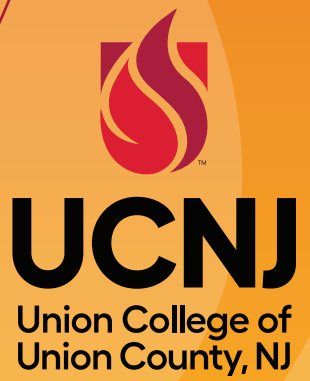


2025 Annual Report

July 2024 – June 2025



Transforming Our Community...
One Student at a Time

**ASPEN
PRIZE**

FOR COMMUNITY
COLLEGE EXCELLENCE
aspen institute

FINALIST

2025

UCNJ through the Decades

The College has been providing excellent and affordable educational opportunities to Union County residents for more than 90 years, transforming our community, one student at a time.

1933: Union County Junior College opens on October 16 as an "emergency junior college" with evening classes at Abraham Clark High School in Roselle.

1934: Dr. Hubert Banks Huntley becomes the first chief administrator of Union County Junior College.

1935: Dr. Charles G. Cole succeeds Dean Huntley and is considered the first "President."

1936: Union County Junior College is established as a non-profit institution governed by a Board of Trustees.

1936: The College changes its name to Union Junior College (UJC).

1940: Basketball is the only varsity sport at UCNJ. The '39/'40 girl's basketball squad captures first place in the "Powderpuff League." This is the first championship for a UJC Team.

1941: The College begins offering day courses on Sept. 1 and continues to use the laboratories at Abraham Clark High School.

1942: UJC is housed at Grant School, called the "Old Lady of Holly Street," and rents the space from the Cranford Board of Education.

1944: To better accommodate returning veterans from WWII, the College creates a Veterans Study Center and changes the academic year from two semesters to one divided into four quarters.

1944: Dr. Kenneth Campbell MacKay succeeds Dr. Cole as president.

1948: For less than \$56,000, the Board of Trustees authorizes the purchase of 56 acres from the Dreyer family in Cranford. A decade later it becomes the home of the Cranford Campus.

1949: Elizabeth General Hospital begins its affiliation with the College in the training of nurses. Later, Muhlenberg Hospital joins the partnership. Elizabeth General is now Trinitas School of Nursing and Muhlenberg Hospital Nursing School is now JFK Medical Center Muhlenberg Harold B. and Dorothy A. Snyder Schools. Both still operate cooperative programs with the College.

1959: The Nomahegan Building is completed in July and the College moves its operations to the 48-acre campus in Cranford.

1967: The word "Junior" is dropped, and the College is officially known as Union College.

1968: Dr. MacKay steps down and is succeeded by Dr. Kenneth W. Iversen, who serves as president until 1974.

1970: The College begins holding classes in Elizabeth at the Bayway Community Center and the Elizabeth YMCA on Aug. 5.

1970: The College begins offering classes in Plainfield on Sept. 2.

1973: The MacKay Library opens on the Cranford Campus.

1974: Dr. Saul Orkin becomes president and serves until his death in 1983.

1982: Union College merges with the Union County Technical Institute and Union County College is established on Aug. 17.

1983: Dr. Derek N. Nunney is named president.

1990: Dr. Thomas H. Brown becomes president.

1991: The Campus Center, now known as the Victor M. Richel Student Commons, opens on the Cranford Campus.

1992: The College purchases the Courier News Building in Plainfield and begins offering courses in the newly renovated two-story building.

1992: The Elizabeth Campus opens on Sept. 1. The former Elizabethtown Gas Company building is named the Sidney F. Lessner Building.

1995: "The Pavilion" opens at the Cranford Campus with a new Fitness Center and the Executive Education Center.

1999: The Annex Building is completed in Plainfield and houses instructional space for the American Sign Language and the Emergency Medical Technician/Paramedic programs.

2002: Trinitas School of Nursing moves to the Elizabeth Campus.

2009: Thanks to the support of the Union County Board of County Commissioners, the College opens the \$48 million Elizabeth I. Kellogg Building at 40 West Jersey Street in Elizabeth on Sept. 29.

2010: Dr. Margaret M. McMenamin, the College's eighth and first female president, begins her tenure on July 1.



continues on the inside back cover...

This year's annual report reflects the transformative opportunities our students experience at UCNJ, New Jersey's Community College. The Aspen Institute for Community College Excellence recognized UCNJ as one of the top 10 community colleges in the country, and the only one in the northeast. This is a remarkable achievement and a testament to the great work being done by committed faculty, staff, and students.

Our students are continuing to reach high levels of academic success, with eight students attending Princeton University's Transfer Scholars Initiative, a summer program for high-achieving first-year community college scholars. UCNJ '25 graduate Odudu Ekpenyong was named a finalist for the prestigious Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship and will receive up to \$55,000 a year to complete his bachelor's degree at a four-year institution.

At UCNJ, leadership is developed both inside and outside of the classroom. With more than 15 athletic teams and more than 35 student clubs and organizations, the College offers students opportunities to get involved and build communities. This year, our Men's Basketball, Women's Basketball, and Men's Volleyball teams won the NJCAA District XIX Championships, all ranking #1 in the Region.

We are committed to not only supporting our students through graduation, but also in guiding them with next steps. UCNJ invested in several post-completion initiatives, including expanded support for transfer transition and alumni relations. This endeavor will provide assistance to UCNJ graduates as they continue their academic journey at four-year institutions and strengthen their workforce opportunities.

We are grateful for the continued support of the Union County Board of County Commissioners, as well as members of the College's Board of Trustees and Governors. These transformative leaders provide advocacy, leadership, and a commitment to transforming our community, one student at a time. Thank you for your support of UCNJ!



Dr. Margaret M. McMenamin

President, UCNJ Union College of Union County, NJ



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A Moment to Shine as UCNJ is Recognized as an Aspen Finalist!



UCNJ was named as one of only ten finalists nationwide for the 2025 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence – a \$1 million dollar award. The institutions selected for this honor stand out among more than 1,000 community colleges nationwide as having exceptional and advancing levels of student success. The College hosted a watch party in the Victor M. Richel Student Commons to see the awards ceremony livestreamed from The Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. President

McMenamin along with select College and Board leaders attended the event in person, where UCNJ was formally recognized as a finalist. On the Cranford, Elizabeth, and Plainfield Campuses, more than 400 students came out to show-off their UCNJ pride with cheers, dancing, and more.

Congratulations to the whole College community for national recognition and their continuous commitment to student success!

UCNJ Student Receives JKCF Transfer Scholarship

JACK KENT COOKE FOUNDATION

Student scholar Odudu Ekpenyong, of Springfield, is one of 90 students nationwide to receive the prestigious Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship. As a finalist, Mr. Ekpenyong will receive up to \$55,000 a year to complete his bachelor's degree at a four-year institution.

Mr. Ekpenyong graduated from UCNJ in spring 2025 with a computer

science degree. During his time at the College, he served as Vice President of Public Relations for the Iota Xi Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) honor society, Vice President of the Entrepreneurs Club, was a member of the Cybersecurity Club, a tutor at the Academic Learning Center (ALC), and a Union Honors scholar.

He was also selected as a 2024 Coca-Cola Leaders of Promise Scholar and

was part of the All-NJ State Academic Team in recognition of his scholarly achievements. He plans to pursue a bachelor's degree in aviation science with a concentration in professional piloting at Tuskegee University, with aspirations of becoming an airline captain and mentoring underrepresented pilots.

This year's selection process drew more than 1,600 applications from

community colleges across the nation. UCNJ had two additional semifinalists for the scholarship, Faris Areiqat and Samir Perez. These students were PTK scholars, tutors at UCNJ's ALC, and were active members of student organizations during their time at UCNJ.





Margolies Transfer Scholarship Recipients

Star Scholars Receive Life Changing Scholarship

Thanks to the continued generosity of the Margolies family, the Margolies Family Transfer Scholarship was awarded once again to two exemplary UCNJ students, supporting them as they transfer to selective institutions.

This year's recipients of the Margolies Family Transfer Scholarship are UCNJ Class of 2025 graduates Lucas Dasilva and Rachel Sweet. Each student will receive up to \$25,000 per year for the next two years to support their bachelor's degree attainment.

Mr. DaSilva earned his degree in computer science and will be transferring to Stevens Institute of Technology. Ms. Sweet earned her associate degree in psychology and will be continuing her studies at Swarthmore College. Both students were part of the Union Honors program and were peer tutors in the ALC, as well as being a member of other clubs and organizations at the College.

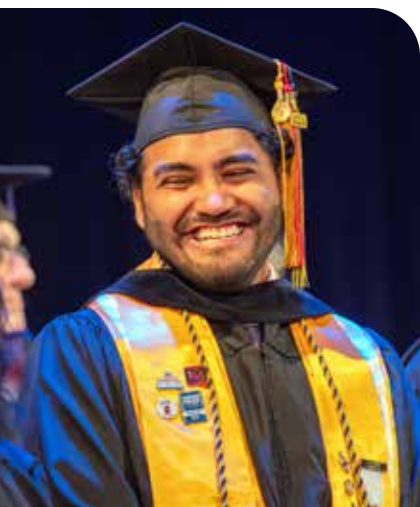
Congratulations!!





Winter Commencement

Lighting the Way for the Class of 2025



Each year, the College hosts two commencement ceremonies for winter and spring graduates. The historic Union County Performing Arts Center in Rahway hosted the winter commencement ceremony. Commencement celebrates the hard work, academic achievements, and commitment to their education that UCNJ students have invested, marking a significant milestone

for them academically, professionally, and personally. President Dr. Margaret M. McMenamin served as the master of ceremonies, recognizing graduates earning their Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, Associate in Applied Science, Certificates, and Certificate of Achievement degrees.

The student speakers were Carlos A. León

Hernandez, of Elizabeth, and Elijah Z. Frieson, of Rahway. The Alumni Prize was presented to William Becerra and Adriana Lara. The Abdallah-Thomas Memorial Award was presented to students Carlos A León Hernandez, Sabdeen Rao, and Frank Ulrich.



Degrees Conferred by Type

Total: 1471

● Associate in Science	880	59.8%
● Associate in Arts	393	26.7%
● Associate in Applied Science	129	8.8%
● Certificate Programs	64	4.4%
● Certificate of Achievement	5	0.3%



Allied Sciences Enrollment by Program of Study

Total: 1721

● Health Science	1449
● Practical Nursing	90
● Respiratory Care	37
● American Sign Language & Deaf Studies	34
● Physical Therapist Assistant	32
● Health Information & Technology	29
● Emergency Medical Studies	24
● Paramedic Emergency Health Science	19
● Educational Interpreting, EIP	7



Spring Commencement

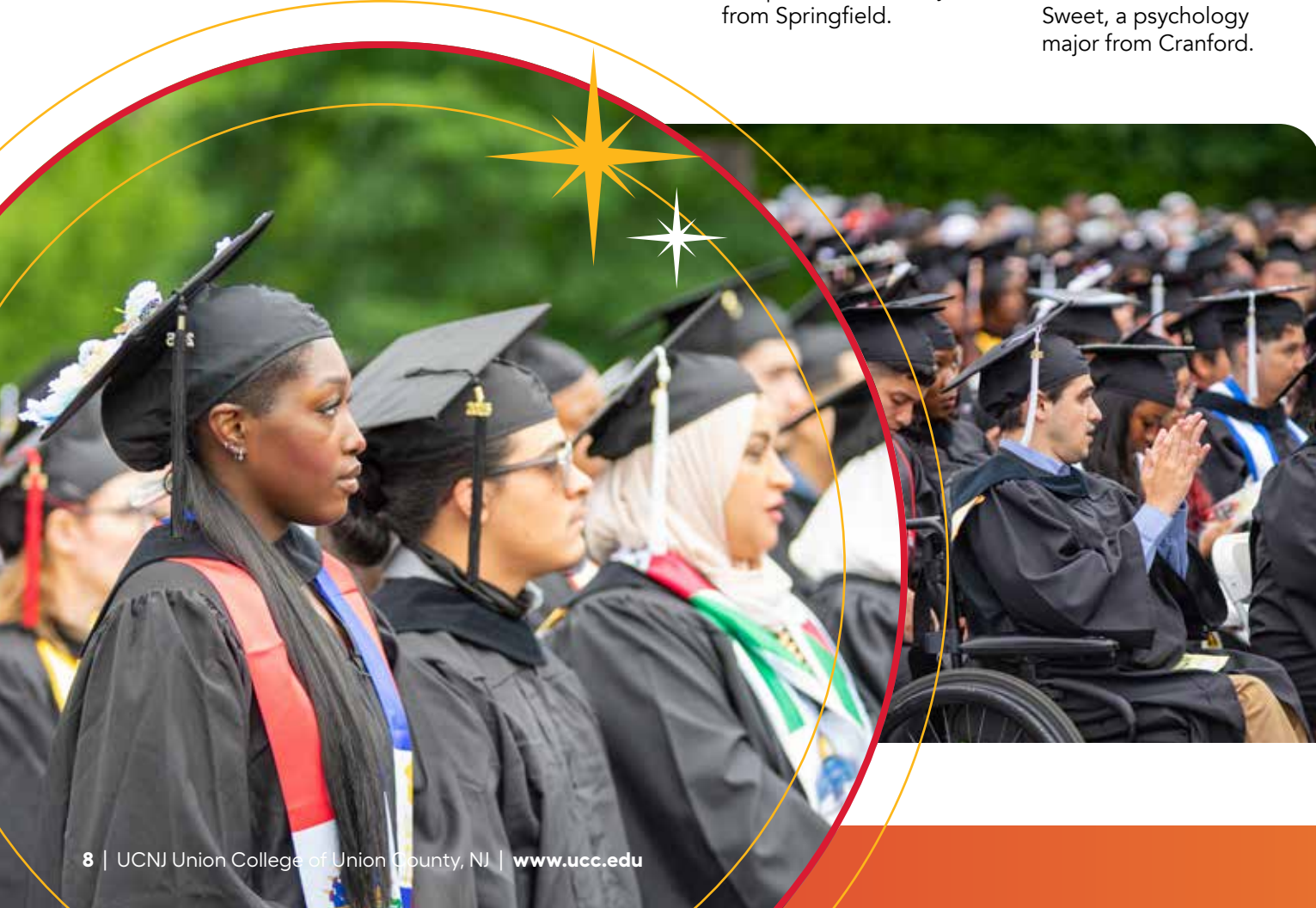
UCNJ's spring commencement is celebrated right in the Owl's Nest. Hosted at the Cranford Campus, the College celebrated more than 700 graduates at the spring ceremony. Jackson Donzella of

