



PIERPONT COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

FALL 2021

# NETWORK

## NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED

Culinary Arts programs advance elite reputation with national ranking [PG.6](#)

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Vet Tech program  
benefits from  
\$2M investment

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through hands-  
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## A MESSAGE

# From the President

It's here, the start of a new academic term, and I could not be more excited and hopeful for the fall semester and our future.

With the legislative separation from Fairmont State University in full force, and more than five hundred students on the ATC campus and more than four hundred on the Caperton Center campus, it is an opportunity for us to show strength, resolve, and be transformative.

This newsletter, "NetWork," will keep our alumni and stakeholders informed about all the exciting and innovative progress we are making at Pierpont. We must, as a team, build a strong network with our students, faculty, staff, stakeholders and alumni. As we move toward the future, we will emerge stronger together.

We will work as a team to ensure, first and foremost, that our students are our No. #1 priority. We will bring to light the story of Pierpont and its transformative impact on students and the local economy. We all must be accountable for our

institution's success and adapt quickly to meet the needs of our students and stakeholders.

We will no longer be in the shadows. The community is watching us. But this

I know... If we work together to provide and design relevant cutting-edge programs, build on the entrepreneurial spirit, provide a comprehensive education, accept responsibility, manage change, act with integrity, and deliver high-quality work, we will be a more interconnected college, a more innovative college, and a more responsive college.

West Virginia needs Pierpont Community & Technical College, and Pierpont Community & Technical College needs West Virginia. This synergistic relationship is symbiotic. We need those in the community that

will support the mission of the institution. We cannot let anything cast a shadow on our future so that we are able to provide a better future for many. We are only as strong as the foundation we build.

We will provide the ultimate student experience. We will be responsive to the community's needs. We will drive economic development in the communities we serve. We will be responsive, nimble, transformative, and build a culture of trust. We will do it the Pierpont Way!!!

**Anthony Hancock, Ph.D**  
*Interim President*



**ON THE COVER** Food Service Management (FOSM) graduate Stephen Nebel puts the finishing touches on his dish.

## PIERPONT ANNOUNCES NEARLY

# \$2 Million Investment in Clarksburg Campus Addition

Pierpont Community & Technical College announced a nearly \$2 million investment in the former Clarksburg Eye Center building in downtown Clarksburg to relocate its Veterinary Technology Program.

Pierpont held a deed signing ceremony to commemorate the acquisition on June 7, 2021.

Remodeling of the facility, located on the same block as Pierpont's Gaston Caperton Center, at 211 S. Chestnut St., will include updates to the existing building to create classrooms and hands-on learning spaces for students. Pierpont will also build new kennels to house the animals cared for by the program.

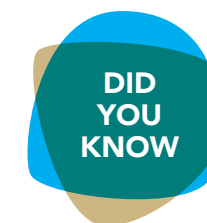
Renovations are expected to begin this fall and students will be able to begin classes in the revamped facility by fall 2022. Until that time, classes will remain on the Fairmont State Campus.

"We are thrilled to be able to give our Veterinary Technology Program a new home," said Dr. Anthony Hancock, interim president of Pierpont Community & Technical College. "We are moving our programs forward. Acquiring this facility allows us to expand our campus to better serve the North Central West Virginia community."

The A.A.S Veterinary Technology degree is designed to prepare students for careers in the dynamic field of veterinary medicine. Pierpont graduates work with



Dr. Anthony Hancock, Pierpont interim president (left-center) and Geoff Marshall, vice president of support services at United Hospital Center (right-center) sign the deed to make the transaction official while Margaret Minch (left), teaching professor of Veterinary Medicine at WVU and member of the WV Veterinary Medical Association Board and James Marino (far right), mayor of Clarksburg, observe.



Our Veterinary Technology program ranks  
**IN THE TOP 30**  
Veterinary Technology Programs in the U.S.

veterinarians in all aspects of animal health, disease and welfare. The program prepares students to become vital and contributing members of a veterinary health care team who are fully capable of performing a wide variety of professional roles within the veterinary medical setting.

