

In With a Roar at CONVOCON 2024

Now in its second year, Convocon 2024 brought inspiration and excitement to a cold January day. Faculty, staff, administrators and other DCC supporters – including trustees, foundation and association board members, student leaders and elected officials – gathered in the cafeteria to kick off the new semester.

After a lively icebreaker “for people who hate icebreakers,” led by Associate Dean of Enrollment Mike Roe on behalf of the President’s Advisory Council (PAC), Dr. Jordan took the stage to give the opening remarks. He emphasized one key takeaway: the impact we have on our students.

“We all contribute to their intellectual and cultural development, their career readiness and their technical proficiency,” said Dr. Jordan. “Whether you work with students directly or indirectly – from facilities and housekeeping to IT, instruction and learning to institutional effectiveness, finance to enrollment and student success – or on our governing and advisory boards, you have a significant role in their experience, and your contributions are crucial to their success.”

For the rest of the morning (and again after lunch), guests were free to explore the nearly 30 vendor booths. DCC faculty and staff shared updates about programs and initiatives, including but not limited to Diversity Council and childcare expansion plans; Title III grant activities; and supporting students through



donating to the DCC Foundation. There were also cozy chairs set up where folks could meet our new campus leaders (see page 2 for a meet and greet!). Representatives from our technology, business and industry partners talked about innovative collaborations in areas such as assessment, scheduling, student employment and internships, learning resources, and more.

Two breakout sessions were offered as well, giving attendees the opportunity to learn in more depth about Falco, DCC’s new chatbot for student persistence; HelioCampus, our new assessment partner; and the academic and facilities master plan.

Following lunch, a hearty lasagna, 61 DCC employees were recognized for their contributions at the annual Length of Service Ceremony (combined they represented 1060 years of service!). Short speeches were prepared for employees who’ve been with the College for more 30 years. The DCC Foundation provided gifts for the honorees – beautiful wooden pens, personalized with each recipient’s name and number of years of service.



See **page 2** for a meet and greet with **new leaders!**

New Leaders on Campus

Convocon attendees had the chance to meet our four newly appointed leaders, director level and above. We'll be sharing brief introductions in DCC Connects, beginning this month with Chief of Campus Safety & Security **Russell Tompkins** and Interim Associate Dean of Instruction and Learning: Learning Commons **Karen Ingham**.

Our new Director of the Library **Anne Deustch**, who will begin on February 1, brings nearly 15 years of experience in academic libraries, most recently serving as a research and education librarian at SUNY New Paltz. Our new AVP of Human Resources **Dr. Irene Okwang**, starting February 5, has held assistant director positions in labor relations at Vassar College and SUNY New Paltz in addition to more than a decade of service in the fields of human resources, human services and education. More to come on Deutsch and Dr. Okwang in our February issue of DCC Connects.

Interim Associate Dean of Instruction and Learning: Learning Commons **Karen Ingham**

Karen Ingham has been a fixture of DCC for decades. She began her career here in 1990, as Chair of the Clinical Laboratory Technician and Phlebotomy programs and professor in the Allied Health and Biological Sciences (AHBS) department, winning the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching in 2019. For the past 20 years, Ingham has served as the Department Chair of AHBS.

Her experience and passion for helping students learn – and Bonnie Gallagher's help in transitioning to the role – prepared Ingham for her new interim position. She will be working closely with the seven areas that make up The Learning Commons: Ritz Library, the Writing Center, Testing Services, Content Tutoring, Accommodative Services, the Math and Science Center and CSTEP.

Given her institutional knowledge and strong background in both teaching and administration, Ingham is well-positioned to lead this innovative effort. Congratulations!



"There are a lot of exciting things happening in the Learning Commons as we work to streamline and solidify learning supports and resources for DCC students. I look forward to collaborating to create truly immersive experiences in which students can become familiar with learning materials in various areas."

Chief of Campus Safety and Security **Russell Tompkins**



"I'm ready for my next adventure. As a lifelong Dutchess County resident, with two daughters getting ready to attend college, the timing couldn't be better. It's a great sign that Alex [Harrison] is still here, too. He was the positive image of DCC security when I was a kid here in the nineties."