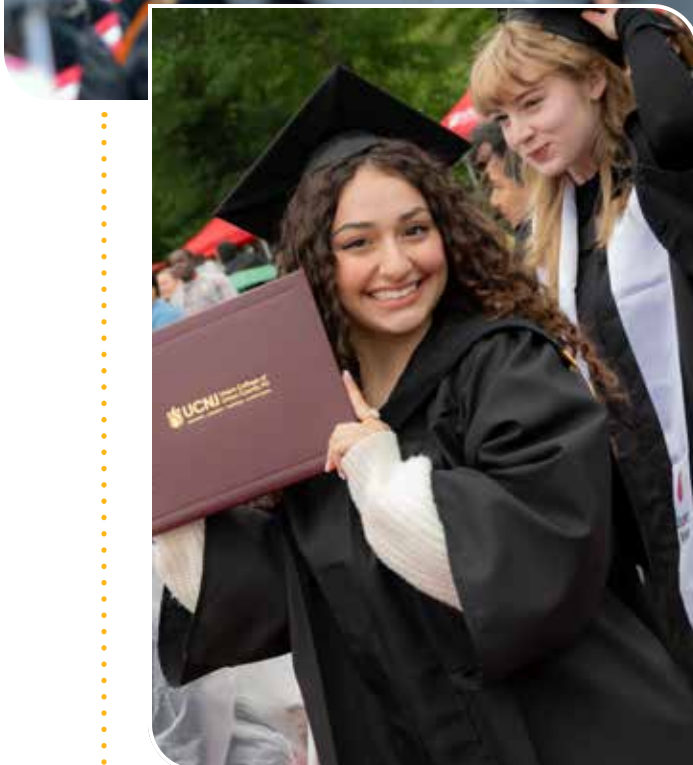
Plainfield was the student speaker at the first ceremony, and Faris Areqiat of Elizabeth spoke at the second.

In the morning ceremony, the Alumni Prize was presented to Reynaldo

Bautista, a computer science graduate from Elizabeth. The Post-Day Memorial Award was presented to students Omowonuola Oyedele, an engineering major from Woodbridge and Odudu Ekpenyong, a computer science major from Springfield.

In the afternoon ceremony, the Alumni Prize was presented to Griffin Cederquist, a psychology graduate from Plainfield. The Post-Day Memorial Award was presented to Yaddyy Jaramillo, a business major from Newark, and Rachel Sweet, a psychology major from Cranford.





UCNJ Faculty

Total: 582

Gender

Female **318**

Male **264**

Status

Full-time **73**

Part-time **484**

Academic Specialists **25**





Open House

College Welcomes Record-Breaking Crowd to the Owl's Nest

More than 350 inquiring future owls attended UCNJ's Open House on the Cranford Campus. Prospective students and their families learned about the College's academic programs, destination venues connected to majors, athletic programs, and financial aid opportunities. Guests had the chance to engage directly with UCNJ deans, faculty, and current students. They also had the opportunity to take a tour of the Campus, visit local food trucks, enjoy a photo booth, music, and



more. Representatives from the Admissions and the Community College Opportunity Grant teams were present to answer questions and share the opportunities available at the College with prospective students. The College is an inclusive institution where all students belong, with the Open House welcoming upcoming high school graduates, non-traditional students, and transfer students.



New Honor Society

Delta Alpha Pi Takes Flight at UCNJ

Delta Alpha Pi, the international honor society recognizing high-achieving students with disabilities was established this academic year at the College. Recognition ceremonies — welcoming and celebrating the new members, were held over the fall and spring semesters. Students invited to join this honor society have a documented disability and work with Universal Accessibility Services or self-identify as an individual with a disability, have completed at least 24 credits, and demonstrate academic achievement. Members display their Delta Alpha Pi pride with cords worn at their graduation ceremonies.





NASDAQ visit

Stock Market Stars: UCNJ Visits NASDAQ

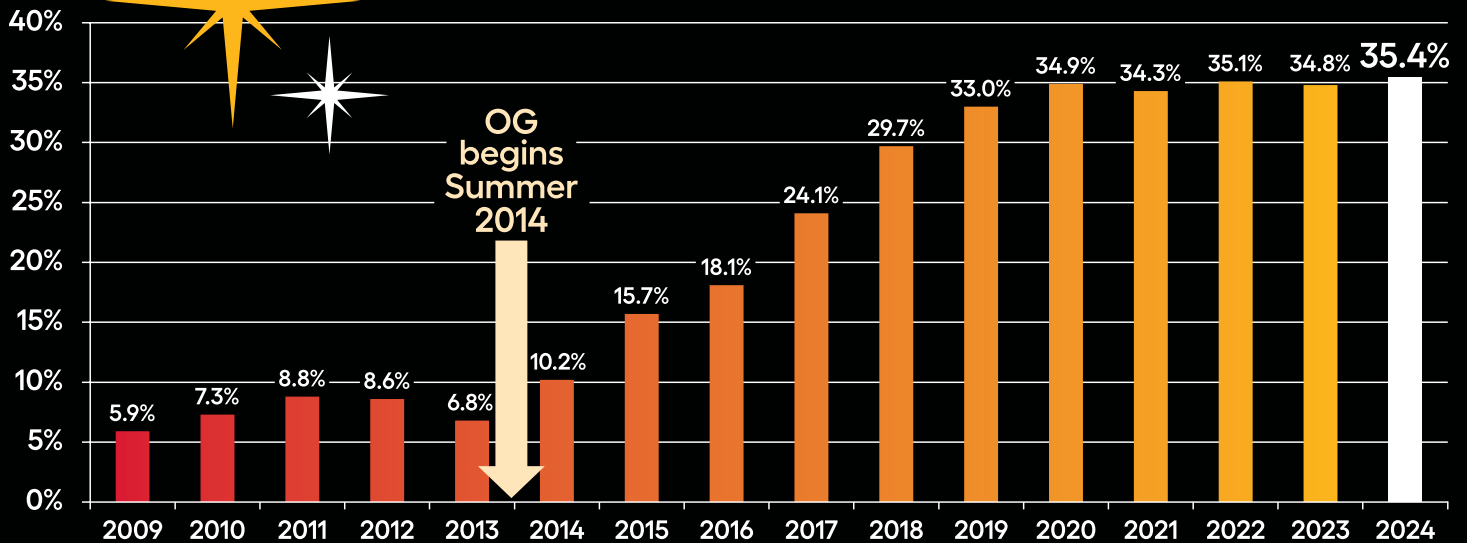
Straight from the classrooms to the closing bell, 15 UCNJ students visited NASDAQ in New York City. During the visit, students observed a corporate meeting with a team of professionals from NASDAQ. The meeting was followed by a question and answer session. At the end of the trip, students participated in a live television production of the closing bell, where they witnessed the CEO of a Biotechnology firm ring the bell. As the bell rang,

NASDAQ put UCNJ on the jumbotron. Accompanying the students were Director of the Business Center Dr. Donovan Smalls and the Foundation's Coordinator of Stewardship and Donor Relations Carolyn Milhiser.

This visit provided students with an invaluable glimpse into the fast-paced world of business and finance, reinforcing UCNJ's commitment to offering real-world learning experiences beyond the classroom.



UCNJ Graduation Rates

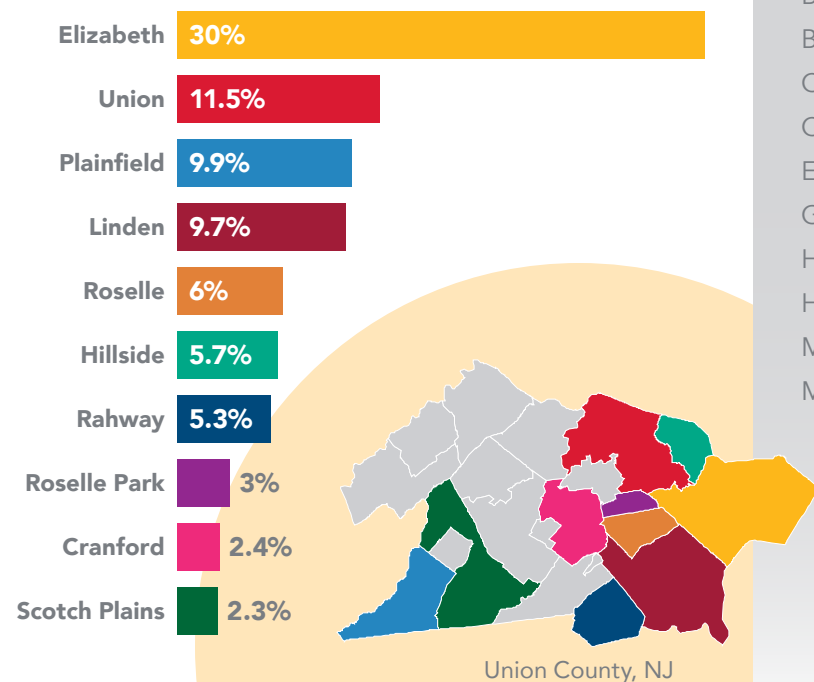


The UCNJ graduation rate has more than quintupled. Additionally, the College went from having the lowest graduation rate in NJ to exceeding both the state and national average.

Student success is UCNJ's priority — the development of *Operation Graduation* and similar initiatives support the College's mission to transform our community, one student at a time.

Union County Towns with Largest Enrollment

These ten towns account for 85.8% of the College's annual enrollment



County Residency

Union.....	6,737	Monmouth	26
Atlantic	1	Morris	28
Bergen.....	10	Ocean.....	9
Burlington	2	Passaic.....	14
Camden	3	Somerset.....	79
Cumberland	1	Sussex	2
Essex	571	Warren.....	2
Gloucester.....	3	NJ resident, county unknown	262
Hudson.....	71	Not a NJ resident	146
Hunterdon.....	1	Information not available.....	14
Mercer	6		
Middlesex	342		

Grand Total 8,330

Ascending Academia



UCNJ Completes Middle States Accreditation Site Visit



Every eight years, institutions in the region complete a self-study and undergo a peer review process to renew their accreditation from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). This year, the College was visited by a team of peer reviewers from MSCHE to evaluate how UCNJ meets the standards for accreditation. MSCHE is a non-governmental organization that accredits over 500 institutions of higher education and is recognized by the United States Department of Education. The Commission's accreditation process ensures institutional accountability, self-appraisal, improvement, and innovation through peer review and the rigorous application of standards within the context of institutional mission.

The preparation for this visit was led by the College's self-study tri-chairs: Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Sara Lacagnino, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Humanities Dr. Melissa Sande, and Associate Professor of Business Marc Postiglione. More than 140 UCNJ faculty and staff members participated in the self-study process and met with members of the team for the MSCHE visit. At the conclusion of their visit, the Middle States visiting team provided their oral exit report in the Roy Smith Theater. The College's accreditation was reaffirmed by MSCHE. The next MSCHE site visit is expected in 2032-33.





A Stellar Success: ALC Celebrates 40 Years of Supporting Students



ACADEMIC LEARNING CENTER | 40th ANNIVERSARY | 1985-2025

For the past four decades, UCNJ's Academic Learning Center (ALC) has been a vital resource providing students with free peer-to-peer tutoring across the Cranford, Elizabeth, Plainfield, and Virtual

Campuses. Employing more than 50 tutors annually, ALC tutors have achieved high academic success in their given tutoring field. Tutors offer extra support to their fellow students,

gaining a deeper understanding of their coursework, and fostering mentorship between the peer tutor and the student receiving help.



Igniting Innovation

UCNJ's 3rd Annual Pitch competition brought the entrepreneurial spirit as students competed to earn funding to advance their business ideas.

Thanks to the support of the Union County College Foundation, UCNJ students had the opportunity to develop, present, and fund their

business ideas. To prepare participants with the skills needed to transform their concepts into a compelling pitch and business, the Director of the College's Business Center provided intensive, hands-on workshops. Students were also mentored by Foundation Board Member Adam Bell, CEO of Rotuba Extruders, Inc. and Pen Company of America. The winning pitches were selected by a panel of judges in the business field, and the winners were:

- First place: James Shield's *Digital Security Solutions*
- Second place: Nadira Hawkings' *This, That and More Seasonings*
- Third place: Juan Acosta's *Active Lightening, Active Wear & Workouts Plans*



Rise of the Archives

This past year, the UCNJ Archives received a grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission for the project *"Student Voices at College."* The initiative supported the ongoing research of student interns into civic discourse at the College from the late 1960s through the 1980s, focusing on topics such as race, women's rights, the early gay rights movement and AIDS crisis, and the Vietnam War. Students conducted their research under the guidance of Associate Professor in History Dr. Michele Rotunda with support from Senior Professor in History Dr. Phillip Papas, History Academic Specialist Joseph Margiotta, and Librarian Emma Trevena.

As part of the project, students conducted more than a dozen oral history interviews with alumni and

presented their findings at several academic conferences, including the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, the American Historical Association, and the New Jersey History and Historic Preservation Conference.

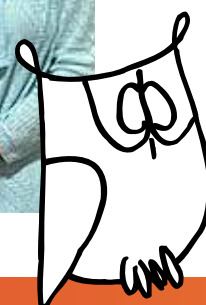
The project culminated in a public exhibit at UCNJ. Attendees included alumni dating back to the 1960s, former interns, and members of the College community. The event featured student research posters, archival displays of student newspapers, and the unveiling of the Archives' updated website: www.archives1933.wordpress.com.



Students Shine at Research Days

Each year, Union Honors students create research projects and present them to the College community. Union Honors is for high achieving, academically motivated students who attend and graduate from UCNJ, who will then transfer to a four-year institution. This year, more than 50 honors students presented their work, which included research on airbag technology, fast fashion, the AIDS crisis, and more. These student-scholars showcased their findings and answered questions from attendees.