Graduates of the program are eligible to take the Veterinary Technician National Exam, the VTNE, and about two thirds of

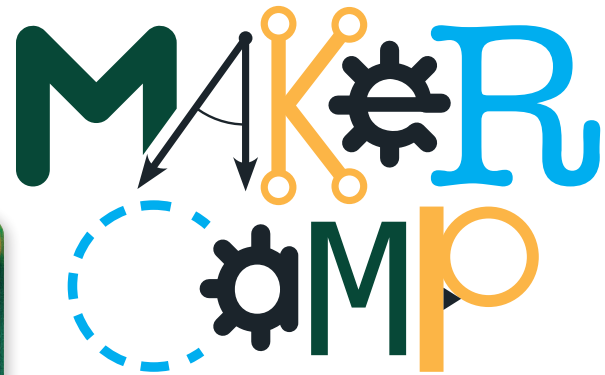
Pierpont students pass that test. The program is accredited through the American Veterinary Medical Association and has been ranked in the top 30 Veterinary Technology Programs in the United States.

For more information on the Veterinary Technician program, please visit <https://www.pierpont.edu/ac/programs/veterinary-technology>. ■





STUDENTS LEARN  
THROUGH HANDS-ON



Sixteen students from across the region were introduced to manufacturing and learned valuable skills in science, engineering and mathematics (STEM) at Pierpont's Maker Camp held in June.

Students, whose ages ranged from 12 to 16, were introduced to a variety of activities and experiments, including soldering and computer programming. The goal of the camp -- get students interested in entrepreneurship and STEM careers from a young age.

"It is important to expose students early to STEM careers and opportunities right here in West Virginia and to introduce them to options for education and careers in areas that they may not have thought of otherwise," says Dr. Martina Bachlechner, the camp director and STREAM (Science, Technology, Robotics, Engineering, Art, Mathematics) coordinator at Pierpont.

Glenna Pirner, assistant camp director, said students were sometimes a little hesitant when they first participated in the activities, but they were more comfortable as the camp progressed.



Instructor and Assistant Camp Director Glenna Pirner assists a Maker Camp student with their soldering project.

"I saw a couple of 'ah-ha' moments with getting a perfect solder, and the excitement you see is just wonderful," Pirner said.

The students also participated in field trips to local businesses, including The Thrasher Group. Students toured Thrasher's facilities and spoke with several employees who shared their passion for STEM careers.

"There are endless possibilities in the engineering industry," said Jenny Weaver, human resources director at The Thrasher Group. "We love sharing that with students because there's nothing more impactful on the learning process than seeing STEM concepts through a hands-on application."

Students also visited Pierpont's Aviation Maintenance Technology program at the Robert C. Byrd National Aerospace Educational Center. The students were excited to engage with aviation faculty who explained elementary principles of flight and gave an overview of the airplanes. The visit included hands-on activities such as drilling and riveting aluminum metal plates. ■

Maker Camp Director and Pierpont STREAM Coordinator Dr. Martina Bachlechner explains the proper techniques for the project.



PC&TC WELCOMES

## Former Viatris Employees as First-Year Students

Pierpont Community & Technical College welcomed more than a dozen former Viatris employees to its ranks as first-year freshman students for the fall semester.

Viатris — the new company formed through the merger of Mylan and Upjohn — announced last year that Mylan's flagship pharmaceuticals plant in Morgantown, W.Va., would be closed by the end July 2021 as a part of the company restructuring plan. The plant shutdown left about 1,500 employees seeking new jobs.

Pierpont Community & Technical College worked to assist former Mylan employees to find educational pathways to a new career. The college held a "Mylan Day" in early June to introduce employees to programs and financial aid available to them.

"Education creates a pathway to a new career for those employees who have been displaced by the Mylan closure," said Pierpont's Interim President Dr. Anthony Hancock. "We have a variety of career-ready programs that can assist these individuals, and we want these employees to know that Pierpont is here for them."

Ian Davis will be attending Pierpont in the Applied Process Technology program. Davis worked at the Mylan plant for 15 years before the shutdown.

