

NCC Graduation

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the loss of his brother this fall 2024. With the support of his wife and counseling services on campus, he made it to graduation day.

Graduate, NCC records staff, and student commencement speaker, Jennifer Fleetwood, took the audience on a trip, beginning her speech with a timeline of several dates, moments in time she valued. “Dates of birth, weddings, high school graduations -- we all have dates that are important to us. Some are transformative. Some are sad. They make us who we are and get us to where we are going. All of us are here at different points in our life, but that’s what makes our NCC grads so unique.”

Fleetwood continued by giving advice to her classmates. “Be gracious, especially to yourself. Be authentic because the world needs who you are. Be vulnerable. Sometimes, just be. Most importantly, be proud. Please take a moment to think of important dates in your story, and add one more, January 25, 2025.”



President of NCC, David A. Ruth, Ph.D.

to embrace their accomplishments.

Montero recalled moments where she learned lessons that continue to guide her today, one lesson that she mentioned was, “I have achieved more than I can ever imagine because of my mentors. My teachers, my colleagues, and more have become people I’ve formed connections with and who’ve gotten me to where I am now. Mentorship allows the transfer of knowledge by those who walked the path before you and who paved the way for you. My mentors showed the importance of investing in myself and have pushed me to the next level. I encourage you to also pay it forward by becoming a mentor yourself one day.”

Montero’s address was followed by the presentation of the President’s Commencement Scholarship, awarded to Sanchenka Crespo, a business management student at NCC.

Applause filled the Spartan Center as proud graduates crossed the stage, cheered on by their loved ones.

To conclude the ceremony, Director of Research & Data Management at Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation, and a member of the Class of 2015, Frank Alvarado, welcomed graduates into the alumni association as they shifted their tassels from right to left.



Jen Bradley, professor of psychology and faculty speaker, talked about something vital to every person’s success – inclusion. She said, “It’s about recognizing and honoring the diversity we all bring to the table and allowing everyone to have a seat at the table.”

Bradley noted that some graduates had moments where they could have given up, but through inclusion, they pushed forward.

“A student struggled with mental health but continued to persevere because their counselor believed in them. A student persisted through economic hardship because their advisor assisted them in finding the right resources. Inclusion is an important part of their story. I have experienced, firsthand, how sometimes the world leaves people who are misunderstood or marginalized behind. Many have faced things that tested your resolve, but even one person’s belief in you, helped create space for you here. A single act of kindness, encouragement or support can make a difference.”

Bradley left us with these powerful words, “Foster inclusion wherever life takes you, which begins with empathy and grows with action.”

Network Director of Community Workforce Development at St. Luke’s University Health Network, Victoria Montero, was the keynote speaker for the ceremony. As an NCC alum, she encouraged graduates



RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The Residential and Commercial Façade Improvement Programs are designed to help improve the exterior appearance and condition of residential and commercial properties within the four boroughs. The program’s goals are to maintain historical and architectural integrity, improve neighborhood appearance, and help property owners make exterior repairs to their homes or businesses while increasing property values for all borough residents.

ABOUT SLATE BELT RISING

Slate Belt Rising is a neighborhood revitalization initiative designed to integrate and capitalize on the substantial assets of the individual Slate Belt boroughs of Wind Gap, Pen Argyl, Bangor, and Portland. While Slate Belt Rising specifically targets these four boroughs, some initiatives promote development and coordination of services throughout the entire region.

More information is available on our website under the Services tab, including program guidelines and applications Visit slatebeltrising.org.

PROGRAM OF COMMUNITY ACTION

Community Action Lehigh Valley is an anti-poverty non-profit offering programs and services in Advocacy, Business Start-Up and Development, Food Access and Nutrition, Housing, Neighborhood Revitalization, and Youth.



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