STEM students presented their research at UCNJ's annual Research Day. More than 100 students displayed their research projects through poster presentation. Before the posters were presented, Drs. Afshin Ghavami and Mark Varney from Psychogenics addressed the crowd of students and discussed their careers. They emphasized that research can positively impact millions of lives, and researchers shape the future of medicine.





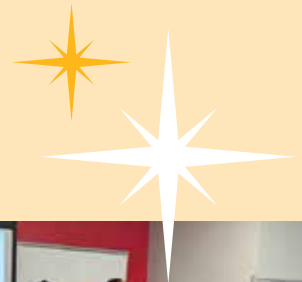
Interstellar Collaboration Receives STEM Award



The New Jersey STEM Pathways Network recognized UCNJ's Vertical Farm Hydroponic STEM-Business Project with the 2025 STEM Collaboration of the Year Award. Dr. Mohamed Mohamed, Director of Student Research & Science Laboratories and Dr. Donovan Smalls, Director of the Business Center, were recognized for their novel collaboration.

Under this innovative system, plants grow vertically indoors at UCNJ using synthetic material instead of soil. The plants can be harvested every six

weeks. STEM students observe and document plant behavior, making the necessary adjustments needed to help the plants grow and thrive. Students are tasked with creating detailed reports and developing a business plan that enables this project to become a successful farming business. The initiative partners STEM and business students, who are mentored, to create a successful agricultural business that also helps the College community.



College Hosts Transfer Seminar Featuring UCNJ Alumni

UCNJ alumni Manny Fernandez ('19) and Carine Medellus ('23), who are currently University of Pennsylvania students, visited UCNJ to speak with current students about transferring after graduation. They shared their experiences about

applying to colleges, offered advice on gaining admission into selective institutions, provided insight on scholarships and the financial aid process, and offered encouragement on next steps.



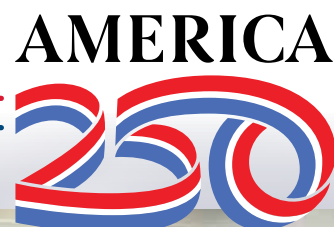


From Owl Nation to Tiger Territory

Eight UCNJ students were selected to participate in Princeton University's Transfer Scholars Initiative summer program. This highly selective program offers an exceptional opportunity for students to take courses at Princeton at no cost to them. The eight scholars enrolled in a full-time, eight-week academic curriculum, taking two full credit Princeton courses. Outside of class, students connected with Princeton faculty, students, and receive transfer success programming to guide them after earning an associate degree at UCNJ. Transfer Scholars received a stipend to cover expenses, including travel, and live on campus.

The eight scholars from UCNJ were:

- **Nyiera Eliscar**, from Linden, studying early childhood elementary education
- **Luis Fiallos**, of Plainfield, majoring in engineering
- **Roger Fortunato**, from Newark, studying computer science
- **Izabella Kopacz**, from Summit, majoring in visual arts
- **Angel Maldonado**, of Elizabeth, pursuing a liberal studies degree
- **Danielle Marie Baez**, from Elizabeth, studying architecture
- **Omowonuola Oyedele**, from Woodbridge, pursuing a degree in engineering
- **Laura Shubert**, of Springfield, majoring in architecture



American Revolution Exhibit Celebrates New Jersey History

To celebrate the 250th anniversary of New Jersey's role in the American Revolution, the College's Social Sciences, Business, and History Division hosted a series of events across the campuses. It was commemorated with Revolutionary War re-enactments, teaching students how to write with invisible ink, a Declaration of Independence guessing game, and an exhibit featuring the trees of the American Revolution. Students also had the opportunity to view a presentation of



artifacts from the American Revolutionary War, including a gilt British officer's gorget, a 1782 Washington Peace Medallion, and a copper American Comitia medal commemorating John Howard Eager's victory at the Battle of Cowpens.



Student Selected as Kaplan Leadership Scholar

UCNJ student Samir Perez was selected as one of only 11 students across the tristate area as a Kaplan Leadership Program (KLP) scholar for 2024-25. Samir is the sixth UCNJ student selected for this student success program, which supports high-achieving students at two-year schools who demonstrate educational acumen, leadership potential, and financial need.

Born in Cuba, Mr. Perez decided to begin his education at UCNJ after learning about the educational programs, extracurricular activities, and the opportunity for growth and connections. This past spring, Mr. Perez graduated from UCNJ with a degree in computer information systems. His career goal is to become a business analyst, a program manager, or a software engineer. He expects to transfer to Stevens Institute of Technology in the fall.



College Readiness Grant Hosts Conference for Incoming Students

65 high school students from UCNJ's Dual Enrollment partner schools attended the College Readiness Now program, which is a partnership among the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, the New Jersey Council of County Colleges (NJCCC), all 18 of New Jersey's county and community colleges, and more than 60 New Jersey high schools. The purpose of the program is to support projects designed to get more students college-ready by the time they graduate from high school.

Students were grouped according to their career interest and met in breakout sessions with Academic Specialists, advisors, and community professionals to ask questions, explore career options, decide on important next steps, and expand their knowledge about their career choices.



Solar Decathlon Challenges Students to Net Zero

During the 2024-2025 academic year, the Department of Energy hosted the *BuildingsNEXT Design Challenge* (formerly the Solar Decathlon design challenge). The challenge was an international, intercollegiate competition that tasks teams with creating a building design that is powered by renewable energy to achieve "net zero emissions." To accomplish this, teams are made up of students from backgrounds in architecture, various STEM fields, and business.

UCNJ's team was founded and led by current student, Benjamin Greeley, and supported by Associate Professor of Chemistry Sherry Heidary, Associate

Professor of Engineering Jennifer Ebert, and Academic Specialist of Architecture Susana Sequeira. Teams worked with industry professionals to gain real-world experience that would be required to complete the design. Along with creating a sustainable design, the teams had to justify the renovation by completing a thorough cost-analysis, as well as improve the building in ways that would benefit the community and health of the building. The student team at UCNJ partnered with industry partners, competition alumni, and faculty advisors to create a unique

design for their own college campus. They competed on the world stage against senior universities during the 2025 *BuildingsNext* showcase event, held at the National Renewable Energy Lab in Golden, CO. Their participation in the event marked the first time that a community college competed in the challenge without a four-year university partner.

Additionally, one of the team's key industry partners was Page, a nationally recognized architecture and MEP engineering firm. Page invited the UCNJ team to visit their Washington, D.C. office, where students had the opportunity to present their project to over 120 employees, including one proud UCNJ alumnus!



Honors Societies that Shine

Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) Iota Xi chapter is the largest honor society at UCNJ. PTK promotes scholarship, development of character, and leadership. To become a member, a student must complete at least 12 credit hours of coursework, maintain a 3.6 GPA or higher, and participate in volunteer activities throughout the semester. This past April, PTK held its new member ceremony with more than 200 new inductees. For decades, the Iota Xi chapter has maintained its status as a Five Star Chapter among all the chapters in the Middle States Region.

PTK was recognized for several projects completed this year, including, *"Green Minds: Students Feeding*

the Future" and *"Rise Up: The Stories of Those Who Acted."* Green Minds was designed to support UCNJ's aim to fight against food insecurity. The chapter developed and executed a plan to provide fresh produce using the college's hydroponic systems to supply fresh vegetation to the food pantry and the College's farmers' market.

The Rise Up project taught the College community about activism from the student's perspective. The chapter told the stories of past and present student activists through a photographic exhibit as well as a panel discussion. These stories included perspectives from a global, national, and local level

including specific details about student activism that occurred at UCNJ during the late 60s and early 70s. The Iota Xi chapter was also recognized for the hard work of their members, chapter officers, and advisors, receiving a total of nine awards at the Middle States Regional Conference.

The Psi Chapter of Chi Alpha Epsilon is a national honor society for students in the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) program.

The Omicron Beta chapter of Tau Alpha Pi National Honor Society is a national honor society for students in the engineering and engineering technology programs at UCNJ.



PHI THETA KAPPA
HONOR SOCIETY



Nursing Programs

41 Graduates Complete Practical Nursing Program

The Practical Nursing Program at UCNJ equips students with essential skills in patient care, assisting doctors and registered nurses with various medical tasks and treatments. Students are taught to provide compassionate and competent care to patients in various healthcare settings, including hospitals, clinics, and long-term care facilities. Upon graduating, students are eligible to take the NCLEX-PN examination for Practical Nurse licensure, which is supported by a voucher payment to help offset the cost of the licensing exam.

The College celebrated 41 new graduates over the spring and fall semesters at their pinning ceremony. Dr. Christiana Nwachukwu, Associate Professor in

Practical Nursing, awarded the pins to the graduates. Following the pinning, the graduates took the Nurses' Pledge and lit candles. The candles commemorate

Florence Nightingale's nighttime aid to wounded soldiers by candlelight.



Certified Medical Assistant Program is a Stellar Success

UCNJ's Certified Medical Assistant (CMA) program celebrated their second cohort's success with a completion ceremony, honoring the 16 graduates. The CMA program



prepares students for careers in high-demand healthcare fields. Graduates complete extensive hands-on training, classroom instruction, and certification preparation, which equips them with the skills to support clinical operations in hospitals, private practices, and urgent care centers. The 620-hour program curriculum includes course syllabi, daily lesson plans, materials, and was refined to meet current industry standards. Special thanks to Union County Commissioner Rebecca Williams for attending the completion ceremony and supporting UCNJ students!



A Breath of Success for 15 Respiratory Care Graduates

This year, 15 students graduated from UCNJ's Respiratory Care Program. Over the course of their program, students learn to administer medical gases and aerosolized drugs, assist physicians with diagnoses, and provide treatment and care to patients with disorders of the heart and lungs. Upon completion, students graduate with an Associate in Applied Science degree and are eligible to sit for the National Board of Respiratory Care credentialing exams.

The completion ceremony included remarks from Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Sara Lacagnino and Dean of the Plainfield Campus and Allied Sciences William Dunscombe. Also in attendance were clinical directors, instructional staff, laboratory staff, and the family and friends of the graduates.



From Classrooms to Crisis: EMT Students Learn Life-Saving Skills

The College offers several different levels of training in the field of Emergency Medical Services, including a Certificate or a Certificate of Achievement in Emergency Medical Studies. This year, 137 students completed the EMT program, including 25 from the Union County Vocational Technical

schools. Throughout their time at UCNJ, students complete ambulance ride along hours for field practice and to improve their skills. The program has expanded their affiliations with local hospitals to meet field experience requirements, and includes three from Hackensack

Meridian Health, including JFK University Medical Center, Old Bridge Medical Center, and Bay Shore Medical Center, as well as RWJ University Hospital in Rahway. The EMT program is equipped with lifelike manikins, a simulation ambulance, and a road ambulance for students to practice emergency

scenarios and to learn critical thinking skills. Upon successful completion of their program, students are eligible to take the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians examination.

RWJBarnabas Health School of Nursing Celebrates 155 Graduates

The RWJBarnabas Health School of Nursing and UCNJ jointly offer a Cooperative Nursing Program, which awards a Diploma in Nursing from RWJBarnabas Health School of Nursing and an Associate of Science degree from UCNJ upon successful completion of the curriculum.

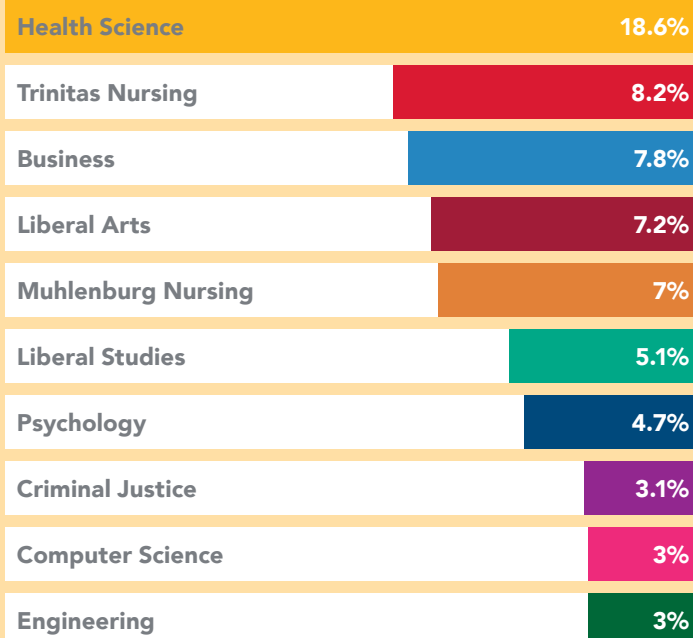
The program provides a sound theoretical foundation in nursing, biological, behavioral, and social sciences and integrates this knowledge into academic and practical experiences within the health and illness continuum of patient care. The program is accredited by The Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) and approved by the New Jersey State Board of Nursing.

Upon completion of the program, graduates participate in a pinning ceremony, which is a traditional rite of passage and entry into the nursing profession. The pinning and graduation ceremonies are combined at the RWJBarnabas Health Trinitas School of Nursing. At the end of the ceremony, the graduates hold the Nightingale lamp in their left hand, raise their right hand, and recite the International Pledge of Nursing.

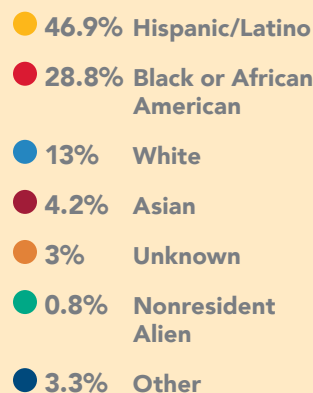


Fall 2024 FT/FT Cohort, Top Enrolled Majors

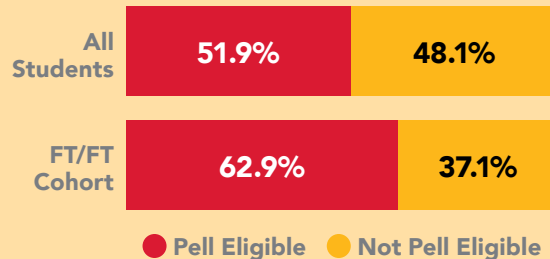
UCNJ's top ten enrolled programs of study account for more than 67.7% of our first-time full-time enrolled students



Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity



Fall 2024 Pell Eligibility



Stellar Spirit



Hispanic Heritage Month Celebrates Pioneers of Change

To celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, the College hosted a kickoff celebration, beginning with a dance performance by "Alborada Spanish Dance." The keynote speaker was the director of Intercultural Resource Center at Rutgers University Newark Mr. Gary Santos Mendoza, who spoke about Latin pride and discussed this year's theme: Pioneers of Change: Shaping the Future Together.