"I'm already an electrician, and it seemed like a good fit for my skills and background," Davis said. Davis said that he did a little bit of everything at Mylan but was focused on the manufacturing side in general.

"It seemed like a good opportunity for me," Davis said.

Former Mylan employees are eligible for the WV Invests Grant, a state-funded grant program that pays toward the full cost of basic tuition, mandatory fees and academic program fees for select certificate and associate degree programs at a West Virginia public two- or four-year institution.

Priority is given to programs in high-demand fields, such as information technology or healthcare, as determined by the West Virginia Department of Commerce. This is a last-dollar-in program, meaning it will pay for any amount up to the total cost of tuition, mandatory fees and approved academic program fees not already covered by other state or federal grants or scholarships and institutional tuition waivers.

Eligible certificate programs at Pierpont range from cyber security to pastry and baking to veterinary assistant. Eligible associate degree programs range from advanced welding to criminal justice. A full list of eligible programs can be found

at <https://www.collegeforwv.com/programs/invest-grant/find-a-program>.

Emily Wix-Lawson worked at Mylan for 10 years in various jobs. She will be attending Pierpont Community & Technical College using Bridging the Gap-Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) funds.

TAACCCT provides community colleges and other eligible institutions of higher education with funds to expand and improve their ability to deliver education and career training programs that can be completed in two years or less, are suited for workers who are eligible for training under the TAA for Workers program, and prepare program participants for employment in high-wage, high-skill occupations.

Wix-Lawson, 38, will be pursuing a degree in Health Information Technology.

"The job market right now is really in the medical field," she said. "Billing and medical coding is something I've always been interested in. I'm nervous, but I'm excited about coming to Pierpont." ■

"We have a variety of career ready programs ... and we want these employees to know that Pierpont is here for them."

DR. ANTHONY HANCOCK, Pierpont interim president





# Sweet Success

## CULINARY PROGRAM PROVIDES DIVERSE PATHWAYS TO A BETTER FUTURE

It's not easy to make the perfect pate a choux or to learn to cook a steak at just the right temperature, but students at Pierpont Community & Technical College are leading the way to culinary excellence.

Over the last five years, the Pierpont Community & Technical College's Food Service Management (FOSM) programs have consistently ranked in the top 20 nationally. Natalie Feltz, assistant professor of Culinary Arts and FOSM program coordinator, attributes the success to affordable, quality instruction.

"I believe we have been consistently ranked due to the quality of the instructors, the cost benefit to the student compared to other institutions, and the quality of the education they get compared to those high-dollar, big-name culinary programs," Feltz said.

Feltz noted that some culinary programs cost more than \$120,000 for two years of instruction, whereas students can earn their degree at Pierpont for less than \$4,000 per year. The reputation of the program has attracted students from beyond West Virginia's borders to earn their degree, she said.

Abigail Reed is a current FOSM student who was born in West Virginia but lived most of her childhood in South America. The quality of the program and national rankings were why she decided to attend Pierpont.

"What drew me to the program was that it was in West Virginia and it was highly ranked," Reed said. "I thought I was going to have to move to another state that I wasn't familiar with. Then when I heard about the credentials that Pierpont had, it only affirmed my desire to go there more."

The FOSM degree program offers four concentrations. Culinary Arts; Hospitality and Tourism; Nutrition and Dietetics Technology (DTR); and Pastry and Baking Arts all prepare students for a career in the food industry.

"Students can pair concentrations together and the added skills make them more employable," said Feltz.

Stephen Nebel, a recent graduate, did just that. Nebel graduated from three different Pierpont FOSM

programs (Culinary Arts, Pastry and Baking Arts, and Hospitality and Tourism programs).

"After an internship at a hotel, I fell in love with the hospitality and food and beverage industry. I added the Hospitality and Tourism concentration because it gave me the opportunity to build the skills that I would need and provide

more opportunities at a resort or hotel."

Some of these combined concentrations can prepare students for a career outside of hospitality and tourism. While many students dream of owning their own restaurants, students can combine culinary skills with Nutrition and Dietetics Technology, filling a need in the healthcare industry.

