It is a lived belief that will continue to thrive under the leadership of President Dr. Daryl Minus. As I move on knowing the college is in great hands, it's not goodbye. Peggy and I will still be on the Shore and look forward to attending events with our Shore friends and family.



Family members travelled from all over to celebrate Peggy and Dr. Jim Shaeffer (center) upon his retirement. Pictured on far right are Karen and Jeff Tanner, close friends who helped organize and sponsor the event.



Revell and Lisa Lewis congratulate Dr. Shaeffer

If you would like to honor Dr. Shaeffer with a gift to his scholarship, please email:
pkellam@es.vccs.edu



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SAVE THE DATE!

Friday, Oct. 10th

5:30-8:30pm

Annual ESCC

Alumni Block Party

With Live Music, Food Trucks,
Giveaways & more
Check es.vccs.edu
for details!

EASTERN SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE WELCOMES PRESIDENT DARYL MINUS

ESCC is pleased to welcome Dr. Daryl Minus as its sixth president, succeeding Dr. Jim Shaeffer. Dr. Minus is an accomplished, innovative, and collaborative leader who has 28 years of higher education experience, with 12 years in executive leadership roles at three community colleges, including Southside Virginia Community College, one of 23 institutions in the Virginia Community College System (VCCS).

Dr. Minus is a highly-experienced, caring, relationship-builder with proven ability to develop and sustain quality strategic partnerships and generate measurable results that impact student success. He is a vibrant student advocate, and a staunch believer in the transformational power of community colleges as pathways to enhanced economic mobility. We are excited to welcome him to ESCC and the Eastern Shore.