Russell Tompkins graduated from DCC in 1994. On January 8, having served 20 years in local law enforcement, he returned to campus – as our new Chief of Campus Safety and Security! The world of law enforcement has been keeping him busy since graduation. Tompkins held many roles in the criminal justice field, first as a police officer in the Town of Poughkeepsie then working his way up to patrol lieutenant. After retiring from the Town of Poughkeepsie in 2022, he was a school resource officer for New Milford, CT and the New Milford School District. He currently serves as a part-time police officer for the Town of Fishkill.

Beyond his A.A. from DCC, Russell holds an M.P.A. from Marist, an M.A. in Criminal Justice from the American Military University and a B.S. in Secondary Education from SUNY Oneonta. He has also earned certifications as an FBI Crisis Negotiator and Defensive Tactics instructor, NYS General Topics Security Guard instructor, NYS certified police officer and security guard.

Given his long-standing connection to the community and DCC, he is an excellent man for the job. Thank you to the search committee and everyone who participated in the open forum and feedback process.

Sue Serino Takes Oath of Office at DCC Center of Excellence for Aviation Education



On January 7, during the region's first major snowfall, more than 350 guests braved the elements to celebrate the inauguration of our ninth Dutchess County Executive. In choosing DCC as a platform for such a pivotal moment in her career, Sue Serino demonstrated the importance she places on the work we do, and how intricately it connects with the region's economic development.

"I'm especially excited to be at Dutchess Community College's Aviation Education Center to help kickstart

the next four years," Serino said in her inaugural address. "I am so grateful for the work DCC is doing under the leadership of Dr. Jordan – not only for creating opportunities for our County residents but for creating innovative programs that draw people from outside our community."

In his welcoming remarks, Dr. Jordan said, "As our State Senator, you were a true ally for education and bringing [DCC's Center of Excellence for Aviation Education] to Dutchess County. I speak on behalf of our trustees, faculty, staff and students when I say we are truly grateful for your service to Dutchess County, and we're excited to continue working with you as you strive to make good on your aspirations and goals for our County."

It took a great deal of cross-departmental cooperation to pull off such a successful event. The President's Office, Chief of Staff and Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness Dr. Susan Rogers, and the Office of Marketing and Communications worked together to organize and provide media coverage. Associate Vice President of Administration-Campus Facilities Bridgette Anderson and the facilities team cleared the snow and provided shuttle service from the parking lot. Serino's team, especially Senior Advisor and Director of Community Engagement Carly Bulgia, went above and beyond to ensure the program ran smoothly.



VIPs in Action: Stephen Caswell



Even though he has more responsibilities and community interests than most of us could imagine, Stephen Caswell's attention somehow remains undivided. Not only was he just elected to his third term as a Dutchess County

legislator and appointed chair of the County's Budget, Finance and Personnel Committee, but he also serves on numerous boards – ranging in focus from child abuse prevention to local history. As a DCC trustee, he is a regular presence at College-related events and an advocate for the value of a DCC education. He also serves as chair of the standing committee on Finance and Facilities.

"When I take on a responsibility," Caswell shared, "I become engaged. I don't just take on the position and say, 'I got this title.' I'm fully invested in the work and causes I care about."

Asked about his involvement with Julie's Jungle, an accessible playground in Hopewell Junction, Caswell said he was there from the beginning. More than a decade later, he's still a strong supporter of the project, serving as its board director and treasurer. The same can be said of his professional career; Caswell spent 40 years working in accounting and finance roles at IBM.

His contributions don't stop there. In memory of his son, Caswell established two scholarships to support students who shared the same talents and interests – one awarded annually to a graduating senior on John Jay High School's boys varsity soccer team, and another, created this year with the DCC Foundation, for an incoming full-time student enrolled in the Construction Management program. Inspired by his son's love of soccer, he began volunteering as a statistician and announcer for John Jay High School 25 years ago, a commitment he has kept to this day.

Nursing Pass Rates

94% of Graduating 2023 DCC Nursing Students Pass RN Licensing Exam

Our Nursing department is pleased to report impressive results for first-time takers of the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX).

The first-time NCLEX pass rate is one of the most important measures of success for nursing programs in the U.S. Not only do DCC's results represent a marked improvement from last year, but the numbers also exceeded nationwide totals.

Department Chair Dr. Treesa Scaria said, "The high achievement demonstrates the rigor and quality of the educational experience students receive, making our nursing program one of the best in the Hudson Valley region."

