

Foundation Awards 2022 Golden Acorn Employer of the Year Annual Breakfast honors Employer Appreciation and Workforce Development

The Charter Oak State College Foundation hosted its **5th annual Employer Appreciation Breakfast** on Wednesday, November 16, 2022 at the TPC River Highlands Club House in Cromwell, CT. The event recognizes the economic and personal importance of employment opportunities that arise for the College's graduates.

Students and graduates of Charter Oak were given the opportunity to invite their boss to breakfast and to nominate them for the Foundation's Golden Acorn Employer of the Year Award.

"This is a significant event for our community as employers are recognized for valuing education, supporting student success, and for promoting and hiring our graduates! The nominations were very heartfelt and made the selection of just one employer of the year very difficult," said Joyce Petrella, *President*, Charter Oak State College Foundation.



Catherine Vanicky, 2022 Golden Acorn Employer of the Year winner.



Nancy Martone, *Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer*, Hospital for Special Care. From the class of 1996, Nancy is proof that higher education credentials and degree completion are imperative factors for personal and professional achievement.

College President, Ed Klonoski was honored for his 25 years of service to Charter Oak State College and Nancy Martone, VP and Chief Administrative Officer, Hospital for Special Care was awarded the Alumni Ambassador & Achievement Award.

The theme of this year's breakfast was echoed in many of the presenter's sentiments – transformation through higher education is a journey well worth taking!

The 2022 Golden Acorn Employer of the Year Award winner is **Catherine Vanicky**, *Owner, Honey Bear Learning Center* in Stratford, CT. She was nominated by Charter Oak student, Jacqueline Valle. Jacqueline nominated Catherine for several reasons; for her leadership style, her commitment to her staff, and as Jacqueline says, "she believed in and supported me in my education when I did not." Catherine personifies the spirit of the award by never letting this Charter Oak student lose sight of the goal – credentials and degree completion. Jacqueline will be graduating in June with a Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education. She previously earned an Associate Degree in General Studies as well as the Connecticut Director's Credential from Charter Oak.

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THE PRESIDENT'S TAKE



Can Online Learning Be More Humane?

Welcome to 2023. Normally, when I write these essays, I spend time telling you about new things the College is doing. I have written about our three-years of flat tuition, new programs with embedded micro credentials, our Community College Tuition scholarship, and our integration of non-collegiate learning into our academic programs. But today I want to address a more fundamental question.

As you know, Charter Oak is an online college, and all our academic programs are delivered directly to our students using technology. I have frequently argued (with legislators and traditional academics) that our approach models the 21st century workplace. My assumption is that knowledge workers use electronic communication, participate in distributed work teams, and do most of their work from wherever they happen to be. In other words, an online classroom operates like a 21st century job.

But traditionally online courses are text intensive. I believe that it is time for that to change, and the next challenge for online colleges is how do we deepen interaction for our remote students and faculty. How do we integrate new tools and approaches so that online coursework includes a social component? We know that our students deeply value interaction with their instructor and their peers, so how do we amplify those interactions?

Here's an interesting development: We are seeing huge turnouts for our online open houses. Where we used to be happy with a dozen in person attendees for an event, we are seeing 300 folks sign up for an online open house. My admissions team is working hard to find ways to organize this activity so that it works for so many attendees. They have created scripted elements and break out rooms to keep the large groups moving forward.

We need to follow the lead of admissions in our academic programs. Our average student takes eighteen courses from us during their degree program, and I want to make those courses powerful moments for students to meet each other, make professional connections, and build their networks.

As I mentioned, most of the content in our courses consists of written material. My instructional design team is working to integrate short videos from instructors and students into our courseware. These can accelerate everyone's ability to "meet" each other. To help this effort, the college has invested in a "green room" to facilitate recording both audio and video components. We are exploring ways to train our instructors in the use of these tools, and we are thrilled to see online courseware move beyond text.

Additionally, we think our new focus of adding micro credentials to our degree programs will also increase the humanity of our courses. Micro credentials are defined units of learning that relate to workplace skills/credentials that improve a learner's value to his employer. As students explore workplace skills as part of their academic program, we will see an increase in internships, externships, and credit for prior learning. Students will be discussing their experiences at these out-of-the-classroom experiences, and those conversations will enrich every course.

Lastly, our biggest ambition is to finally add a career center with the appropriate counseling function to our student services. We are looking to provide a place where students can explore their career options and do that in conversation with an actual counselor. We have provided workshops in areas like interviewing and resume construction, but if we can fund a career center, we can take these items to the next level. We believe most of our students are seeking to make a better living, so these services should land in their sweet spot.