Following the ceremony, attendees were invited to the



Victor M. Richel Student Commons for music, dancing, and empanadas. Continuing the celebration, the Women's Volleyball

team also hosted a Hispanic Heritage Month Game against Raritan Valley Community College.

Voices of Strength Honored at Black History Month Kickoff

Black History Month began with a celebration in the College's Roy W. Smith Theater for faculty, staff, students, and members of the community. The theme for this year was "African Americans and Labor." Kicking off the event was the United Voices of UCNJ, a student club that performed a medley of songs. The keynote address was



given by Dr. Alex Ellis, founder of Tied to Greatness, a mentoring initiative impacting over 10,000 young men globally. Dr. Ellis spoke about the importance of redefining personal and professional images, empowerment, and authenticity. Following the keynote speech, UCNJ student Robin Finney recited the poem, "Still I Rise" by Maya Angelou.

The Office of College Life

The Office of College Life (OCL) promotes extracurricular and co-curricular programs to enhance the college experience and students' personal growth at UCNJ.

With more than 35+ clubs and organizations at the College, there is something for every student to join. Clubs provide a co-curricular opportunity for students to socialize and get involved on campus. Some club highlights from the year include:

- The **Music Club** hosted a student talent show with over a dozen performances, multiple bands, instrumentalists, and vocalists.
- The **Muslim Student Association** hosted their second annual Iftar dinner to break the fast with students and staff during Ramadan.
- The **Women's Empowerment Club** hosted a self-care event for women as a midsemester de-stress.
- The **History Club** brought the federal election to life on campus with events for Constitution Day and Election Day events.
- The **Caribbean Culture Club** hosted a Women's Heritage event focused on Caribbean women on campus telling their stories of success.



A Galaxy of Opportunities

The OCL kept students engaged all year long with experiences and service opportunities outside of the classroom. These trips provide students with the chance to explore new environments, learn about different cultures, and create lasting memories with their peers. Trips this year included:

- The National Mall and National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C.
- Activate at the American Dream Mall
- Madame Tussauds and Rockefeller Center in New York City
- Medieval Times Dinner and Tournament
- NJ Devils Hockey Game
- Scare Farm's Haunted Corn Maze

On top of these trips, students also made a real impact in their communities. Service trips included lending a hand at the Community Food Bank in Hillside, walking for breast cancer and suicide awareness, donating blood at the Cranford Campus, and helping out at the 10 Lil' Acre Rescued Animal Farm. UCNJ students showed up and gave back in big ways.

Students can earn service hours by participating in these volunteering opportunities, enhancing their chances of securing scholarships and other opportunities outside of UCNJ.





Triple Threat Region XIX Champions



Congratulations are in order for several UCNJ teams that won their NJCAA District XIX Championships this year and ranked #1 in the Region.



The **Men's Basketball team** defeated Northampton Community College with a score of 95-74, securing their championship win. The MVP was forward Nicolas Acosta. Head Coach Devon Stanberry won the NJCAA Region XIX Doug Yenni Coach of the Year Award.



The **Women's Basketball team** defeated Harcum College in a nailbiter game, with a score of 61-60. The MVP of the Women's team was forward Yasmeen Brightwell. Seventh time was the charm for Head Coach Marbely Montas, who received the NJCAA Region XIX Coach of the Year Award for the seventh consecutive year.



The **Men's Volleyball team** won their NJCAA Region XIX Championship against Northampton Community College, winning three sets to one. This marks the first championship win since the program began in 2023 under Head Coach Kevan Pidgeon-Hammock, who was named NJCAA Region XIX Coach of the Year. The MVP of the game was Middle Blocker Javon Scott.



Dynamic Duo Bring Home the Gold

UCNJ's Esports team continued its winning legacy this year with a national title and multiple regional championships. The team won the National Junior College Athletic Association Esports (NJCAAE)

Championship for Call of Duty. Student-players Bryan Carillo and Paulo Matias won the title and broke the previous seasonal record by staying undefeated with 19 wins this season. Both Mr. Carillo and Mr. Matias have played on UCNJ's Esports team for two years, with Mr. Matias bringing home the national championship title for Call of Duty in 2023. The Esports



Esports Champions Honored with Ring Reveal Celebration

The College celebrated another championship, recognizing the Esports national championship team. The UCNJ community gathered for a Championship



team was also named the NJCAAE Regional Champions for both Call of Duty and Fortnite. The players for Fortnite included Felix Parades, Tamir Reddick, and Roger Fortunato.

Ring Reveal Ceremony, recognizing the achievements of the College's Esports athletes in *Call of Duty: Gunfight* and *Mario Kart*.

Each player was presented with a custom championship ring, a symbol of their commitment, skill, and sportsmanship throughout the season.

The *Call of Duty: Gunfight* team included:

- Ricky "Rickety" Amaral – Team Captain
- Paulo "Pajo819" Matias
- Chris "Cbandz" Reed

In the *Mario Kart* division, UCNJ celebrated the achievement of another standout player, Ian "lanxl" Friedman who also secured a championship title.



Athletic Excellence



Student Athlete of the Year

- **Yasmeen Brightwell** – Women's Basketball, UCNJ Female Student-Athlete of the Year 2024-2025
- **Roger Fortunato** – Esports, UCNJ Male Student-Athlete of the Year 2024-2025

Fall Sports

Women's Soccer Individual Awards

All-GSAC Teams

- Marisa Hill, Goalkeeper (FR) – First Team
- Kayla Cabrera, Midfield/Forward (SO) – First Team

All-Region XIX Selections

- Marisa Hill, Goalkeeper (FR) – First Team
- Kayla Cabrera, Midfield/Forward (SO) – Second Team

GSAC Player of the Week

- Marisa Hill, Goalkeeper (FR)
- Christi Mendoza, Midfielder (FR)

Men's Soccer Individual Awards

All-Region XIX Selections

- Pablo Corte, Forward (FR) – Second Team

All-GSAC Team

- Pablo Corte, Forward (FR) – Second Team

Winter Sports

Women's Basketball Individual Awards

All-Region XIX Selections

- Marbely Montas – Region XIX Coach of the Year
- Destiny Bynum-Johnson, Guard (SO) – First Team, Region XIX Player of the Year
- Hellary De Los Santos, Forward (FR) – First Team
- Ore Ogunwolere, Guard (SO) – Second Team

All-GSAC Teams

- Ore Ogunwolere, Guard (SO) – Second Team
- Hellary De Los Santos, Forward (FR) – GSAC Player of the Week x3
- Destiny Bynum-Johnson, Guard (SO) – GSAC Player of the Week x2

Men's Basketball Individual Awards

All-Region XIX Selections

- Devon Stanberry – Region XIX Coach of the Year
- Nicolas Acosta, Guard (FR) – First Team
- Joey Garguilo, Guard (SO) – Third Team
- Devin Geiger, Forward (SO) – Third Team

All-GSAC Teams

- Devon Stanberry – Region XIX Doug Yenni Coach of the Year
- Nicolas Acosta, Guard (SO) – Player of the Week x4
- Joey Garguilo, Guard (SO) – Player of the Week

NJHoops JUCO Player of the Week

- Devin Geiger, Forward (FR)

Wrestling Individual Awards

Scholar All-Americans

- Christian Ramos (SO)
- Jack Higuera Justo (SO) – First 2x Scholar All-American in program history
- Salvatore Randazzo (FR)

NJCAA Region 19 Gulf Atlantic District Championships

- Josh Baeza (FR) – 141 lb. District Champion

Spring Sports

Men's Volleyball Individual Awards

All-Region Teams

- Kevan Pidgeon-Hammond – Region XIX Coach of the Year
- Javon Scott (FR) – Region XIX Player of the Year
- Javon Scott (FR) – First Team
- Jaden Guzman (FR) – First Team
- Joshua Orihuela (FR) – Second Team
- Daniel Silva (SO) – Second Team

All-GSAC/Conference Teams

- Javon Scott (FR) – GSAC Player of the Year
- Kevan Pidgeon-Hammond – GSAC Coach of the Year
- Javon Scott (FR) – First Team
- Jaden Guzman (FR) – First Team
- Joshua Orihuela (FR) – First Team
- Daniel Silva (SO) – Second Team



Baseball Individual Awards

All-Region Teams

- Fraelyn Rosario (SO) – Second Team

2024-2025 NJCAA Academic Teams & All-Academic Team Honors

2024-2025 NJCAA Academic Teams of the Year

- UCNJ Men's Volleyball – 3.15 GPA
- UCNJ Golf (Men's) – 3.66 GPA

2024-2025 NJCAA and NJCAA All Academic Teams

- NJCAA All-Academic First Team 4.00 GPA
- NJCAA All-Academic Second Team 3.80-3.99 GPA
- NJCAA All-Academic Third Team 3.60-3.79 GPA

First Team

- Faris Areiqat (SO) – Men's Volleyball, Esports
- Griffin Cederquist (SO) – Golf
- Mirella Gomes (FR) – Women's Soccer
- Benjamin Greeley (SO) – Men's Volleyball
- Camille Guerand (SO) – Women's Cross Country
- Xavier Hernandez (FR) – Men's Volleyball
- Jacob Paredes (SO) – Men's Soccer
- Chester Rose (SO) – Esports
- Kelly Ruiz (SO) – Women's Soccer
- Angie Sanchez (SO) – Women's Soccer
- Maria Urena (Maira Paula Urena Rojas) (FR) – Women's Basketball
- Nicholas Velotti (SO) – Golf
- Vincent Zeferino (SO) – Golf

Second Team

- Nicolas Acosta (FR) – Men's Basketball
- Afi Agboka (FR) – Women's Soccer
- Gabriel Albarran (SO) – Baseball
- Jeremy Albuja (SO) – Golf
- Fabienne Auguste (FR) – Women's Outdoor Track & Field
- Gregory Ayube (SO) – Baseball
- Yasmeeen Brightwell (SO) – Women's Basketball
- Roger Fortunato (SO) – Esports
- Liam Hester (SO) – Baseball
- Gabriel Higuera Justo (SO) – Wrestling
- Jaden Linton (SO) – Women's Soccer

- Paulo Matias (SO) – Esports
- Thomas Matthews (SO) – Men's Soccer
- John McDonald (SO) – Golf
- Jesus Namroud (SO) – Esports
- Stephen Pascucci (SO) – Baseball
- Luis Perez (SO) – Esports
- Santiago Puerto (FR) – Esports
- William Ramsey (SO) – Baseball
- Javon Scott (SO) – Men's Volleyball
- Nyla Williams (SO) – Women's Basketball

Third Team

- Gabriel Amaya (SO) – Men's Soccer
- Sebastian Aparicio (SO) – Golf
- Andrew Charzewski (SO) – Baseball
- Brendan Fitzsimmons (SO) – Golf
- Marisa Hill (FR) – Women's Soccer
- Amy Martinez (FR) – Women's Soccer
- Franklin Paredes (SO) – Esports
- Jakob Ramos (SO) – Baseball
- Matt Riggins (FR) – Golf
- Vinit Shah (FR) – Men's Volleyball
- Molly Vetter (SO) – Women's Volleyball
- Craig West (FR) – Men's Basketball
- Levaughn Wilsonreid (SO) – Wrestling

GSAC/NJCAA All Region

2024FA GSAC

(3.0 GPA or higher) 76 student-athletes

2024FA All region

(3.25 GPA – 4.0 GPA). 68 student-athletes

2025SP GSAC

(3.0 GPA or higher) 90 student-athletes

2025SP All Region

(3.25 GPA -4.0 GPA) 74 student-athletes



Owls Soar Higher with Multiple Championship Wins



The victories began in the fall semester when **Esports** secured multiple championship titles through both the Call of Duty: Gunfight and Fortnite: No Build teams. The Fortnite team swept their competitors, Jackson College, 3-0, clinching their first regional championship in program history. UCNJ student-athletes include Tamir Reddick, Roger Fortunato, and Felix Parades.

The Call of Duty: Gunfight team had a perfect regular season and continued their dominance in the Regional Tournament. The Owls swept Pensacola State College 3-0 to capture the Regional Championship title and secure a spot in the NJCAAE National Championship for Fall 2024. In the national championship game, the Owls emerged victorious, adding another National title to the books. The Owls finished the fall '24 season undefeated, marking the first time in program history they

completed a season with a perfect record.

Esports continued their winning streak in the spring, earning two more Regional Championship titles and another trip to the NJCAAE National Championship. UCNJ student-athlete Santiago Puerto won regionals for Mario Kart 1v1, and the Call of Duty: Gunfight team, consisting of UCNJ student-athletes Paulo Matias, Bryan Carrillo, Samuel Arias, Xavier Hernandez, and Roger Fortunato, also won regionals. Mario Kart 1v1, Call of Duty: Gunfight, and Fortnite: No Build all qualified for the NJCAAE National Championship in Spring '25. Mario Kart 1v1 finished fourth in the nation, Fortnite: No Build finished third in the nation, and Call of Duty: Gunfight was victorious once again, winning the National Championship title.

The wins continued into the spring semester. Both the **Men's and Women's**

Basketball teams had outstanding seasons this year. On the men's side, the Owls finished their regular season with a 24-6 record and were seeded number one in the NJCAA DIII Men's Region XIX Tournament. The Owls went on to win the Region XIX Championship title and the North Atlantic District A Championship Tournament against Northampton Community College, also clinching a ticket to the NJCAA DIII Men's Basketball National Championship in Herkimer, New York.

UCNJ **Women's Basketball** shined all season with a regular season record of 27-4, helping the Owls earn the number one seed in the NJCAA DII Women's Basketball Region XIX Tournament. The Owls also secured their spot at the NJCAA DII Women's Basketball National

Championship in Joplin, Missouri.