Dr. Jordan commented, "The NCLEX results reflect the hard work of our nursing students and the dedication of our nursing faculty." Read more about the results [here](#).



Central Hudson Supports Mechatronics

Great news! Central Hudson CEO Christopher Capone announced a significant partnership with DCC at the Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce's January Contact Breakfast. "I want to thank Dr. Peter Grant Jordan for his leadership of the College and his spirit of collaboration in working with so many vital institutions and businesses in our community," said Capone. "Additional details will be announced in the near future, but through economic development funding, Central Hudson will be supporting the College's Mechatronics Lab in Fishkill."



A Rich History of Black History

Each February, DCC's Black History Committee brings several high-caliber, dynamic scholars, artists, writers and other professionals to campus. They plan, coordinate and build relationships so that DCC students, faculty and staff, as well as the broader community – including local middle and high school students – can enjoy free, enriching events.

In 2021, the same year he was awarded the prestigious MacArthur Fellowship, **Hanif Abdurraqib** gave our Black History Month Lyceum lecture. Many other exceptionally accomplished people have participated in the program, such as **Dr. Sylvester James Gates**, who was awarded the National Medal of Science by President Obama in 2011, and award-winning authors like **Dr. Nafissa Thompson Spires** and **Renee Watson**.

Not only do the speakers, panels and presentations enlighten and inform, but they also give students a chance to engage with prominent thinkers and artists in real time.

"Students write to me after the readings and tell me how hearing an author's perspective changed their understanding and analyses of a work we read in class," said Assistant Professor of English and Chair of the Black History Committee Willie Morris. "The experience is really eye-opening for them and helps to deepen their connection with the material."

Students also benefit from learning about and being exposed to the interdisciplinary field of Black Studies. While DCC doesn't have a Black Studies concentration, students can take the three courses below to prepare for a minor or major at their transfer institution.

HIS 209 – African American History

ENG 224 – African-American and Black Literature

ENG 102 – Composition II sections taught by Willie Morris and Assistant Professor of English Jordan Bell

SUNY New Paltz has one of the first Black Studies departments in the country. It's chaired by Dr. Weldon McWilliams, who taught at DCC for a decade, and professors such as Dr. Blair Proctor have spoken at previous Black History Month celebrations.

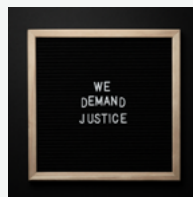
2024

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DCC's Black History Committee – Chair and Assistant Professor of English Willie Morris, Assistant Professor of History Shalon Hallager and Associate Professor of Accounting Ahmed Ismail – put together another outstanding lineup for 2024. They collaborated with many others on campus, including the DCC Foundation, the Writing Center, the Francis U. and Mary F. Ritz Library, Scheduling, Marketing and Communication and Facilities.

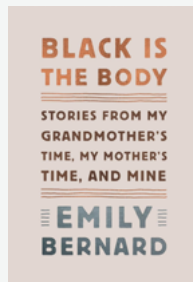
All events are free and open to the public. They will take place during activity hour, **12:30 to 1:45 p.m.** Full details on the [online calendar](#).



TUESDAY, FEB. 13

Justice Impact Panel

Bowne 122



THURSDAY, FEB. 15

**Black Solidarity Reads Lyceum
Dr. Emily Bernard**

**Black is the Body:
Teaching Race and the
Difference it Makes**

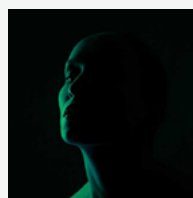
James and Betty Hall Theatre



THURSDAY, FEB. 22

**STEM Panel and Job/
Internship Networking Event**

Ritz Lounge



THURSDAY, FEB. 29

**Reproductive Justice in
Minority Communities**

Dutchess 101

Athletics - Fall Semester Review



The DCC Falcons had a busy and exciting fall semester! Below are some of the highlights.

- **Women's volleyball** won their second straight Mid-Hudson Conference Championship and clinched their spot in the National Tournament.
- **eSports** had a season of impressive growth. Over 25 student-athletes participated in games including Valorant, Overwatch, Call of Duty, Mario Kart and Super Smash Brothers.
- **Men's basketball** finished the semester on a strong note, earning the number one spot in Region XV and placing eighth overall in DIII Men's College Basketball.
- **Women's basketball** ended their season after a three-year hiatus with a very respectable 8-3 record.
- **Men's soccer** faced a tough season and unfortunately did not advance to the postseason. However, individual players were recognized for their performance:

AIDAN YEREANCE

Region XV 2nd Team, Mid-Hudson Conference 2nd Team

BRADEN PETTIGREW

Region XV Honorable Mention Team, Mid-Hudson Conference 2nd Team

ALAN QUEZADA

Sportsmanship Award for Dutchess



What's Next?