I hope this essay opens the door to a conversation with all of you about how our new online world is evolving and how we can shape it into something that is efficient but also more humane. We are social creatures, and in our online classes and our online work we appreciate the efficiencies technology offers, but we must also resist the isolation that being remote can create.

I look forward to your responses. You will always find me at eklonoski@charteroak.edu.


Ed Klonoski, President

"Employer Appreciation" cont. from pg. 1



Guest speaker, **Marissa Perez Cardona**

Employer nominees were received from a wide range of industries and services across Connecticut and other states. Nominations were submitted by Charter Oak State College students and alumni in the fields of Public Safety, Early Childhood Education, Nursing and Health Care, Business, Paralegal, and Information Systems Studies representing many of the certificate and degree programs offered by the college.



Neal Cunningham, COSC Class of 2000, with his "boss" and daughter, **Karen Cunningham**, Bestech Inc.



Jacqueline Valle (left of center) Charter Oak student, **Catherine Vanicky** (right of center) the 2022 Golden Acorn Employer of the Year proudly displays her award with her team and **Joyce Petrella** (center).



The Waste Management Team with Employer Nominee **Paul Foody** and **Mervin Alexander**, Charter Oak Class of 2018, along with **Joyce Petrella** and **Ed Klonoski**



Juliet Atakora, Charter Oak student (left) and Employer Nominee, **Henry Torres**, DMHAS-SWCMHS (right), with **Joyce Petrella** and **Ed Klonoski**

The **Employer Appreciation Breakfast** brings our students, alumni, and business leaders together to celebrate employers that support higher education and to raise funds for degree completion. Proceeds from the event will support the College Scholarship Programs. **We are thankful for our sponsors.**

This year's breakfast was made possible by:

- Fiducient**
- BigThink**, Dave Calibey
- Calculus of Talent**, Joyce Petrella
- Neal Cunningham**, Charter Oak Class of 2000
- Guru Enterprises Group**, Joe Waxman
- Ed Klonoski**, Charter Oak State College President

2022 Nominees | Golden Acorn Employer of the Year

Maegan Adams, *Bristol Child Development Center*, nominated by Renee Dailey, Charter Oak Class of 2005, Joshua Cross and Jessica Braddock, Charter Oak students

Chantel DiPronio, *Childport (Yale New Haven Hospital)*, nominated by Ruth Kenneth, Charter Oak, Class of 2005

Henry Torres, *DMHAS-SWCMHS*, nominated by Juliet Atakora, Charter Oak student

Nancy Walsh, *Educational Playcare*, nominated by Michele Sinata, Charter Oak student

Roseann Wilder, *Educational Playcare*, nominated by Sarah Yineman, Charter Oak student

Carol Work, *Grimes Center (Yale New Haven Hospital)*, nominated by Alita Parker, Charter Oak, Class of 2022

Melissa Monroe, *Hartford HealthCare*, nominated by Matthew Lapane, Charter Oak, Class of 2022

Milly Arciniega, *Hartford Parent University*, nominated by Delmarys Serrano, Charter Oak, Class of 2014 and current student

Graciela Rivera, *Hartford Public Library*, nominated by Nancy Mendez, Charter Oak, Class of 2016

Neeru Bhambree, *Hudson County Montessori School*, nominated by Diana Euyoque, Charter Oak student

Mikyle Byrd-Vaughn, *Lulac Head Start, Inc.*, nominated by Vera Davis Woolfolk, Charter Oak student

Christine Feliciano, *Pumpkin Patch Childcare and Learning Center*, nominated by Laurie Glasser, Charter Oak, Class of 2019

Marie Monahan, *Saint Mary's Hospital*, nominated by Melody Davis, Charter Oak student

Lauren Boyd, *Veteran's Health Administration, Portland*, nominated by Kwame Asamoah, Charter Oak, Class of 2022

Paul Foody, *Waste Management*, nominated by Mervin Alexander, Charter Oak, Class of 2018



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Charter Oak State College complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding nondiscrimination and affirmative action.

Alumni Association Updates

During 2022, at the tail end of the pandemic, your Alumni Association hosted a variety of virtual and in-person events. We continued the popular professional and personal development series, "Conversations With", hosted our Alumni Ambassador activities online and in-person, and met with College leadership. We said goodbye to many long-time board members as the board transitions to represent the many graduating classes, degrees, areas of study, and locations too!