UCNJ **Wrestling** also made an impact this year. Freshman Josh Baeza brought home the gold, crowning him the 141 lb. District Champion. Five other Owls qualified for the NJCAA Men's Wrestling National Championship and traveled to Council Bluffs, Iowa.

With spring in full swing, the UCNJ **Men's Volleyball** team was on fire. The Owls broke several program records, including winning the Region XIX title with a 3-1 set victory. The Owls became the Garden State Athletic Conference (GSAC) Champions and NJCAA Region XIX Champions, earning a trip to the NJCAA Men's Volleyball Invitational in Canandaigua, New York.



UCNJ Graduate Honored for Historic Golf Season

After a successful golf season, UCNJ alumnus Patrick Murray ('24) received a championship ring. The celebration recognized Mr. Murray's remarkable athletic journey and the lasting impact he made during his time at the College. His success included winning both the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Region XIX Championship and the Garden State Athletic (GSAC) Championship in back-to-back years. Mr. Murray's performances on the green earned him a spot in the NJCAA Division III Golf National Championships in his freshman and sophomore year. In his first year at nationals, he placed an

impressive 18th, but it was his second year that solidified his status as one of the top golfers in the country, securing 7th place in the NJCAA Division III Golf National Championships. In addition, Mr. Murray earned All-American honors in both 2023 and 2024. After graduating from UCNJ, he transferred to Kean University with a 4.0 GPA and continues to play golf for their newly formed team.



Alumni Brunch Welcomes Graduates Back to the Owl's Nest

In collaboration with Alumni Relations, the College's Athletics Department hosted an alumni event to have brunch and watch the Men's and Women's Basketball teams compete. Alumni enjoyed a day of networking,

reminiscing, and basketball action. Following brunch, those in attendance headed to the gymnasium to cheer on the Men's and Women's teams.



Owl You Need is Love

UCNJ couples of the past and present came together for a Valentine's Day special at the College. The couples that were featured were current UCNJ students Katherine Paola Jovel and Manny

Martinez, UCNJ alumni Kay Oliveira ('22) and Grace de Araujo ('22) who met playing soccer for UCNJ, and Luis Padilla ('15) and Martha Padilla ('15) who met at UCNJ more than a decade ago and are now married.

Each couple shared their journey at UCNJ, how their relationship has progressed, and gave advice for current students.



An Evening of Empowerment and Etiquette

Student leaders gathered for an impactful Etiquette Dinner led by Social Work

Services, where they learned networking skills, communication skills, and the essentials of business dining behavior.

The night began with opening remarks from Mrs. Deborah Enix-Ross, Esq., who serves as Chair of the Union County College Foundation Board and is a member of UCNJ's Board of Governors. A Senior Advisor in the International Dispute Resolution Group at Debevoise & Plimpton LLP, Mrs. Enix-Ross shared her journey as the first in her family to attend college

and later, law school. Her story of perseverance and professional achievement set the tone for an evening dedicated to growth and opportunity.



HOOT'S MARKET *and more!!*

Social Work Services Addresses Food Insecurity on Campus

Food insecurity affects a large population of students at UCNJ, and the College is dedicated to helping students in need. Nearly 65% of students experience financial obstacles and have skipped meals due to financial constraints. Also, more than 50% of students were worried their food

would run out before they received money to buy more.

Food insecurity can lead to a negative impact on academic performance and mental well-being. UCNJ assists students with this issue by offering food pantries, meal share programs, and



connections to community support services.

- **Hoot's Market** is an on-campus food pantry that assist students with pantry stable items.
- **UCNJ Farmer's Market** is a semesterly program that allows students to access free produce.

- **Grubpass Program** is an electronic fund that students can access to purchase hot meals from the campus cafeteria.

- **Hoots Lunch Box** offers weekly free entrées for students.

These food insecurity initiatives are also supported with generous funding provided by the Union County Board of County Commissioners.



UNION COUNTY COLLEGE **FOUNDATION**
NOURISH THE FUTURE

Mental Health & Wellness On Campus Services



The College provides mental health support for all students. Services include:

- **UWill:** Students receive free immediate access to teletherapy at anytime.

Uwill

Student Mental Health & Wellness

- **Cooperative Counseling Services:** A licensed therapist visits the Cranford, Elizabeth, and Plainfield Campuses to provide free on-campus counseling to students who fill out the Mental Health Interest Form and Referral.
- **TalkCampus:** A free, on-demand peer-to-peer student support app. Students can download TalkCampus from the App Store on their mobile device and use their student email address to register. The platform is also monitored by clinicians.



PLC

The President's Leadership Council (PLC) is comprised of leaders from across the various divisions of the College who share the current initiatives, updates, and plans from their respective departments. They discuss and implement the College's institutional priorities: Student Success & Post-Completion, Enrollment & Value, Innovation & Sustainability, and Inclusion & Belonging.

The President's Leadership Council

- Dr. Margaret M. McMenamin, *President*
- Mark G. Anderson, *Director of Purchasing*
- Lester T. Bosea, *Registrar*
- Dayne Chance, *Executive Director of Financial Aid*
- Dr. Nicole D. Cippolletti, *Dean of Scotch Plains & Virtual Campus*
- William E. Dunscombe, *Dean of Plainfield Campus & Allied Sciences*
- Dr. Demond T. Hargrove, *Vice President for Student Development*
- Joseph Hines, *Executive Director of Public Safety*
- Dr. Lisa R. Hiscano, *Executive Director of Continuing Education & Workforce Development*
- Dr. Charnette Hockaday, *Dean of Students*
- Dr. Coleen Kumar, *Dean of JFK Muhlenberg Harold B. and Dorothy A. Snyder Schools*
- Dr. Sara N. Lacagnino, *Vice President for Academic Affairs*
- Vincent J. Lotano, *Associate Vice President of Operations*
- Dr. Maris Lown, *Executive Vice President & Provost*
- Marci L. MacGregor, *Chair of the Governance and Leadership Council*
- Dr. Melinda C. Norelli, *Dean of Social Sciences, Business, and History*
- Dr. Bernard A. Polnariiev, *Vice President for Administrative Services*
- Dr. Elizabeth A. Ramos, *Dean of Elizabeth Campus & Institute for Intensive English*
- Dr. Duane Reid, *Assistant Dean of Student Success*
- Douglas E. Rouse, *Vice President for Institutional Advancement*
- Dr. Melissa R. Sande, *Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs & Dean of Humanities*
- Dr. Roseminda N. Santee, *Dean of Trinitas School of Nursing*
- Dr. Jaime M. Segal, *Assistant Vice President of External Affairs & Secretary of the Boards*
- Dr. Faraz Siddique, *Dean of STEM*
- Marlene M. Sousa, *Chief Financial Officer*
- Dr. Lauren Swierc Falkowski, *Dean of Curriculum & Assessment*
- Dr. Marlene White, *Associate General Counsel & Executive Director of Procurement*
- Dr. Eric D. Winch, *Chief Information Officer*
- Dr. Andrew S. Ziner, *Executive Director of Institutional Research*

Orbiting the Community

Mrs. Zimmermann and Dr. Rotunda Receive ACCT Awards



Two members of the UCNJ community received awards from the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT). Former Board of Governors Chair and Trustee Mary M. Zimmermann (UCNJ '01) received the 2024 ACCT Northeast Region Trustee Leadership Award. As a UCNJ alumna, Mrs. Zimmermann is an advocate for students and understands their needs better than most. She has more than 15 years of service on the College's Boards. Mrs. Zimmermann

previously served as the Chair of the New Jersey Council of County Colleges.

Associate Professor of History Dr. Michele Rotunda received the 2024 Northeast Region Faculty Member Award. She serves as an advisor for the College's History Club and was integral in the development of the College's History program. Both received their awards at the 55th Annual ACCT Leadership Congress in Seattle.

From left: ACCT Chair Rich Fukutaki, Assoc. Professor of Chemistry Sherry Heidary, Mrs. Zimmermann, Dr. Rotunda, ACCT President & CEO Jee Hang Lee, Executive Vice President and Provost Dr. Maris Lown, and AVP of External Affairs & Board Secretary Dr. Jaime Segal.

Commissioners Recognize UCNJ Student with Resolution

The Union County Board of County Commissioners presented UCNJ student Samir Perez, of Elizabeth, with a resolution for being named a Kaplan Leadership Scholar. Mr. Perez is one of only 11 students from the tristate area selected for this opportunity. The Kaplan Leadership Program supports students at two-year schools who demonstrate educational acumen, leadership potential, and financial need. He graduates in May 2025 and plans to transfer to Stevens Institute of Technology.



From left: UCNJ Asst. Director of Marketing & Communication Maggie Ortuso, Asst. Dean of Students Bea Rodriguez, Commissioner Chairwoman Lourdes M. Leon, Samir Perez, Commissioner Kimberly Palmieri-Moued, Asst. Dean of Learning Resources Jose Paez, and AVP of External Affairs & Board Secretary Dr. Jaime Segal

Congratulations Trustee Dr. Tasharofi

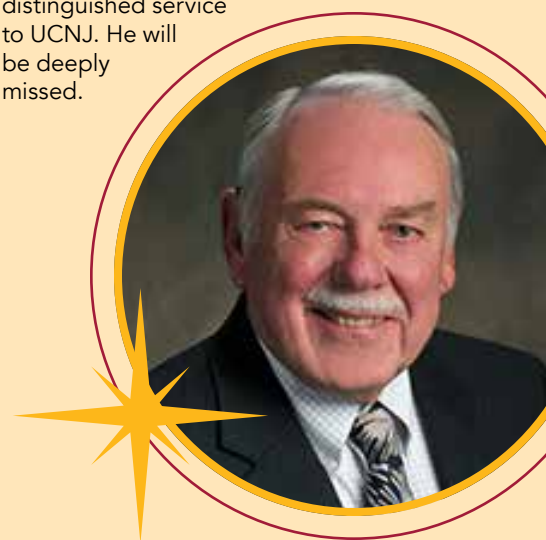
Several UCNJ staff members attended a ribbon-cutting to commemorate the opening of Trustee Dr. Kamran Tasharofi's newest medical office in Cranford. At center of the photo, Senate President Nicholas P. Scutari (LD-22) and Dr.

Tasharofi cut the ribbon surrounded by supporters including Union County Commissioner Chairwoman Lourdes M. Leon and Commissioner Sergio Granados as well as Union County Prosecutor William A. Daniel (UCNJ '76).



Remembering Board of Governors Member Frank Raudelunas (1935-2024)

The College mourns the loss of former Board member Frank Raudelunas. Mr. Raudelunas was a member of the College's Board of Governors from 2006 to 2023. He served on the Buildings & Grounds Committee as well as the ad hoc Marketing Committee. Mr. Raudelunas was a Scholarship Donor and an avid supporter of the College's Foundation. He was also the father to UCNJ's Executive Director of Continuing Education & Workforce Development Dr. Lisa Raudelunas Hiscano. Mr. Raudelunas was posthumously named a Governor Emeritus in recognition of his long and distinguished service to UCNJ. He will be deeply missed.



The College's Advocates

The College is indebted to advocates in the County, in Trenton, and in Washington for their unwavering support and their commitment to education.

State and federal elected officials provide valuable support to the College. From Federal Pell Grants and Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education funding to New Jersey Tuition Assistance Grants, the Community College Opportunity Grant, and NJ STARS, these programs provide critical financial assistance. We thank them for their support!

United States Senate

Senator Cory Booker

Senator Andy Kim

United States House of Representatives

Representative Tom Kean, Jr. (NJ-07)

Representative LaMonica McIver (NJ-10)

Representative Rob Menendez (NJ-08)

Representative Bonnie Watson Coleman (NJ-12)

New Jersey Governor

Governor Philip D. Murphy

Lieutenant Governor Tahesha Way

New Jersey Legislature, District 20

Senator Joseph P. Cryan

Assemblyman Reginald W. Atkins

Assemblywoman Annette Quijano

New Jersey Legislature, District 21

Senator Jon M. Bramnick

Assemblywoman Michele Matsikoudis

Assemblywoman Nancy F. Munoz

New Jersey Legislature, District 22

Senate President Nicholas P. Scutari

Assemblywoman Linda S. Carter

Assemblyman James J. Kennedy

New Jersey Legislature, District 28

Senator Renee C. Burgess

Assemblywoman Garnet R. Hall

Assemblywoman Cleopatra G. Tucker



Mrs. Zimmermann, Congresswoman McIver (NJ-10), Ms. Mejia, and Dr. Segal.

Greetings from DC: UCNJ Attends ACCT National Legislative Summit

UCNJ Board of Governors Chair and Trustee Mary M. Zimmermann (UCNJ '01), Student Representative Katherine Mejia Reyes (UCNJ '24), and UCNJ's AVP of External Affairs & Board Secretary Dr. Jaime Segal attended the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) 2025 National Legislative Summit in Washington, DC. During their visit, they had the opportunity to meet with the offices of elected officials, including U.S. Representatives Bonnie Watson Coleman, Thomas H. Kean Jr., Rob Menendez, and LaMonica McIver, and U.S. Senators Cory Booker and Andy Kim. The meetings were held to advocate for current issues facing community colleges.

HOOO Loves UCNJ?

In the fall, U.S. Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) visited the College's Scotch Plains Campus to rally up voter volunteers. The National Pan-Hellenic Council hosted a nonpartisan voter call bank with more than 100 volunteers who conducted outreach to 170,000 individuals reminding them to vote in the upcoming election. While there, the Senator snapped a selfie with a group of UCNJ employees.



From left: Asst. Dean of Student Success Dr. Duane Reid, Asst. Director of Marketing & Communication Margaret Ortuso, AVP of External Affairs & Board Secretary Dr. Jaime Segal, and Sen. Cory Booker.

Cherry Blossoms & Advocacy: HACU Capitol Forum in DC

UCNJ attended the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) 30th Capitol Forum held in Washington D.C. The event brings together HACU members with elected officials and government leaders to advocate for the legislative priorities of Hispanic-Serving Institutions. Attending this event were President McMenamin, who is also a member of the

HACU Governing Board, AVP of External Affairs & Board Secretary Dr. Jaime Segal, and UCNJ students Emmanuel Isaiah Martinez, of Rahway, and Bryan Velasquez, of Elizabeth. As part of the conference, the UCNJ delegation met with the offices of Senator Cory Booker, Senator Andy Kim, and Representative LaMonica McIver (NJ-10).