As we head into the start of the spring semester, our men's baseball and women's softball teams will begin practicing in preparation for their season, which begins in late March. Both teams are actively identifying interested student-athletes to bolster their rosters.

Beyond competitive teams, the Athletics Department will have other opportunities for the broader college community throughout the semester. They will be sponsoring open gym sessions for students on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:30 to 2 p.m. and hosting social and recreational events for students, faculty and staff in the eSports Arena.

SUNY to All Campuses: Invest in Students, Not Paper

After an assessment found that SUNY as a whole spends more than \$50 million per year on printing, an initiative was developed to optimize the system-wide print environment by July 2024. If we work together, according to the initiative's goals, we can save money, decrease SUNY's carbon footprint and spare our precious natural resources (it takes nearly 47 gallons of water to produce one ream of paper!).

View the full SUNY policy [here](#) and the policy procedure documentation [here](#). For our part, DCC will be deploying more efficient, shared, secure printers across campus in late January or early February. While this change is rolling out, we can all contribute by reducing our printing. Think twice before you print, and make the most of DCC's technology by using online collaboration tools and moving documents to shared platforms. If you have questions contact the Help Desk. New printer locations will be posted to myDCC once they are available.



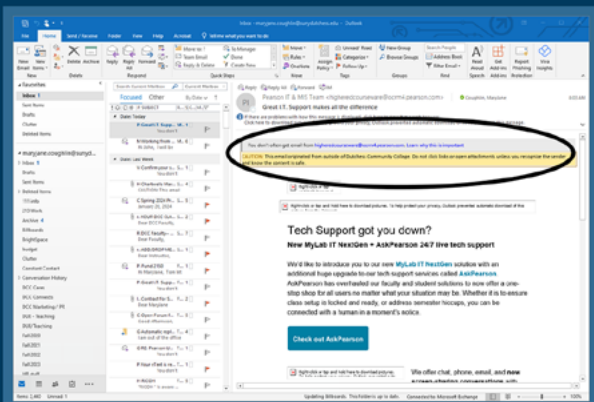
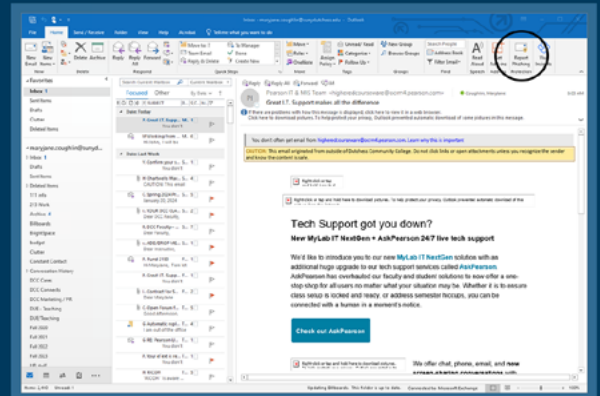
Have you seen something new on your Outlook ribbon?

It's a button you can use to report phishing (creatively named "Report Phishing"). It's a great way to report suspicious emails to help strengthen DCC's defenses.

Other ways you can stay off the phish hook:

Inspect hyperlinks by hovering over them before clicking. Be on the lookout for urgent language asking for help or sensitive information. These should be avoided and reported. Also, check the sender's address, look for misspellings, unusual domain names or special characters. When in doubt, delete the email and contact IT support for assistance.

First Contact Safety Tip: This is a newly added feature in Office 365 that warns users to be cautious when interacting with emails from external senders or users they don't usually receive messages from. The tip sits on top of our "outside the organization" email tip as shown in this sample snippet:



Remember, the Help Desk can be reached at helpdesk@sunydutchess.edu.
Can't email? Call x4357 or (845) 431-8005.
If you get voicemail, please leave your contact information and a description of your troubles.
All voicemails are automatically generated into tickets.