"A major need is healthcare, like West Virginia University Hospitals, which is looking for chefs. Majoring in both Nutrition and Dietetics Technology and Culinary Arts makes graduates a huge asset," said Pamela Hamilton, Nutrition and Dietetics program coordinator.

Along with being awarded their degrees, graduates are also eligible for certifications that will provide additional career opportunities.

"Once students graduate, they are eligible to be certified in culinary and certified in pastry by the American Culinary Confederation," said Allison McCue, Pastry and Baking instructor and program coordinator. "

Those who complete the DTR program will get a verification statement so that they can be certified to be a dietetic technician.

The elite reputation of the FOSM programs wouldn't exist without the program's incredible instructors. Feltz, McCue, Hamilton, and many others take great pride in their craft and it benefits the students tremendously.

"The chefs that mentored me at [Pierpont] gave me the tools I now use almost every day because I was dedicated and listened to their advice. This program has a lot to offer a person, so take advantage of it and be driven in what you do because it will have a greater impact on you," said Reed.

For more information on Pierpont's FOSM programs, visit [pierpont.edu](https://www.pierpont.edu). ■



## A RECIPE FOR SUCCESS:

**JOB RATE: 71%**  
of graduates were employed within the hospitality industry immediately after graduation.\*

\*Nearly 97% of graduates are employed — some in another field. Survey taken by Pierpont Culinary faculty of fall 2020 graduates.

Nationally Ranked:  
Pierpont's Culinary program is rated as the

**#5 BEST CULINARY SCHOOL**

in the United States.\*\*

\*\*Rated by BestChoiceSchools.com

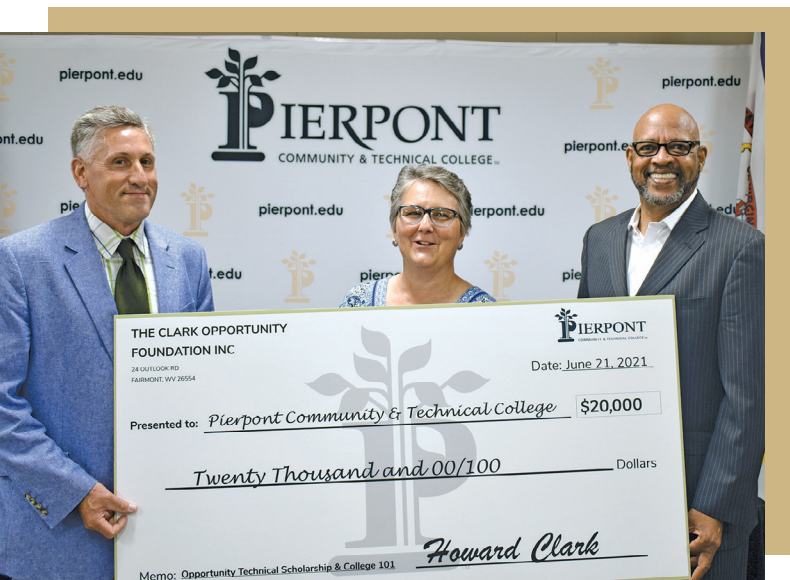
**ONLY PROGRAM IN WV:**

Pierpont's Nutrition and Dietetics program is the only program of its kind in the state.

Average salaries\*\*\*  
for chefs and food service managers are  
**HIGHER THAN WV'S MEDIUM INCOME.**

\*\*\*Info from Salary.com





Dr. Anthony Hancock, Pierpont interim president (right), accepts a check from the Clark Opportunity Foundation founders Howard Clark (left) and Leslie Clark (middle).

**Howard and Leslie Clark know the importance of a college education.**

That is why the founders of the Clark Opportunity Foundation created a scholarship for students who want to take college classes while still in high school.

The Clark Opportunity Foundation gave the Pierpont Foundation, Inc. \$20,000 to provide scholarships to high school students to cover the cost of College 101, which teaches students how to navigate the college experience. High school students who receive this scholarship will have all tuition and fees for dual enrollment courses covered.

“This funding originated from the need to encourage additional students to acquire some type of postsecondary education or training,” said Howard Clark, founder and president of the Clark Opportunity Foundation.