UCNJ “Walks to Washington”



Back after a five-year hiatus, the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce hosted the 84th Walk to Washington. This

event consisted of 900 New Jersey leaders traveling to Washington D.C. on a chartered train. After arriving in Washington, there was a congressional reception featuring speakers: Governor Phil Murphy, Senators Cory Booker and Andy Kim, and Representative Chris Smith.



From left: VP Administrative Services Dr. Bernard Polnarev, Asst. Dean of Student Success Dr. Duane Reid, Vice President of Institutional Advancement Douglas Rouse, Mayor of Elizabeth J. Christian Bollwage, Executive Director of Continuing Education & Workforce Development Dr. Lisa Hiscano, AVP of External Affairs & Board Secretary Dr. Jaime Segal, and Asst. Dean of Learning Resources Jose Paez-Figueroa. And a selfie with Governor Murphy!



Congressman Menendez Visits UCNJ

Congressman Rob Menendez (NJ-08) toured the College's Elizabeth Campus, visiting the Nursing program offered through a partnership with RWJBarnabas Health system, where he observed a high-tech simulation manikin used

for hands-on training. He also spoke with students in a non-credit English as a Second Language (ESL) class.

Thank you for visiting!



From left: Director of Continuing Education and Workforce Development Marlene Loff, Congressman Menendez (NJ-08), Dean of Elizabeth Campus & Institute for Intensive English Dr. Elizabeth Ramos, AVP of External Affairs & Board Secretary Dr. Jaime Segal, Executive Director of Continuing Education & Workforce Development Dr. Lisa Hiscano, Assistant Dean of Students Beatriz Rodriguez, Associate Director of Continuing Education & Workforce Development Maritza Batista.

Congressman Menendez with Director of Learning and Simulation Lab Dr. Kevin O'Neill



UCNJ Supports Elizabeth State of the City



UCNJ represented at the Greater Elizabeth Chamber of Commerce's annual Elizabeth State of the City Luncheon. At the event, Mayor Bollwage delivered an address highlighting the events, initiatives, and accomplishments in the City of Elizabeth over the past year. He praised UCNJ for its impact on the community and acknowledged the College being one of ten finalists nationwide for the Aspen Prize!

From left: VP of Student Development Dr. Demond Hargrove, GECC President & CEO Jen Costa, Dean of Elizabeth Campus Dr. Elizabeth Ramos, Asst. Dean of Students Beatriz Rodriguez, AVP of External Affairs & Board Secretary Dr. Jaime Segal, Exec. Dir. of Cont. Ed. & Workforce Dev. Dr. Lisa Hiscano, Mayor of Elizabeth J. Christian Bollwage, VP for Administrative Services Dr. Bernard Polnarev, Dir. of Cont. Ed. & Workforce Dev. Marlene Loff, Asst. Program Dir. of Employee Engagement Katrina James-Pellam, Assoc. Dir. of Cont. Ed. & Workforce Dev. Maritza Batista, Vice President of Institutional Advancement Douglas Rouse

Hoo's UCNJ's Wonder Woman?

Why Union County's very own Assemblywoman Linda Carter! Asw. Carter represents New Jersey's 22nd Legislative District, which covers nine municipalities in Union County. She has been

a member of NJ's General Assembly since 2018, and this year, she serves as Chair of the Higher Education Committee. The College is always happy to have Asw. Carter on campus.



Welcome New Board Member Chief Matthew Nazzaro



UCNJ's Board of Governors welcomed new member Matthew Nazzaro (UCNJ '04), who is a proud alumnus of the College and currently serves as the Cranford Chief of Police. In his time as a police officer, Chief Nazzaro has earned many awards and recognitions, including the 2022 FBI-LEEDA Trilogy Award, the 2016 Cranford Knights of Columbus Police Shield Award, and in 2015, he received the AzureMasada Lodge No. 22 First Responder of the Year.



Celebrating the Beginning of the 2024-2025 Academic Year

UCNJ hosts Convocation the day before the fall semester begins, welcoming faculty and staff to the new academic year. This event opens with President McMenemy providing a State of the College. This past year's Convocation theme was "From Enrolling to Serving at Hispanic-Serving Institutions." The keynote speaker was Ms. Deborah Santiago, the co-founder and CEO of Excelencia in Education. Excelencia is an organization in higher education committed to accelerating Latino and all

students' success. Following Ms. Santiago's keynote, she facilitated a panel featuring Senior Vice President Community Relations Manager at Bank of America Etta Rudolf Denk; Founder and Executive Director of Cientifico Latino, Inc. and alumnus Dr. Robert W. Fernandez (UCNJ '09); and UCNJ's Dean of the Elizabeth Campus and Institute for Intensive English Dr. Elizabeth Ramos.



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There is no stronger partner to the College than the Union County Board of County Commissioners. Thanks to their generous and steadfast support, UCNJ is able to keep tuition low for students. Beyond the operational financial support they provide, they also help fund capital projects to modernize and update the College's aging facilities. Low tuition coupled with modern labs and facilities ensures students have access to an excellent, cutting-edge education. Through the support of the County Commissioners, the Commissioner Scholars Program provides scholarship support for high-performing students who demonstrate financial need. Additionally, the Senior Scholars Program offers free courses to residents over age 60. Beyond the financial support, the County Commissioners also support the College by attending events. Our County Commissioners are a welcome presence at UCNJ.

*Community Pride
in Action!!*





The Mean, Green, UCNJ Team Marches in St. Patrick's Day Parade



The UCNJ community brought college spirit and Irish pride to the 28th Annual Union County St. Patrick's Day Parade. More than 100 students, alumni, faculty, and staff proudly marched in the parade, all clad in green UCNJ sweatshirts. Leading the charge was President McMenemy, who served as Grand Marshal of

the Parade in 2015 and was named the 2023 Woman of the Year by the Irish Business Association of New Jersey. She led the College's delegation, decked out in UCNJ sweatshirts through Union Township.

Slainted!

Two Vice Presidents Selected as Aspen Rising Presidents Fellows

Vice President of Student Development Dr. Demond T. Hargrove and Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Sara Lacagnino have been selected as two of 40 leaders for 2025-26 Aspen Rising Presidents Fellowship. Dr. Bernard A. Polnariev successfully completed the 2024-25 Rising Presidents Fellowship. This Aspen fellowship aims to prepare the

next generation of presidents who can lead institutions to higher and more equitable levels of student success. Rising Presidents Fellows aspire to enter a community college presidency within five years of completing this fellowship. As fellows, they join a network of over 430 forward-thinking peers with approximately 200 of whom are sitting college presidents.





HACU

H I S P A N I C
A S S O C I A T I O N
O F C O L L E G E S &
U N I V E R S I T I E S

Owls Fly High to HACU Conference

UCNJ students and staff accompanied President McMenamin to the 38th Annual Conference of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) held in Colorado.

The HACU Conference serves as a valuable educational and networking opportunity for students. The Conference theme was "Championing Hispanic Higher Education Success: Reaching New Heights of Excellence and Equity." Dr. McMenamin is serving a two-year term on the HACU Governing Board. Accompanying the 11 students with President McMenamin were Associate



Vice President for Academic Affairs & Dean of Humanities Dr. Melissa Sande, Assistant Dean of Students Beatriz Rodriguez, Title V Project Director Sarah Cunha, and Student Services Generalist Christopher Villalta.

Elizabeth Development Company Honors Dr. McMenamin

The Elizabeth Development Company (EDC) recognized President McMenamin as an honoree at their 9th Annual Leadership Award Reception. Dr. McMenamin was recognized with the Community Agency Partner Award for her transformative leadership of the College in her 15 year tenure as UCNJ



president, which has seen significant improvements in student success outcomes and the modernization of facilities and services to benefit students. Under her leadership, the College has improved students' social and economic mobility.



From left: AVP of External Affairs & Board Secretary Dr. Jaime Segal, Dean of Elizabeth Dr. Elizabeth Ramos, Board of Trustees Chairman Mr. Victor M. Richel, Dr. McMenamin, Executive VP & Provost Dr. Maris Lown, VP of Student Development Dr. Demond Hargrove, VP of Institutional Advancement Doug Rouse, VP for Administrative Services Dr. Bernard Polnarev, Exec. Dir. of Continuing Education & Workforce Development Dr. Lisa Hiscano, Board of Governors member Stephen F. Hehl, Esq. (UCNJ '75).



President McMenamin Named NJBIZ Education Power 50

President McMenamin was named to the 2024 NJBIZ Education Power 50. This list profiles the most influential education professionals in New Jersey. Since becoming the President of UCNJ in 2010, Dr. McMenamin has prioritized student success outcomes, with the College's graduation rate more than quintupling. Under her leadership, UCNJ was recognized as a 2025 Aspen College Excellence Prize finalist based on our student success outcomes.



UCNJ is managed by a Board of Trustees and Board of Governors comprised of volunteer community members who give generously of their time and expertise for the benefit of the College.

UCNJ's board members advocate for the mission of providing a high-quality, affordable, and accessible education to all Union County residents.

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Daryl Palmieri



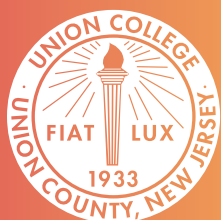
Kamran Tasharofi, M.D.



Mary M. Zimmermann
(UCNJ '01)



Katherine Mejía Reyes
(UCNJ '24)
Student Representative



Former UCNJ Leader Named President of College of The Mainland

Dr. Helen Castellanos Brewer, the former UCNJ Vice President of Student Development, was appointed as the new President of the College of the Mainland in Texas. Dr. Brewer previously

served as Executive Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs at College of the Mainland. At UCNJ, Dr. Brewer played a pivotal role in advancing student success.



New Doctors Shine in the Owl's Nest



Dr. Duane Reid, the Assistant Dean of Student Success, has earned his doctorate in Education in Educational Leadership from Rowan University. His dissertation was titled "A Qualitative Program Evaluation of a Community College Mentoring and Advising Initiative for First-Time, Full-Time African American Men." Dr. Reid earned his master's degree in Public Administration from Rutgers University and his bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from Rutgers University. Congratulations to Dr. Reid!



Dr. Marjorie Barnes, the Associate Professor in English, has earned her doctorate in Education in Educational Leadership from Rowan University. Her dissertation was, "Community College Faculty Use of Universal Design for learning (UDL): A Participatory Action Research Dissertation Study." Dr. Barnes earned her master's degree in Linguistics from Temple University and her bachelor's degree in Literature from Stockton University. Congratulations to Dr. Barnes!

Dr. Kathleen Clarke-Anderson, the Coordinator of the Center for Adult Transitions, has earned her doctorate in Education in Educational Leadership from National University in San Diego. Her dissertation was titled "Faculty Perceptions of Professional Development and Universal Design Learning Framework Integration in Instructional Practices: A Qualitative Case Study." Dr. Clarke-Anderson earned a master's degree in English from William Paterson University and a master's in Educational Leadership from Ramapo College of New Jersey. She earned her bachelor's degree in English, Theater, and Education from Keuka College. Congratulations to Dr. Clarke-Anderson!



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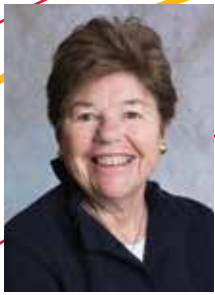
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James Roundtree III



John M. Toriello



Allan L. Weisberg



Hugh C. Welsh





Empowering Future Leaders: Young Professionals Committee Strengthens Impact Through Partnership



The Union County College Foundation's Young Professionals Committee continues to provide a dynamic platform for young professionals and alumni to connect, grow, and give back. Designed to foster meaningful relationships while navigating their careers, the committee offers a supportive space for emerging leaders to collaborate and make a lasting impact on student success at UCNJ.

This year, the Young Professionals Committee expanded its reach through an exciting partnership with the Greater Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce and its Young Professionals Alliance group. This collaboration connects UCNJ's young alumni with a broader network of business leaders and entrepreneurs in Union County. Through joint networking events, mentorship opportunities, and fundraising initiatives, the partnership strengthens professional development while increasing support for UCNJ students.

At the heart of the Young Professionals Committee's work is a commitment to raising funds for student scholarships. Through annual networking events and socials, the committee generates financial support to sustain its scholarship fund—

providing vital resources that empower students to overcome financial barriers, earn a credential from UCNJ, and improve their economic mobility.



“

“This scholarship is not just a financial gift; it is a vote of confidence in my abilities and potential.

It serves as a constant reminder that there are people who believe in me and are willing to invest in my future.”

Clive Duffour –
Bristol-Myers Squibb
STEM Scholarship

”

The Power of Giving: UCNJ Employees Drive Student Success

At UCNJ, supporting student success is made stronger by the unwavering generosity of faculty and staff. Through their commitment to the Union County College Foundation, UCNJ employees have played a crucial role in funding scholarships, supporting key initiatives, and ensuring that students have access to vital resources.

This year alone, the College community has demonstrated an extraordinary level of support.

From attending fundraising events to establishing scholarships, UCNJ employees have stepped up to make a difference. Their generosity has provided financial relief to students, allowing them to focus on their education without the burden of financial stress.

Beyond scholarships, staff and faculty have been involved in the success of the Nourish the Future campaign to help end food insecurity at the College. UCNJ employees have

recognized that food insecurity is a barrier to academic achievement, and they continue to actively raise funds to ensure that students receive the vital support they need. The dedicated involvement of these employees has helped to reinforce the College's commitment to student well-being.

The impact of employee giving extends far beyond financial contributions—it fosters a culture of care, support, and shared responsibility for student success.

The Foundation encourages even more members of the UCNJ community to join this important movement. Together, the College can continue to break down barriers, create opportunities, and empower students to achieve their dreams.



Nourish the Future: Fighting Food Insecurity at UCNJ

At UCNJ, it is critical that no student should have to choose between their education or their next meal. That's why this year, the Union County College Foundation launched the Nourish the Future campaign. The campaign's goal is to address the growing crisis of food insecurity on Campus and ensure that students have access to the nutrition they need to succeed.