New Year, New myDCC

With DCC's transition from Blackboard to Ellucian Experience came a much-anticipated update to our student, faculty and staff portal. The new myDCC system allows you to customize your display to see as much, or as little, as you want – in whatever order you choose! It's also much more mobile-friendly.

"Many people came together to make this happen," said Director of Instructional Technology and eLearning Chrisie Mitchell. "From the IT department, who helped us pull everything together on the technical side; to our four VPs, Dr. Susan Rogers, Scott Schnackenberg, Ray Houston and Adam Rathbun, who were instrumental in securing funding; and leadership from Enrollment Management, Human Resources, Registrar, and Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment, who assisted with testing and content advising."

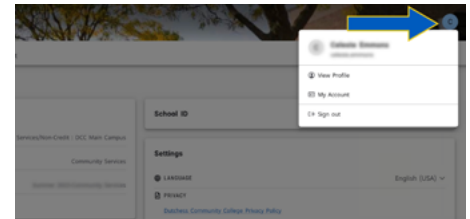
"One of the points to be made is that the Ellucian Experience will be a constantly evolving platform," said Acting Associate Dean of Administration for Information Technology Michael Soltish. "It's really going to be interesting to see how this progresses over time. It's already fairly intuitive if you take a few minutes to look around."

Quick Tips

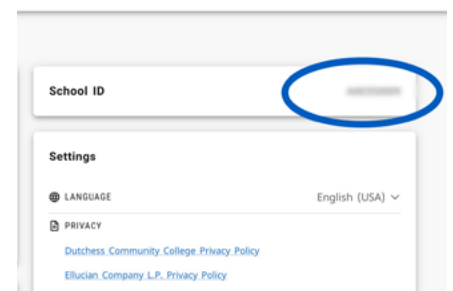
Declutter your home screen. If there is something on your Home screen you don't want or need to see every time you log on, simply click to un-bookmark it, and it will go to Discover. If you want to bring a card back to your Home screen, just click the bookmark again.

Customize your layout. Cards can easily be dragged and dropped into the order that makes most sense to you.

Locate your A-number. On the top right corner of your screen, you'll see the first letter of your name. Click on that and select View Profile.



From there, you'll see your School ID.



You can also get there by clicking My Account on the dropdown and toggling to Details.

Help us Build DCC's Digital Presence!

Need to update something on the website? Submit a web request at sunydutchess.edu/web-request.

Have a story or event to share? Past, present and future DCC stories and events – this is the material we need to engage our audience. Submit your ideas here: sunydutchess.edu/social.



Campus Notes



Tuskegee Airmen to Honor Dr. Jordan on Feb. 3

Every year during Black History Month, the Major General Irene Trowell-Harris Chamber of the Tuskegee Airmen holds their Annual Tuition Assistance Dinner, a prestigious event honoring the legacy of the first African American aviators in the United States. A fundraiser to support the educational aspirations of future aviators and students, the dinner is also a celebration of community leaders and organizations who have advanced the cause of young people in our area.

As one of the recipients of this award, Dr. Jordan will be recognized at their 26th Annual Tuition-Awards Dinner, which will take on Saturday, February 3, 2024 from 6 to 11 p.m. at the Villa Borghese in Wappinger Falls. Dr. Jordan said, "This is an honor that belongs to our entire DCC community. Together, we are providing outstanding opportunities for students and their families. This accomplishment is yet another sign that people are recognizing our efforts."



There's a New (Honorary Deputy) Sheriff in Town

DCC Security Guard Brett Lipton got some new creds during halftime at a Marist women's basketball game at McCann Arena on January 11. Sheriff Kirk Imperati of the Dutchess County Sheriff's Office made him an honorary deputy. Brett's proud family was there to watch the ceremony, including his father Ron, who has been a boxing instructor at Marist for over twenty years. The DCC community was well represented - President Jordan, Vice President for Finance and Administration Adam Rathbun, Chief of Campus Safety and Security Russell Tompkins, and several members of the Campus Safety and Residence Hall teams were also in attendance.

Campus Notes



Academy of Music Hits High Note with Winter Recital

Last month, the Academy of Music hosted its Winter Recital, featuring approximately 70 students from ages 5 to 80. They performed as soloists and with ensembles, ranging from Vivaldi to Christmas standards. One of the highlights was long-time community member Bob Schnetzler, who has been playing as a drummer for the jazz combo, coming back to his piano playing after over 50 years!

