



Imagine the Possibilities...

News from the HCC Foundation, Alumni and Friends

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Gary Vien
Chair

William C. Hirsch
Treasurer/Finance Chair

Charles M. Holloman II Esq.
Governance Chair

Gina Evans
Development Co-Chair

Jaclyn Kilpatrick
Development Co-Chair

Randall Reid
Trustees' Liaison

Al Erdman
President's Liaison

James A. Fernandez
Past Chair

Chuck Peterson, Jr.
Emeritus

DIRECTORS

Ann E. Allen

Paul Anderson

Rey Bulnes

Tina Cotton

Ana Cruz

Justin Day

Katharine Eagan

Louise Ellrod

Stephen M. Koontz

Joe D. Lauck

Cisco Malpartida-Smith

Bruce Napier

Matthew Novak

Dr. Lucila Ramiro

Rich Shannon

Ryan Sladek

Chris Taylor

Greg Thompson

Garrett VonEye

Stephen C. Shear
Executive Director

"I have tears of happiness in my eyes right now....This is not only a scholarship to me, it's a hope which tells me there are people who care about us and support us for fulfilling our dreams." — Khumari Barakzai, HCC scholarship recipient



Executive Director's Message

The 2017 HCC Commencement Ceremony was a true celebration marked with pride, tears of joy and achievement for the 1,000 plus students who attended our 48th graduation ceremony on Friday, May 5th at the Florida State Fairgrounds. Debra Morris, a grandmother of nine, delivered this year's commencement address. After losing her job, Debra's grandchildren urged her to make her dream of going back to school a reality. Debra graduated with an Associate's degree in Business and has plans to attend USF. Her message to us all is to never give up on your dream, regardless of your age. As a community, it is our responsibility to ensure that students of all ages have the ability to pursue a quality education, and that those who need our help the most do not suffer because of fluctuations in our economy or lack of opportunity.

Debra, like so many of our students, achieved what she previously thought was unattainable because of the guidance and support of our biggest cheerleaders, our faculty and staff. This year, even withstanding the rise in employee healthcare premiums, employee donations increased by 34% and we increased the number of sustaining employee donors by 125%!

Our employees are the bedrock of our college, and many times, the unsung heroes for our students. We are able to serve more students than ever before because of their increased support. We thank our employees for striving for excellence in all they do and for showing our corporate and community donors that when you give to the HCC Foundation, you give to your community. Whether your gift funds student scholarships, strengthens programs, enhances facilities or addresses other needs—every dollar donated to the HCC Foundation is a commitment to a better future for the citizens of Tampa Bay. Because of your generosity, we are able to build an educated, diverse and upwardly mobile workforce essential to attracting and retaining business in the Tampa Bay area.

In this issue, you will read about Josefina Plata, a young woman whose dream of becoming a nurse is closer to becoming a reality. Discover why HCC's Drs. Alex Ambrosio and Sonya Golden give back to the college that has given them so much. Learn why our community partner, Suncoast Credit Union Foundation, invests in HCC, its students and employees. And did you know on every campus, we have a Career Resource Center which is open to students as well as alumni? Find out more about this on page three.

As you read about our students, programs and community donors, we hope you can **Imagine the Possibilities** and help students like Josefina and Debra overcome challenges in their path so they too can soar to new heights.

Please make your gift today with the enclosed envelope or by going online at hccfoundation.com. Should you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to me at sshear2@hccfl.edu or (813) 253-7014.

Thank you for your support!

Stephen C. Shear
Executive Director

Giving Inspiration: Suncoast Credit Union's 10-Year Partnership with HCC Improves Lives



Since becoming a corporate partner with HCC in 2007, Suncoast Credit Union has supported our students, employees and community in multiple ways. Through an endowed scholarship fund, Suncoast helps to break down financial barriers to college completion and ensure that students succeed.



"We're advocates for financial literacy," said Cindy Helton, Executive Director of the Suncoast Credit Union Foundation. "HCC helps us deliver financial education to students through our on-campus mobile units, where they learn how to be smart with money."

Suncoast also supports HCC events and programs that benefit the greater community. For the past six years Suncoast Credit Union has sponsored the Black, Brown & College Bound Summit, promoting college enrollment, persistence and completion for African-American and Hispanic students. They also provided assistance with the

Science Olympiad, a STEM-focused competition for middle and high school students across the county. Thanks to Suncoast, students who could not otherwise afford the entry fee were able to experience the excitement of the sciences.