Food insecurity is a serious issue affecting a significant portion of the student body. A recent survey revealed alarming statistics:

- 52% of UCNJ students worried their food would run out before they had money to buy more;

- 64% reported eating less than they should have due to financial constraints;
- 52% went hungry because they lacked food or money to purchase it

These numbers highlight the urgent need for action, and thanks to the generosity of donors, faculty, staff, and community partners,

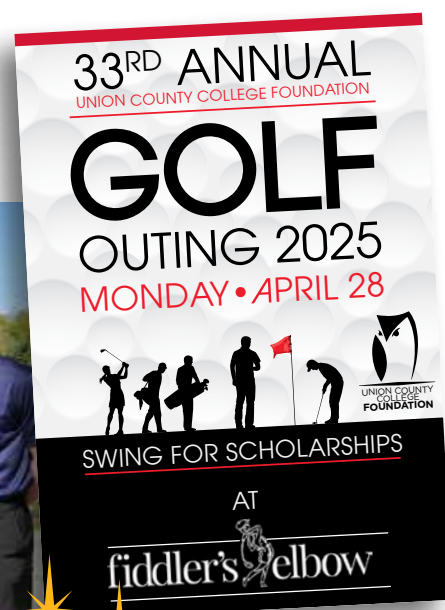
incredible progress has been made. This year, the Nourish the Future campaign raised over \$250,000, providing essential resources to support the College's Food Insecurity Program. These funds have helped stock food pantries, provided meal vouchers, and ensured students have the support they need to stay focused on their education.

This initiative is more than just providing meals—it's about giving students the confidence and security to pursue their dreams without the weight of hunger holding them back. The overwhelming success of Nourish the Future is a testament to what can be achieved when the UCNJ community comes together.



Union County College Foundation's 33rd Annual Golf Outing:

A Record-Breaking Success raising over \$210,000



The Union County College Foundation hosted its 33rd Annual Golf Outing this April at Fiddler's Elbow Country Club, raising more than \$210,000. With over 250 golfers, guests, and volunteers in attendance, the event was the largest

and most successful outing in Foundation history.

Thanks to the generosity of sponsors, participants, and the dedication of the hardworking committee, the record-breaking amount raised will provide crucial funding for scholarships, academic programming,

and emergency student assistance.

A highlight of the event was the inspiring keynote address by Carlos Leon-Hernandez, a distinguished 2025 UCNJ graduate and scholarship recipient. Sharing his personal journey, Mr.

Leon-Hernandez spoke passionately about how the Foundation's support transformed his education and future, reinforcing the profound impact that donor contributions have on students' lives.

“The financial support alleviates the burden of educational costs, enabling me to focus more intently on my studies and clinical training. Your investment in my education is not merely a financial contribution; it is a profound vote of confidence in my abilities and potential.”

Shyahna Thompson –
Elizabeth J. Bielefeld
Memorial Scholarship



Foundation Hosts 9th Annual Close the Gap: Advancing Student Success



The Union County College Foundation proudly hosted its 9th Annual Close the Gap Cocktail Reception at Galloping Hill Golf Course, continuing its commitment to increasing graduation rates among students at UCNJ. This event was a resounding success, raising over \$60,000 for scholarships, grants, program support, and emergency funding, which helps keep students on track for graduation.

Since its inception, the Close the Gap initiative has raised more than \$500,000, directly impacting the lives of countless students by removing financial barriers and fostering academic achievement.

Throughout the evening, distinguished community leaders who have made significant contributions to education and student success were recognized. The 2024 Community Leader of the Year Award was presented to Angela Adderley, a successful

entrepreneur who has operated ten McDonald's franchises in New Jersey over the past 30 years. Her leadership and dedication to economic empowerment have made a lasting impact in the community.

Additionally, Foundation board member George L. Cooke III was honored with the 2024 Frank

Bolden Honorary Award for his decades of service in Hillside, including his roles with the Hillside Scholarship Fund since 1986 and the Lions Club since 2017. His dedication to philanthropy and student success embodies the Close the Gap mission. The Union County College Foundation remains

committed to expanding opportunities for all students and ensuring that financial challenges do not stand in the way of their education.



Foundation Board member Susan Hairston presents the 2024 Community Leader of the Year Award to Angela Adderley.



Foundation Board Chair Deborah Enix-Ross presents the 2024 Frank Bolden Honorary Award to George L. Cooke III.



"You are not just simply paying my fees. You have motivated me to persevere through the academic year and have given me the confidence to face new challenges head on."



Omowonuola Oyedele – Hansome Energy Systems Scholarship



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**Scholarship Donor*

“

“Your belief in my potential and investment in my future has been incredibly motivating.

I am committed to making the most of this opportunity and to making you proud of your decision to support my endeavors.

I am grateful to have your support and it means so much to know someone who has never met me wants me to reach my goals.”

”

Nickey Dem Kuhn – Judge Chester and Emily Weidenburner Scholarship



Union County College Foundation Secures nearly \$300,000 in Grants to Expand Student Support

The Union County College Foundation continues to make a significant impact on student success through the generosity of its grant partners. The Foundation is proud to announce several new and renewed grants that will directly support scholarships and essential student programs.

The William Randolph Hearst Foundation provided a \$100,000 grant to support an honors scholarship. This transformative gift will provide high-achieving students with the financial assistance needed to pursue their education at UCNJ, empowering them to reach new academic heights.

In addition, the RSI Foundation has not only renewed but also increased its nursing scholarship to \$15,000, reaffirming its commitment to support students in UCNJ's nursing program. This continued investment ensures that future healthcare professionals have the necessary resources to

complete their education and enter the workforce.

Further strengthening the mission are both the Westfield Foundation and the Plainfield Foundation, who have each awarded \$10,000 grants to support the *Nourish the Future* campaign. These generous contributions will help combat food insecurity among UCNJ students, ensuring that no student must choose between their education or their next meal.

These grants exemplify the power of the community's investment in higher education. The Foundation is grateful to all the corporate and private foundations for their generosity and commitment to UCNJ students.

Union County College Foundation's Annual Gala Raises Over \$210,000

The Union County College Foundation hosted its 32nd Annual Gala at the Westwood in Garwood, bringing together guests for an evening of food, fun, and philanthropy. Themed “Harvesting Dreams,” the event celebrated the Foundation’s commitment to empowering students and accelerating their success.

The Gala, the Foundation’s premier fundraising event, raised over \$210,000 to support scholarships, programming, emergency assistance, food insecurity, and other vital student resources.

During the evening, the Foundation honored Christie McMullen, President and COO of Elizabethtown Gas,



Christie McMullen receives the 2024 Woman of the Year Award from UCNJ Board Chair Victor Richel.



Dean William Dunscombe accepts the 2024 Fiat Lux Award from Gala Chair Professor Sherry Heidary.

“I was considering being a part-time student this year due to financial challenges before I received scholarship, and I could not be more thrilled.

I now can continue as a full-time student and get one step closer to achieving my academic goals. There were times when my dream of pursuing a higher education seemed impossible, but the financial assistance you have provided me has helped me tremendously and kept me going.”

Alona Zhytovoz –
Elizabeth J. Bielefeld
Memorial Scholarship

as the 2024 Woman of the Year for her dedication to the College’s mission and student success. Additionally, the 2024 Fiat Lux Award was presented to William Dunscombe, Professor and Dean of the Plainfield Campus & Allied Sciences at UCNJ, in recognition of his remarkable 50-year tenure and his outstanding contributions to the College, its students, and the community.

HARVESTING Dreams



UNION COUNTY
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Union County College Foundation's Scholarship Reception Celebrates Donors and Scholars

At the end of March, the Union County College Foundation hosted its Annual Scholarship Reception, a heartfelt evening dedicated to celebrating the generosity of donors and the achievements of scholarship recipients. This year's event was the Foundation's largest yet, bringing together over 170 donors and students for an inspiring night of connection, gratitude, and shared commitment to student success.

The reception serves as a special opportunity for scholarship donors to meet the students whose lives they have directly impacted. This year, fifteen new scholarship donors were welcomed into the growing donor family, further expanding opportunities for UCNJ students to pursue their dreams without financial barriers.

The highlight of the evening was an inspiring keynote address from Benjamin Greeley, a scholarship recipient who shared how attending UCNJ and the support from the Foundation has transformed his life. His speech served as a powerful reminder of the profound impact scholarships have—not just on education, but on shaping futures.

The Union County College Foundation extends its deepest gratitude to all donors who make this possible. Their generosity continues to change lives, one scholarship at a time.



To watch Benjamin Greeley's full speech, visit www.ucc.edu/studentspeaker.



"Your contribution has not only lightened my financial load but also empowered me to pursue my passions with greater determination and confidence."



Alkida Likaj – Southpole Foundation Scholarship



Foundation Provides Over \$1.6 Million in Direct Student Support and Welcomes New Scholarships

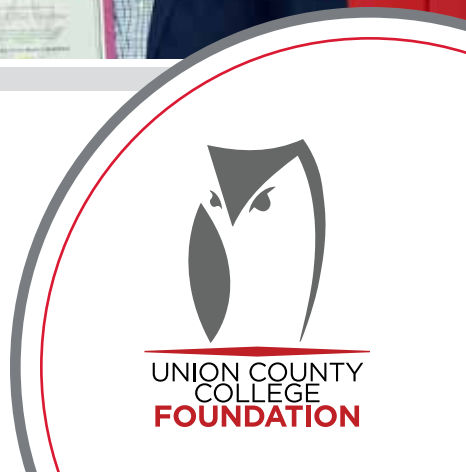


The Foundation is thrilled to announce the addition of seventeen new scholarships this year, made possible by the generosity of dedicated donors. Their support directly impacts the lives of UCNJ students, opening doors to education and opportunity that might otherwise be out of reach. Thanks to the commitment of dedicated donors,

the Union County College Foundation has provided over \$1.6 million in direct support to students this year alone, empowering them to achieve their academic and career goals. On behalf of UCNJ students, faculty, and the entire UCNJ community, the College extends its deepest gratitude for the philanthropic investment made in their future.



Douglas Rouse, the Vice President for Institutional Advancement, proudly welcomes four of newest scholarship donors, William Daniel, Bob and Marie Sloan, and Guy Del Vecchio. These visionary supporters are helping create a brighter future for UCNJ students.



New Annual & Endowed Scholarships – FY 25

Cooperative Counseling Services Scholarship for Parents

Awarded to full- or part-time students who are parents of children under 18 years old. Recipients must reside in Union County and preference will be given to students who demonstrate financial need and who desire to finish their degrees.

Daniel Family Scholarship

Awarded to a full- or part-time student majoring in criminal justice. Student must have a GPA of 2.5 or higher at time of award.

Donna J Del Vecchio Memorial Scholarship

Awarded to new or existing PTA students. Returning students must have a 2.0 or better GPA. Preference will be given to students who demonstrate financial need.

Greater Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce Scholarship

Awarded to full- or part-time business students or students in business-related curriculum. Recipients must be from Westfield, Garwood, Fanwood, Clark, Scotch Plains, or Mountainside. Preference will be given to students who demonstrate financial need.

Susan L. Hudak Memorial Scholarship

Awarded to a full-time student who has completed 15 credits. Recipient must be a member of a club, organization, honor society, or the Academic Learning Center. Preference will be given to a Linden resident. If none qualifies, then it will be awarded to a Union County resident.

Marianne M. Kerwin Scholarship

Awarded to a full-time student with a minimum 3.5 GPA. Recipient must be a mathematics major or an education major concentrating in mathematics.

Katlyn Millea Memorial Scholarship

Awarded to a full- or part-time student majoring in Fine Arts or English disciplines. Preference will be given to students who demonstrate financial need.

Mayor Al Morgan Scholarship

Awarded to a full- or part-time incoming student who has earned a minimum high school GPA of 2.0. Recipient must reside in New Providence, have earned a diploma from New Providence High School, and show community involvement. Preference given to those students who demonstrate financial need.

Jim & Judy O'Brien Friendly Sons Scholarship

Awarded to a full-time, first-generation student who has a minimum 2.5 GPA and a minimum of 30 credits. Student must be a Union County resident.

Serafina Oxner-Against All Odds Scholarship

Awarded to a full- or part-time student who has completed 15 credits with a 3.5 GPA at the time of award. Recipient must be a non-traditional student (above age 25) who is a working parent. Preference given to a student who demonstrates financial need.

Arlene Rogoff Scholarship for Women in Mathematics

Awarded to a female student majoring in Mathematics. Recipient must have a minimum 3.0 GPA, have completed between 45-60 credits, and intends to transfer to a four-year institution. Preference will be given to a student who demonstrates financial need.

Sloan Family Scholarship

Awarded to a full-time, first generation UCNJ student. Student must have a 2.5 GPA with a minimum of 30 credits completed.

Dr. Donovan A. Smalls & Jacqueline Nixon-Smalls Scholarship

Awarded to a full or part-time student majoring in business with concentrations in management and marketing. Recipient must have a minimum 3.0 GPA at the time of application. Preference will be given to a student who demonstrates financial need.

STEM Academic Specialists Scholarship

Awarded to full-time, 2nd year STEM students who have completed their first year at UCNJ. Recipients must have minimum GPA of 3.0. Preference will be given to students who demonstrate financial need.

Summit College Club Foundation Scholarship

Awarded to full or part-time female students who have had a break in education of at least one semester. Students must have completed 12 credits, have a minimum 3.0 GPA, and must be enrolled for a minimum of six credits per semester. Preference will be given to students who demonstrate financial need.

Systemic Humanities Scholarship

Awarded to a full-time student with 3.0 GPA, majoring in one of the humanities degree programs.

Tasharofi Health Science Scholarship

Awarded to students pursuing education in the health science field who demonstrate financial need.



"Your belief in my potential inspires me to work even harder and make the most of the opportunities that come my way. I look forward to the day when I can pay forward this kindness and make a positive impact on someone else's life, just as you have done for me."



Isabella Costello – Robert F. Hand Scholarship and The Lessner Family Scholarship



2nd Annual Owl Invitational Brings Together Staff and Faculty

This summer marked the 2nd Annual Owl Invitational, a growing tradition that continues to bring the UCNJ staff and faculty together for a day of golf, camaraderie, and connection. Building on the success of the inaugural event, the UCNJ community once again gathered at the Galloping Hill Golf Course for a day filled with friendly competition and community spirit.

