

suburban life



Through key partnerships that prioritize education, empowerment, and skills development, **Penn Community Bank** helps uplift businesses and create new opportunities for the work force. page 40

+ Also
Inside:

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Bucks County Community College President Felicia L. Ganther (third from right) and Penn Community Bank President Jeane M. Vidoni (second from right) tour the school's Center for Advanced Technologies. The bank recently entered into a multi-year financial agreement with BCCC to help fund the center's continued development.



INVESTING IN PEOPLE TO POWER REGIONAL ECONOMIC GROWTH

THROUGH KEY PARTNERSHIPS THAT PRIORITIZE EDUCATION, EMPOWERMENT, AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, PENN COMMUNITY BANK HELPS UPLIFT BUSINESSES AND CREATE NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE WORK FORCE.

BY BILL DONAHUE

When it first opened its doors over 150 years ago, Penn Community Bank set out to help families, business owners, and communities throughout southeastern Pennsylvania build a better, brighter, and more sustainable future. Throughout its history it has done so not only by offering a breadth of products and services designed to grow and protect customers' financial security, but also by forging strategic partnerships with organizations and communities devoted to creating opportunities for present and future generations.

Look no further than Penn Community Bank's partnership with Bucks County Community College (BCCC). The bank recently entered into a multi-year financial agreement with BCCC to help fund the continued development of the Center for Advanced Technologies at the school's Epstein Campus in Bristol. The center's goal: to provide employers with an influx of qualified candidates for in-demand positions that require next-generation skills.

An educated and highly skilled work force is essential to a flourishing local economy. Community colleges are in a unique position to help workers make themselves more attractive to prospective employers and, in turn, strengthen businesses. Naturally, Penn Community College saw BCCC as an ideal partner, according to Jeane M. Vidoni, the president of Penn Community Bank.

"The college is uniquely positioned to connect local businesses and eager jobseekers to power our region's economy," says Vidoni. "As a part of the community, we saw it as our job as a corporate citizen to support and expand the reach of this program to help local companies grow and individuals and families thrive in a difficult economic period."

The 28,000-square-foot, multimillion-dollar facility will house BCCC's Center for Workforce Development, which partners with local businesses to provide customized training, and develop industrial training programs to "feed the local workforce pipeline." What's more, the center is designed to adapt existing programs and add new ones as the needs of employers and employees evolve.

In particular, the center will help buoy the region's rich heritage in manufacturing. While Bucks County manufacturers employ nearly 30,000 people, they also expect to have 3,000 unfilled jobs by 2025 as members of the existing work force retire. Current and future programs offered through the Center for Advanced Technologies should help to close the projected "skills gap."

BCCC's leaders envision the Center for Workforce Development as a hub of advancement for workers who specialize in metalwork, industrial maintenance, robotics, and welding. It will also serve as an incubator, of sorts, where individuals who are interested in business technology, bookkeeping, and customer service can acquire the skills they need to move forward in their careers.

In recent years, BCCC's Center for Workforce Development has trained and graduated nearly 400 advanced manufacturing students

through two pre-apprenticeship programs, with a job-placement rate above 90 percent. Many of the workforce programs also qualify as college credits toward an associate's degree.

BCCC President Felicia L. Ganther, J.D., Ph.D., describes Penn Community Bank's gift toward BCCC's Center for Advanced Technologies as a testament to the bank's "commitment to ensuring that our future learners have state-of-the-art facilities and educational opportunities that will prepare them for the jobs of tomorrow."

"Penn Community Bank is and continues to be one of the leading institutions in corporate giving and social responsibility in Pennsylvania," Dr. Ganther says. "It is truly an honor for Bucks County Community College to be one of Penn Community Bank's benefactors, as well as one of their trusted community partners."

She adds, "We are extremely grateful for

Penn Community Bank's investment in post-secondary education opportunities for the residents of Bucks County."

The partnership with BCCC embodies Penn Community Bank's pledge to educate and empower others. At the same time, it is just one of several strategic partnerships designed to "lift all boats" by creating opportunities for workers, business owners, and other constituents. Penn Community Bank has forged similar partnerships with other respected educational institutions in the region, including Montgomery County Community College.

"We know that job training and apprenticeship efforts aren't limited to one county or one region," Vidoni says. "As the region's largest mutual bank, we're committing hundreds of thousands of dollars over the coming years to establish and scale diverse programming to promote economic self-sufficiency, from Philadelphia to the Lehigh Valley." ■



Current and future programs offered through BCCC's Center for Advanced Technologies will help buoy the region's rich heritage in manufacturing.



LOCAL BANK. LOCAL PARTNER.

Giving back is part of Penn Community Bank's DNA. The bank has nurtured the communities it serves through financial literacy efforts and volunteerism, as well as by giving 5 percent of its net income to area groups and nonprofits that make a difference in the region. It also gives back through the Penn Community Bank Foundation.

The Penn Community Bank Foundation contributes to communities through sustaining annual donations, as well as innovative, impactful grants to organizations helping build strong and resilient communities and promoting local economic development. In addition to support for community enrichment programming and emergency services, the foundation's giving strategy focuses on:

- **Local Business Growth:** strengthening the local economy by promoting sustainable practices, supporting area business communities, and encouraging entrepreneurship and job creation.
- **Economic Self-Sufficiency and Opportunity:** improving economic inclusion, access to food, affordable housing, and living-wage work for the unemployed and underemployed. In addition to giving and advocacy, the foundation supports community members through financial education and empowerment.

For anyone who wants to work with Penn Community Bank to improve communities and change lives for the better, the organization welcomes interested parties to submit a grant application through the Penn Community Bank Foundation.

Visit www.penncommunitybank.com/penn-community-foundation-grant-application for more information.



For more information on Penn Community Bank's personal, business, and wealth management services, as well as details on its branch locations in Bucks and Montgomery counties, visit penncommunitybank.com.