“It is very clear that Pierpont and [The] Opportunity Foundation have a similar interest in the success of the foundation’s mission of encouraging high school students to participate in post secondary education and training. The College 101 course is a great way of introducing and preparing students for the availability of numerous online and dual credit college courses,” said Clark.

The Clarks established the Clark Opportunity Foundation in 2013, and the foundation awards

approximately \$60,000 to students in scholarships and grants.

Pierpont serves many high school students within its dual credit courses.

“During the past academic year, [Pierpont] had more than 400 high school students participate in our dual enrollment courses and numbers are looking to be higher this fall,” states Katie Beck, transitional education specialist at Pierpont.

This funding will also help open pathways to technical education opportunities to students from around the North Central West Virginia area.

“Pierpont takes great pride in providing quality, comprehensive education that works for students in our region. The Clark Opportunity Foundation has provided our region’s students with an opportunity to further their education and help grow North Central West Virginia,” said Lyla Grandstaff, vice president of Student Services and Enrollment Management at Pierpont.

“[This donation] helps strengthen us in a multitude of ways,” said Pierpont’s Interim President Dr. Anthony Hancock. “This is what I call a valued partnership.”

Pierpont hosted a check ceremony in late June to celebrate the gift. It was attended by the Clarks and Pierpont faculty, staff and administration.

Pierpont offers a variety of programs high school students can take to earn college credit. For more information, call Pierpont’s admissions office at **304-367-4907**. ■

# DUAL ENROLLMENT COURSES

*These courses are offered this fall in local schools:*

AVMT 1101 & 1103	SPN 1101
ENGL 1104	SCI 1101
OFAD 1150	CRJ 1100
POL 1101	VETT 1113
PSYG 1101	FINC 2230
HLCA 1100	MTH 1200 & 1212
HLCA 1171/1171	SCY 1101
CHM 1101	COM 2200
BUSN 1102	AMSL 1111
HST 1101 & 1102	

**LOCAL FAMILY FOUNDATION CREATES**

# Scholarship Program for High School Students

## PIERPONT HIRES New Administrative Team Members



Julie Cryser comes to Pierpont from the Fairmont State Foundation, where she served as president for two years. Previously, Cryser spent nearly 20 years in development at West Virginia University, having served as a development director and assistant dean of development and communications. At both Fairmont and WVU, Cryser was instrumental in the growth and development of those institutions, having raised more than \$30 million at WVU and nearly \$10 million at Fairmont State. Before beginning her career in higher education, Cryser spent a decade as a newspaper city editor and reporter throughout West Virginia and Pennsylvania.

Cryser received both her master’s and bachelor’s degrees in journalism from West Virginia University. Cryser grew up in Mineral County, WV.

**JULIE CRYSER**, Vice President, Institutional Advancement & Foundation Director

Pierpont Community & Technical College has named Julie Cryser as the vice president of Institutional Advancement and Pierpont Foundation director and Nancy Ligus as director of Workforce, Continuing Education and Economic Development.

Nancy Ligus comes to Pierpont from the West Virginia Council for Community & Technical College Education, where she served as the director of Workforce and Economic Development. Previously, she managed workforce development programs for the United Steelworkers Institute for Career Development and Westmoreland Community College in Pennsylvania. With more than 15 years of experience within Operations and Project management in global manufacturing and energy companies, Ligus has provided employee training and development in some capacity in every position.

Ligus holds a bachelor’s degree in business administration with a focus in marketing from Seton Hill University in her hometown of Greensburg, PA. ■



**NANCY LIGUS**, Director of Workforce, Continuing Education, and Economic Development



PIERPONT PRESIDENT PLEDGES TO  
**Promote Entrepreneurship**

The National Association for Community College Entrepreneurship (NACCE), the nation’s leading organization focused on promoting entrepreneurship through community colleges, has announced that Pierpont Interim

President Dr. Anthony Hancock has taken its Presidents for Entrepreneurship Pledge. Through the pledge, presidents of community colleges throughout the country pledge to take action steps that will increase their focus on entrepreneurship and the



“Our many programs include components [...] that provide our students with the tools they need to build or start a successful business.”

