



Office of College Relations
Cranford Campus
1033 Springfield Avenue
Cranford, NJ 07016
(908) 709-7112

Contact(s):

News Release

ELLEN DOTTO (908) 709-7501

NICOLE TORELLA (908) 709-7112

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Union County College Part of Statewide Phi Theta Kappa Community College Completion Challenge

Cranford, N.J. — Union County College is one of 19 community colleges across the state hosting a series of campus-based activities for the first-ever statewide NJ C4 kickoff week from Monday, October 14, to Saturday, October 19.

Sponsored by the New Jersey Council of County Colleges' (NJCCC) Center for Student Success and the New Jersey Education Association (NJEA), the NJ C4 initiative is an effort to increase the number of community college students completing their associate degrees and certificates so that they have the credentials they need to successfully transfer to four-year colleges and universities to earn their bachelor's degrees and enter careers that provide family-sustaining wages.

“We are excited that the students of Iota Xi Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa at our College are leading this effort,” said Dr. Margaret M. McMenamain, president, Union County College. “NJ C4 is a terrific program where our Phi Theta Kappa honor students will be working directly with other students to encourage college completion.”

Included in the NJ C4 Initiative will be a host of speakers, events and campus activities. The events for the week will be held on all three campuses at the times stated. The week will kick off with a banner signing event from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Students will pledge to complete their associates degree when they sign the banner. On Tues., Oct. 15, 2013, a “Slam Your Exam” event will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. On Wed., Oct. 16, 2013, the College will host “All Honor Societies Day” beginning at 11 a.m. This will provide students with the opportunity to learn about the honor societies, and their criteria. Also on Wednesday, the College will celebrate its 80th anniversary and Founders Day. On Thursday, Oct. 17, 2013, information on graduation requirements and academic advising will be held. The week will wrap up on Friday, Oct. 18, 2013, from 12 to 2 p.m. with the C4 Final Ceremony. Members of the College community will gather on each campus and the signed banners from the week will be hung at each campus. In addition, NJ C4 will be featured on Facebook and Twitter with the hashtag #NJC4.

“The NJEA is proud to partner with New Jersey’s 19 community colleges to support this statewide initiative that aims to encourage students to persevere, succeed and ultimately earn the credentials they need to succeed in New Jersey’s workforce,” said NJEA President Wendell Steinhauer.

The NJEA is providing operational funding to support NJ C4 at Union County College. In addition, the College received a C4 Toolkit provided by Pearson Higher Education. The toolkits provide student pledge cards, faculty/staff pledge cards, signing banners, student guides, faculty/staff guides, posters, stickers, buttons, and C4 bracelets.

“Phi Theta Kappa is committed to actively promoting completion of a college credential – an associate degree or certificate among college students,” said Dr. Rod Risley, executive director of Phi Theta Kappa. “Throughout this completion week in New Jersey we hope to encourage students to take that pledge and declare that they will, indeed, complete their education.”

The national Community College Completion Initiative began in April 2010 when leaders from the Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society, the American Association of Community Colleges, the Association of Community College Trustees, the League for Innovation in the Community College, and the Center for Community College Student Engagement signed *Democracy's Colleges: A Call to Action*. The Community College Completion Challenge website, www.cccompletionchallenge.org, showcases the missions, action plans and strategies developed by each organization to involve their constituents to produce 5 million more associate degree and certificate holders by 2020.

Phi Theta Kappa is the international honor society for community college students. Its mission is to recognize and encourage the academic achievement of two-year college students and provide them with opportunities for individual growth and development through service, leadership, honors, and fellowship programs.

Union County College is a public comprehensive community college. The College operates major campuses in Cranford, Elizabeth, Plainfield and Scotch Plains. Union enrolls almost 30,000 credit, non-credit, and continuing education students and is accredited by the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. Union has had the largest non-credit enrollment among the nineteen New Jersey County Colleges.

Known for excellence among regional colleges and universities, programs at Union lead to the Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, Associate in Applied Science degrees, and Certificates. Students who complete two-year programs may transfer to four-year institutions for their junior and senior years or seek employment in their fields of study. Union is one of the most racially and ethnically diverse county college in New Jersey. The Institute for Intensive English is a National model for teaching English as a Second Language. Each year over 2,000 students representing over 80 countries and speaking 40 different languages enroll in ESL classes on the Elizabeth campus. The Professor Elmer Wolf Engineering Program has been preparing students for transfer to prestigious colleges and universities throughout the country for decades. Graduates of Union's renowned American Sign Language Program are sought after for employment and transfer to baccalaureate programs.

Union County College is the largest educator of undergraduate allied healthcare professionals in New Jersey, offering degrees and certificates in nursing and licensed practical nursing, physical therapy, emergency medical services, radiography, and nuclear medicine technology. Union County College is the partner in cooperative programs with the Trinitas

School of Nursing, Elizabeth, New Jersey, the JFK Muhlenberg School of Nursing, Plainfield, and Rutgers University in Scotch Plains.