HCC's All College Day annually brings together all HCC employees to celebrate their important work with students and the community. As presenting sponsor of this event, Suncoast honored those celebrating special anniversaries of their employment with special gifts.

"Corporate partnerships supporting education are so important—they help build sustainable pathways to careers in the Tampa Bay area," said Cindy Helton. "More than 84% of HCC alumni remain in our community. By supporting HCC, we are supporting future leaders and building our workforce. We're proud to partner with HCC as the College continues to grow and inspire students to achieve success."



Get to Know Us! HCC Foundation Welcomes Lee Lowry as Director of Development

I am so pleased to have joined the staff of the Hillsborough Community College Foundation as Director of Development. In this role, I'm able to combine my years of fundraising experience with my community and civic work to help our students achieve success.

At the Foundation, we are creating innovative partnerships that generate new opportunities and support our students, raising scholarship dollars that help them take advantage of our excellent education, making grants to faculty for the launch of innovative programs, and planning a 50th anniversary celebration for the college in 2018-2019 that will honor our history and look ahead to our bright future.

We also, daily, tell the story of HCC. Our story first and foremost is of our amazing students. We talk about those who are the first in their family to ever attend college, who through their hard work are setting their family up for a positive future, single-handedly lifting them into a different economic bracket and setting an example

for those who come after them. We talk about the students who go on to outstanding universities, setting the academic world on fire. And, most importantly, we talk about those students who stay in our own community and help make it one of the best, fastest growing regions in the US.

But our HCC story is also one of significant economic impact. Our annual financial impact is more than \$1 billion. We have nearly 45,000 students enrolled in classes each year. And more than 80% of these students make Tampa Bay their permanent home. Our community's firefighters, EMTs, welders, nurses, educators, and many more of the professionals who create the firm foundation of our city and county came through HCC.

I look forward to telling the community our story, with your help! Please don't hesitate to reach out to me at llyowry2@hccfl.edu if you have thoughts or questions. I'm proud to be a part of the HCC family.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Lee Lowry".

Alumni Network: HCC Hawks for Life!

If you attended HCC for any period of time, even for just a semester or two, you're an HCC alumnus. And we want to hear from you!

Join the HCC Alumni Network at hccfoundation.com/alumni.

Membership is free, and benefits include:

- Invitations to community and campus events
- Opportunities to take advantage of Career Services
- Connections with students and faculty in your field of study
- A local and international network of talented Hawk peers
- Discounted classes at our Institute for Corporate and Continuing Education

HCC has more than 54,000 alumni living and working in the Tampa Bay area—and thousands more playing important roles in communities around the world.



Career Resource Centers Help HCC Alumni

Did you know that HCC offers Career Resource Centers on each of our five campuses? Each of these offices is open to HCC students and alumni to assist in the job and career search process.

HCC Career Resource Center services include:

- Interview preparation
- Résumé assistance
- Job fairs with local employers
- Access to job postings
- One-on-one career counseling
- Online resources and personality tests
- Occupational exploration
- Extensive reference libraries

Alumni in Action: Molly's Success Story

HCC alumna Molly Larkin earned an AS in Respiratory Therapy at HCC in 2015 and now enjoys a rewarding career as a respiratory therapist at a large hospital. Her experience with one of HCC's Career Resource Centers was pivotal to her success. After struggling through a few job interviews, Molly decided she needed help preparing for the next ones.



"My career counselor, Lorraine Canalejo, taught me how to organize my thoughts and pause before answering questions," said Molly. "We practiced, practiced, practiced, so that I became more comfortable with interviewing. She was very patient and supportive. I honestly don't believe I would have landed my job without her help!"

Molly encourages all students and alumni to make use of the free services available to them at HCC Career Resource Centers.

"The counselors are professionals who can help you in so many ways," she said. "They are dedicated to helping HCC students and graduates succeed."

Donor Spotlight:

An Interview with HCC Faculty Drs. Sonya Golden and Alex Ambrioso

Sonya Golden and Alex Ambrioso were working on their Master's degrees in mathematics at USF when their lives intersected during study group sessions. The two became inseparable and were married in 1994. Since the early 90s, they have built careers at HCC while raising a family. Sonya teaches math on the Plant City Campus, and Alex on the Brandon Campus. Both find great satisfaction in their work, yet they feel called to reach out to other deserving HCC students beyond their classrooms.

In their interview Sonya and Alex talk about what inspired them to fund scholarships for students in the veterinary technology and welding programs—and why workforce training strikes a chord for them.