Academy of Music Director Jenny Jieun Park shared, "It is such an inspiration for everyone to see these performances and we hope to continue to create more performance opportunities in the future."

Student Art Show

The opening reception for the student art exhibit at the Mildred I. Washington Gallery on January 24 was very well-attended. Community members, faculty, staff and students alike enjoyed meeting and mingling with the artists featured in the show. Three students received Presidential Recognition Awards for their work. First place was awarded to Katelyn Oles for a sculpture of a cat head from Professor Kayla Thompson's ART 172: Basic Ceramics class; second place went to Daniel D'Agostino for a shadow box created in ART 132: Basic Printmaking with Professor Lindsey Guile; and third place went to Emily Woolever for a portrait created in Lindsey Guile's ART 113: Drawing II class.

The show exhibits works from fall 2023 Visual Arts Transfer program students – including photographs, drawings, paintings, animated videos, graphic design, and a lot of ceramics. "There are some really gorgeous pieces," said Gallery Director Dana Weidman, adding, "We tend to think of the Mildred I. Washington as a gallery that just exhibits art, but in fact people can bid on and purchase the artwork on display." So, consider that another way to support our student artists. The show runs until February 14.



Portrait by Emily Woolever

Cat Head Sculpture by Katelyn Oles



Shadow Box by Daniel D'Agostino

Campus Notes

988: More Than a Number

Our Counseling Center is an excellent resource for students experiencing mental health crises, but how do they get help outside of their regular 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. hours? 988 is an easy-to-remember three-digit number students can use to connect with a trained crisis counselor by phone or text, and it's available 24/7! They can also go to 988lifeline.org/chat to chat online.

"We want people to know that 988 is more than a suicide and crisis hotline number," said Director of Mental and Physical Health Services Diana Kiernan. "It's been a valuable resource for supporting our students – offering them free access to trained crisis counselors who can help with any kind of emotional distress, including but not limited to mental health crises, struggles with substance use and/or suicidal thoughts." More information about the service can be found [here](#).



Application for DCC Foundation Scholarships Opened January 22

Tell your students not to leave money on the table! Our scholarship application process got a head start this year. [The application for continuing or graduating students](#) (full- and part-time!) opened January 22 and closes February 23.

Scholarships offered through the DCC Foundation range from \$500 to \$4,000. Please remind students that they may be eligible for more than one type of scholarship and that if they need support applying or writing the essay, the Writing Center will be offering workshops. You can find [the schedule and sign up form for workshops here](#).



**SCHOLARSHIP
APPLICATIONS**



Campus Notes

New Hires – Welcome to DCC!

Heun Choi, credit free instructor, Academy of Music

Robert Conlon, part-time instructor, Behavioral Sciences

Cara Costello, part-time instructor, Nursing

Maria Feuz, credit free instructor, Drinking Driver Program

John Finch II, Direct Support Professional tutor, Human Services

Thiththalapitige Fonseka, part-time instructor, Computer Information Systems

Christopher Gabryszewski, part-time instructor, English

Taylor Genovese, part-time assistant professor, Philosophy

Anne Geraci, part-time instructor, Mathematics

Shannon Giambanco, part-time instructor, English

Jonathan Gorst, part-time instructor, Music

Matthew Greene, part-time assistant professor, English

Cheryl Mallozzi, Direct Support Professional tutor, Human Services

Margaret Meyer, professional tutor, Math & Science Center

Margaret Naravaez-Cooper, temporary program assistant, Family Partnership

Deborah Priest, temporary program assistant, Physical Science

James Rae, part-time instructor, Aviation Science

Meghan Tomaskovic, part-time instructor, Computer Information Systems

Russell Tompkins, chief of campus safety & security, Safety & Security

Thomas Townsend-Pitt, academic coach, ACT Center

James Vazquez, academic coach, ACT Center

Hannah Webster, part-time assistant professor, English

Title Changes and Appointments

Karen Ingham, interim associate dean of Instruction and Learning: Learning Commons, Instruction and Learning

Diana Pollard, associate vice president for institutional advancement, Institutional Effectiveness

Burnelle Roser, assistant director of grants, alumni relations and operations, Institutional Effectiveness

Stefania Timpano, coordinator of special events, Institutional Effectiveness

Sarah Wheeler, assistant director of student activities, Student Activities