From celebratory cheers to lighthearted banter, the day was filled with moments that brought the College community even closer together. What's even better is that all funds raised directly supported UCNJ students!

Operation Graduation Fund: Supporting Student Success at UCNJ

At the Union County College Foundation, ensuring students complete their educational journey is the forefront of the mission. The Operation Graduation Fund is essential in helping UCNJ achieve this goal. The fund directly supports students who are on track to graduate but face financial challenges that could hinder or delay the completion of their degree.

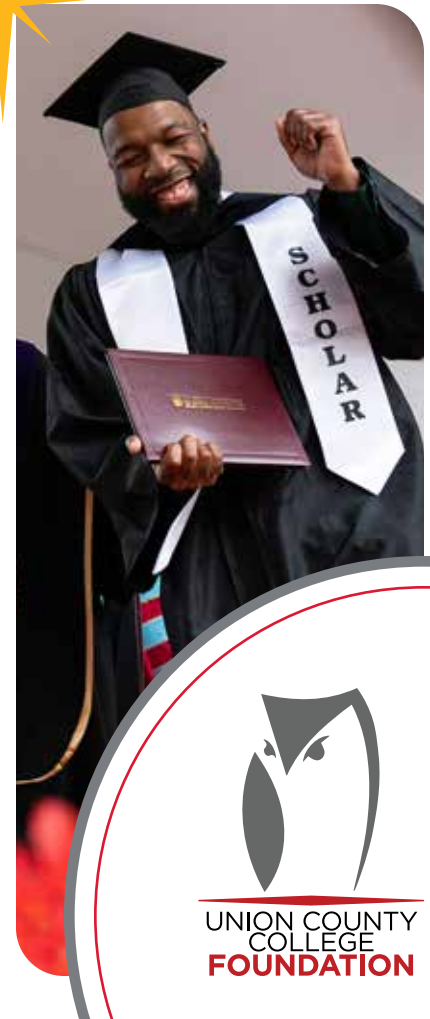
This past year, the Operation Graduation Fund has made a significant impact, providing thousands in last-dollar grants to students who were ready to graduate but needed additional financial support to complete their degrees. These grants allowed students to continue their studies

over the summer and fulfill the requirements needed for graduation.

The fund is an essential part of UCNJ's strategic initiative to increase graduation rates and ensure that students not only enroll in college but also complete their degree, entering the workforce to earn a family sustaining wage. By removing financial obstacles, the Operation Graduation Fund plays a critical role in helping students reach their academic goals and build brighter futures for themselves and their families.

Through the generosity of donors and the commitment to student success, the Operation

Graduation Fund continues to provide crucial support for students determined to cross the finish line. With each last-dollar grant awarded, UCNJ takes another step toward fostering a community of graduates who are prepared to succeed in the competitive world ahead. The Foundation is proud to be a part of this transformative journey and is grateful for the unwavering support of donors who make this program possible.



HONOR ROLL OF DONORS

May 11, 2024 – April 1, 2025

Ensuring that students have every resource available to excel in the classroom, the Foundation is charged with raising the vital funds to support the most vulnerable students. Between new scholarships, corporate donors, alumni engagement, special events, and the specific campaigns developed and supported by the Foundation, over the past 10 years, the Foundation has been able to invest over \$10 million in direct student support.

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Thank You

*for Accelerating the
 Pace of Student Success!*





Stability and Student-Centered Investment

Summary & Outlook

UCNJ Union College of Union County, NJ entered FY25 with a commitment to student success, access, and institutional agility. The FY25 budget was designed not only to sustain core operations but to **expand student services, address basic needs, and enhance affordability**—all without raising tuition for the fifth consecutive year.

Key achievements in FY25 included:

- **Enrollment Growth:** The College experienced a 5.15% increase in enrollment supported by the launch of a comprehensive Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan to sustain and build on that growth.
- **Flat Tuition for Fifth Consecutive Year:** The College maintained tuition rates to ensure cost is not a barrier to access—marking five years of zero tuition increases.
- **Investments in Student Success:** Funding was expanded for tutoring, social work, and advising services.
- **Food Insecurity Initiative:** A dedicated institutional budget was established to address food insecurity, prioritizing student well-being as an academic success strategy.
- **Faculty & Staff Investment:** The College prioritized professional development and wellness

programming, including support for ACUE certification and staff training aligned with institutional goals.

These accomplishments reflect UCNJ's continued focus on **sustainability, responsiveness, and inclusivity**, all while preserving the integrity of the academic experience and supporting our mission of transforming lives through education.

Contextualizing Within Higher Education Trends

The College's financial strategies were developed in response to national and regional trends impacting higher education. Institutions are increasingly challenged by:

- **Enrollment declines** in traditional student populations.

- **Intensified focus on affordability and return on investment.**
- **Evolving state and federal funding models**, often tied to outcomes and equity.

- **Shifting student expectations** for flexible, career-relevant programs.

By proactively responding to these forces, the College is better positioned to maintain financial stability while meeting the changing needs of its student body.

Outlook for FY26 and Beyond

Looking to FY26 and beyond, UCNJ remains steadfast in its mission to expand opportunity through **affordability, access, and student-centered innovation**. The College will:

- **Sustain investments in food insecurity initiatives**, recognizing the importance of basic needs in academic persistence and completion.
- **Enhance affordability and reduce cost barriers**, including a planned reduction in tuition for out-of-county residents and the elimination of the transcript fee—initiatives that directly support equitable access and mobility for all learners.
- **Strengthen pathways for transfer and job placement**, expanding articulation

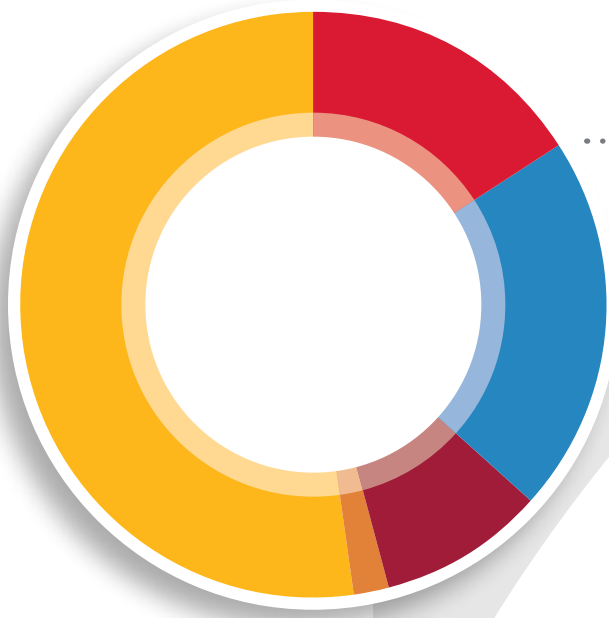
agreements, work-based learning, and career-aligned programming consistent with the *Community College 3.0* vision.






- **Embed micro-credentials into academic programs**, allowing students to earn stackable, workforce-relevant credentials throughout their degree journey.
- **Refine advising and career services** to increase personalized support for diverse learners, including adult and returning students.
- **Modernize infrastructure and systems**, with continued upgrades to instructional technology, digital engagement tools, and administrative operations.

Through these initiatives, UCNJ will continue to position itself as a leader among community colleges—**lowering barriers, lifting potential**, and driving student success at every stage.

Budgeted Revenue by Source

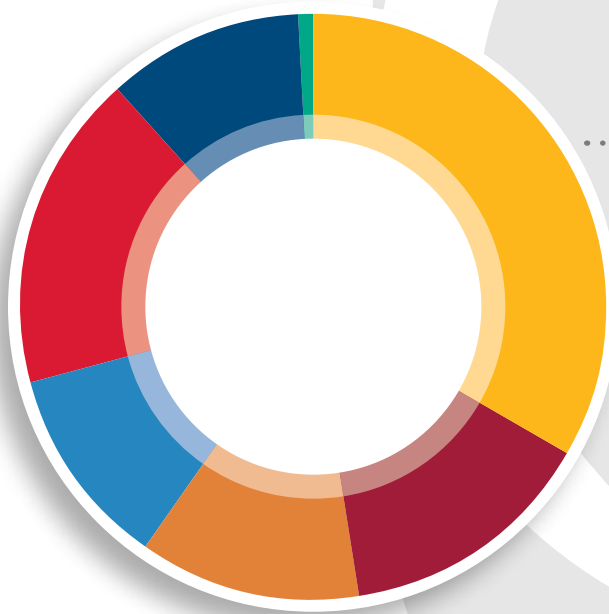
For Year End June 30, 2025










	Tuition & Fees & Other Operating Revenue 52.1% 41,109,249
	County Appropriations 20.7% 16,374,380
	State Appropriations 16.0% 12,615,111
	Transfer from Net Plant 9.3% 7,327,255
	Other Income 1.9% 1,532,720
	Total 100.0% 78,958,715

Budgeted Operating Expenses

For Year End June 30, 2025



	Academic Support 33.5% 26,396,425
	Employee Benefits 14.2% 11,249,777
	Plant 12.2% 9,615,430
	Student Development 11.1% 8,765,386
	Institutional Support 17.4% 13,776,920
	Depreciation Expense 10.8% 8,508,110
	Interest on Capital Related Debt 0.8% 645,668
	Total 100.0% 78,957,716

UCNJ Union College of Union County, NJ

Budget FY 2024-2025

Fundable Credit Hours (1): 193,510
 Fundable FTE Students 6,450

Revenues:

Tuition, net of waivers. \$37,780,248
 Course Fees 1,725,501
 Other User Fees 1,603,500

Total Academic Revenues 41,109,249

Expenditures:

Academic Services 26,396,425
 Employee Benefits 11,249,777
 Facilities Operation & Maintenance. 9,615,430
 Administration 4,703,379
 Student Development 8,765,386
 Information Distribution Ops (IT). 5,960,496
 College Relations & Publications 1,593,781
 Institutional Support. 1,519,263
 Depreciation Expense 8,508,110

Total Academic and Administrative Expenditures. 78,312,047

Operating (Loss) from Academic Mission: (37,202,798)

Appropriations:

State Appropriations 12,615,111
 County Appropriations. 16,374,380

Total Appropriations. 28,989,491

Other: Net Income (Loss)

Workforce Development, CEWD (net). (35,685)
 Non-Credit Education (net):
 Career/Custom Training (net) 59,838
 Personal & Youth Enrichment (net) (27,933)
 Other Income:
 Parking Fee Income, net of related expense 190,000
 Bookstore Commission 60,000
 Kellogg and Lessner Lease Income 409,500
 Food Service Commission 35,000
 Miscellaneous Other 141,000
 Interest Income. 700,000
 Interest related to Capital Improvements (645,668)

Total Other Net Income 886,052

Transfer Net Plant to Operations 7,327,255

Contribution to Net Position & Other Non-Current Fund Expenditures 0

2013: The College revamps its mission statement to "Transforming Our Community... One Student at a Time," to accurately reflect the nature of the environment at the three campuses.

2015: The new Health Sciences Building, the former Thul Auto Parts Building, opens at the Plainfield Campus on Oct. 20.

2016: After two years of construction, the Helen E. Chaney Student Services Center opens in the new two-story Student Development Building at the Cranford Campus. This project was made possible thanks to the support of the Union County Board of County Commissioners and the Union County Improvement Authority.

2016: The Annex at the Plainfield Campus reopens after damages caused by a 2012 fire and includes a new information commons, cafeteria, bookstore, and faculty offices.

2017: In March, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education Site Visit Team comes to the College for the official accreditation review. The College receives notification that the accreditation is reaffirmed in June.

2018: A major renovation of the lower level and first floor of the Lessner Building at the Elizabeth Campus is completed.

2018: An Innovation Center is established at the Cranford Campus to provide students with the opportunity to learn current technologies such as coding, virtual reality, and using 3D printers.

2018: The College publishes its first Undergraduate Research Journal and builds a Student Research Lab to provide dedicated space for ongoing research projects.

2019: UCNJ establishes a respiratory care program at the Plainfield Campus.

2019: The College is named a Top 150 U.S. Community College by The Aspen Institute for the first time and is eligible to compete for the 2021 \$1 million Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence.

2019: Major renovations to the Health Sciences Building in Plainfield are completed.

2020: COVID-19 hits the U.S. and forces the College, and all educational institutions in New Jersey, to move operations and instruction remote during the Spring 2020 semester. Operations return to campus in July. Fall classes are offered remote live, online, and face-to-face.

2020: Dr. McMenamin is named the Marie Y. Martin Community College CEO of the Year by the Association of Community College Trustees.

2021: A major renovation of the Roy W. Smith Theater is completed.

2021: Weidenburner Hall is dedicated in honor of a \$2.7 million donation by alumnus Bruce Weidenburner, which is the largest single donation in Union County College Foundation history.

2021: For the second consecutive time, the College is named a Top 150 U.S. Community College by the Aspen Institute and is eligible to compete for the 2023 \$1 million Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence.

2022: The College's Scotch Plains Campus is re-opened as a destination campus and re-imagined as a University Center and home to the College's virtual campus.

2022: In April, the College is named as one of 25 semifinalists for the 2023 \$1 million Aspen Prize. UCNJ is the only college in New Jersey to be named as a semifinalist.

2022: On July 1, Union County College changes its name. The College becomes UCNJ Union College of Union County, NJ.

2022: At the College's Founders Day Ceremony in October, the new logo is revealed to the UCNJ community.

2023: For the first time, two UCNJ students are selected for the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship. UCNJ now has had seven graduates who have received this prestigious award.

2023: UCNJ is the first community college in New Jersey to film an episode of "The College Tour," a streaming program on Amazon Prime, Apple TV, and more which features the stories of 10 UCNJ students.

2023: The College celebrates its 90th anniversary in October with the dedication of a gazebo and a prohibition-era themed party on the lawn outside of the Victor M. Richel Commons.

2024: In June, the College is named as one of 10 finalists for the 2025 \$1 million Aspen Prize. This is the first time the College has been recognized as a finalist. UCNJ is the only college in New Jersey and the only one in the Northeast to be named as a finalist.

2025: In February, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education Site Visit Team comes to the College for the official accreditation review. The College receives notification that the accreditation is reaffirmed in June.





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