Tell me about the scholarships you fund.

SONYA: We fund two scholarships each year and decided to help students in the AS programs because they need extra support. This year it's a veterinary technology student scholarship and a welding student scholarship. I see the amazing work Dr. Vince Centonze does with his Vet Tech students on the Plant City Campus, so this program was a natural fit.

ALEX: I have gotten to know Vince over the last couple of years. He does a fantastic job managing the Vet Tech program. He really cares about his students. Vince even helped us find our dog Penny. We also have a mutual interest in chess and have had quite a few interesting games.

SONYA: We chose welding because they have expensive equipment to fund, and the students are in demand. There are many companies in the area who need welders.

ALEX: Workforce programs are putting people to work and filling a need in the community. It's a win-win. There are many great AS programs that allow students to get hands-on training for specific jobs.

What inspired you to make the scholarship gifts to the HCC Foundation?

SONYA: We wanted to give back. HCC has given us so much.

ALEX: We both work here and have built our careers here. We've had flexible schedules that have allowed us to spend time with our kids. We've had a lucky life. We teach a lot of students, but thought we could help even more by funding scholarships. Contributing even a modest amount, consistently over time, can grow into a nice legacy of giving.

From left: Dr. Vincent Centonze, scholarship recipient Brittany Bittikofer, Dr. Sonya Golden, Dr. Alex Ambrioso



What do you hope to achieve?

SONYA: Our goals are to bring attention to the AS programs, to inspire others to give back, and to help students get to work.

ALEX: Sonya said that very well. I am also interested in learning about the programs at HCC. I've learned a lot about HCC's workforce programs since we started doing this. These programs lead to careers and satisfying lives for our students.

What advice would you offer someone who is considering giving to an HCC Foundation scholarship fund?

SONYA: Do it!

ALEX: Find an amount you can give and be consistent. Over the years, it can do a lot of good for our students and our community.

Scholarship Recipient: **Josefina's Story**



Born in the U.S., Josefina "Josie" Plata moved to Mexico with her parents at age two. Life in Mexico was hard, and her family struggled to make ends meet. When Josie turned 12, her parents decided it was time for her to move back to the US to live with her uncle's family and pursue a better life.

"Leaving my mom was the hardest thing I ever had to do," said Josie. "I was in 7th grade and everything was new to me. Although I did not speak English or understand my homework, school was the only thing that kept me going."

By high school, Josie was confident in her English and doing well. As a senior, she entered a patient care technician program at a local technical college and spent time in hospital environments, where she discovered her calling to become a nurse.

After graduating from high school, Josie moved out of her uncle's home and into her own place, where her younger brother came to live. As she looked after her brother, she enrolled in a full-time LPN program and worked two part-time jobs to pay for school and rent. The demands of her schedule became overwhelming, and Josie fell ill, landing in the hospital. Unfortunately, she was dropped from the LPN program after missing classes while she was ill.

Mrs. Walker, a nurse and former instructor, encouraged her to pick up the pieces and pursue her dreams of going to college and becoming a nurse. Josie's research led her to HCC, where she enrolled in the AA program.

"One day I got an email about HCC Foundation Scholarships," said Josie. "I didn't know much about scholarships because no one in my family had ever gone to college. I applied, not expecting anything to come of it."

Soon Josie received another email saying that she had been awarded a HCC Foundation Krewe of Sant Yago Scholarship.

"Everything changed for me at that moment," she said. "I had hope. I was able to focus on my classes and to be successful."

Josie received her HCC diploma in May 2017 and is applying for the nursing program. Her goal is to become a pediatric nurse at Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital.

EVENTS



Dr. Atwater with Hope Scholars at 2017 BBCB Summit



John Legend mesmerizes audience at annual BBCB Summit Lunch.



Wonderful turnout for our annual HCC Foundation Golf Classic. The Tournament netted \$54,000 for Athletics, the most raised for this event to date.

UPCOMING EVENTS

10/13

**Hawks, Line & Sinker
Fishing Tournament**
Hula Bay Marina

11/15

HCC Presidential Showcase
Port Tampa Bay




NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
TAMPA, FLORIDA
PERMIT NO. 100

**39 Columbia Drive, 7th Floor
Tampa, FL 33606**

Connect with Us!

Hillsborough Community College Foundation

 39 Columbia Drive, Tampa, FL 33606

 813-253-7114

 foundation@hccfl.edu

 Hillsborough Community College (HCC) Foundation

 hccfoundation.com