DR. ANTHONY HANCOCK,  
Pierpont interim president

impact these colleges have on the economic well-being of the communities they serve. “As our economy begins to recover, we are more motivated than ever to push our students to become local business owners and entrepreneurs. Our many programs include components relevant to

business and entrepreneurship training that provide our students with the tools they need to build or start a successful business,” Hancock said. “In fact, we have some culinary graduates with their own restaurants and a recent graduate of our applied design program that began her own clothing line.” ■

Pierpont Interim President Dr. Anthony Hancock signs pledge to promote entrepreneurship at Pierpont.

PIERPONT SERVES KEY ROLE IN REGION’S  
**Economy and Workforce Development**

For Nancy Ligus, the goal for workforce education is simple: a good paying job is at the other end. As Pierpont Community & Technical College’s new director of Workforce, Continuing Education and Economic Development, Ligus is focused on developing programs that result in students being able to use their knowledge, skills and ability in an occupation with a good income. “Community colleges were designed for flexibility and responsiveness to provide portable, career-level skills that result in students getting jobs in our region and beyond. Ideally, that goal drives all programming,” Ligus said. It’s a part of the mission of the West Virginia Community & Technical College system, to “maximize student learning, improve the standard of living for West Virginians, and contribute

to the economic vitality and competitiveness of our state.” “Since I began my career in workforce development through higher education, I hold these ideals as the compass and measure against the work we do, collectively, in workforce education,” Ligus said. Pierpont has many channels to provide workforce education, including degree, non-degree and independent workforce training. “We are the most engaged with the community we serve, especially business and industry. As the economic landscape changes, we adapt and respond,” Ligus said. “Economic development and workforce development are a marriage, and community colleges support that relationship.” Ligus has begun examining labor market data for the region and neighboring states to identify

high-demand occupations. In addition, she will be working collaboratively with the local Workforce Development Board and regional economic and workforce development agencies, as well as Pierpont’s various program advisory boards, to create and sustain those employer relationships. “That’s where we will get the best knowledge of training needs in real time,” Ligus said. “Competency-based education must be the focus of Workforce Training programs and Continuing Education because it has become more and more valuable to employers.” Pierpont is in the most advantageous position in West Virginia as a community college, she noted. The 13-county region has a large population; a high number of manufacturing, healthcare and energy-based companies in place; and

a growing information technology and government sector. The region is also close to other large metropolitan areas that help drive development, as well as a variety of state initiatives to attract more business and residents to West Virginia. “The sky is the limit. We’re listening and willing and able to provide quality training and education that results in the needed skills to be job ready,” Ligus said. “We want our employers to know us. We want to be the first choice in workforce development.” ■

For more information on workforce education offered at Pierpont:  
Nancy Ligus  
*director of Workforce, Continuing Education and Economic Development*  
[nligus@pierpont.edu](mailto:nligus@pierpont.edu)  
304-366-8912



LEFT: A welding student prepares for their career by receiving hands-on training in the classroom. BELOW: A Petroleum Technology student showcases his workforce training at Pierpont.





## PIERPONT PRESIDENT TO COMPETE IN United Way Fundraiser

Pierpont's Interim President Dr. Anthony Hancock will be competing in the Marion County Dancing with the Stars event presented by the Marion County Chamber of Commerce and Tygart Valley United Way on October 23, 2021. Dancers will be judged by a panel of three judges based upon technical skill and footwork. Awards will be presented to the first- and second-place winners. There will also be a people's choice award given to the dancers with the most support from the audience and online voting.

"[Dancing with the Stars] has been an incredible event over the last few years, and I am thrilled to be a part of something that greatly benefits the community. We at Pierpont take great pride in North Central West Virginia, and this is the perfect opportunity to support one of our local United Way Foundations," said Hancock. "And it's the perfect place to showcase my dance moves".

Tickets for the event are \$50 per person and include dinner. For more information, visit [marioncountydwt.com](https://marioncountydwt.com). ■



DON'T MISS A THING!

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