We have even more planned for 2023... an Alumni Association Podcast, Regional Networking and Social Opportunities, and an Anniversary Celebration Illuminating our Alumni!

Become a volunteer Board Member, Ambassador, or Acorn in Action! Connect with Your Alumni, Receive a Gift with your Membership Today! Learn more at www.CharterOak.edu/Alumni. Follow us on Facebook and LinkedIn too!

Alumni Association Board of Directors

Officers

John Thomas, *President*
Steve Foerster, *Vice President*
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Sean Peltier
Cecelia Peppers-Johnson
Daniel Perea
Joel Raffone
Tenell "Tiger" Rhodes

Incoming Board Members

Sophia Jappinen, 2021
Aquia Brown Welch, 2021
Juan Urena, 2018

Notable Ambassador and Acorn in Action: Cecilia Kozlowski, Class of 2011

In 2022, one of (our favorite) long-time board members resigned from service to the Boards to pursue other opportunities. Cecilia is a strong and determined advocate for Charter Oak State College and was a dual Board Member serving on both the Alumni and Foundation Boards for over a decade.

A stalwart at many College events, she always had a kind word of encouragement and an attentive ear. She provided guidance,

leadership, and created many connections between the College and Community Members.

We would be remiss if we did not come together as a community to honor her many years of service, incredible commitment, and contributions to her alma mater. Please watch your email for an invitation to honor Cecilia and others.



Cecilia Kozlowski (right) with (left) Marissa Cardona, Delmarys Serrano, and Milly Arciniega in November 2022.



At the 2019 Employer Appreciation Breakfast, (left to right), Cecilia, her guest, Nitza Rivera, Talent VP, Aetna, Ed Klonoski, and Charter Oak Alum, Seila Mosquera-Bruno, Commissioner, Department of Housing.



Extra Alumni Benefits!

Find Insurance and Legal benefits for Charter Oak alums at www.CharterOak.edu/Alumni/Benefits
Shop for great alumni gear at the Alumni Online Store! Visit www.rhinogift.com/charter-oak-.htm

Conversations With

In the Fall of 2022, the Charter Oak State College Alumni Association presented “*Conversations With.*” This new complimentary virtual series of Professional & Personal Development discussions included a 30-minute presentation and Q&A session. See here what our

presenters covered and who they are. If you are interested in sharing your knowledge with the Charter Oak Community, please email alumni@charteroak.edu and stay tuned for new presentations!



September | Tenell 'Tiger' Rhodes

Title: *Are You LinkedIn? Get more connected and connections.*

Description: Tenell helped us take our LinkedIn profiles to the next level and get more from the business, career and networking website and app. He covered how there's more that you can do to help yourself, career, business, and organization thrive.

Brief Bio: Tenell 'Tiger' Rhodes is an experienced business executive and minister with more than 25 years of engineering, software, and Internet business development and marketing experience. He has successfully and profitably used LinkedIn for business development, networking, career advancement, non-profit, and ministry opportunities, among other helpful purposes, since 2008.



October | Damon DePaolo

Title: *The Value You Bring – preparing yourself for something new.*

Description: Damon asked us “Have you ever been looking at making a career move, but talked yourself out of it because you didn't feel like you had the experience they were looking for?” He shared how each of us possess a unique combination of skills and experience that make us a powerful force for innovation and sets us apart as a valuable asset for an employer. He encouraged all to re-evaluate how you perceive and present yourself, how that can help set you apart and give you the courage needed to take that next step.

Brief Bio: Damon has a 20+ year career in Information Technology spanning programming, project management, R&D, management, and cybersecurity. He is passionate about empowering others to bring their unique perspective and experience to bear on new and exciting challenges and believes that intellectual curiosity can be your strongest asset.



October | Alex Casella

Title: *Take Control of Your Finances!*

Description: Alex offered an informative financial literacy session that touched on all areas of personal finance including cash flow and budgeting, debt management, insurance protection, savings and retirement, and growth topics! This session was purely educational and didn't endorse or recommend any specific company or products.

Brief Bio: Alex is a 2022 graduate of Charter Oak State College where he earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a Concentration in Small Business and graduated with honors. Alex has worked in the financial services industry since 2009 and over those years has recognized the shortage of financial literacy provided to first responders, healthcare and helping-services professionals during their education and training. Alex has developed a comprehensive understanding of financial services through his training and time working alongside successful advisors in the financial planning industry. Alex's vision goes beyond products as a solution and emphasizes that financial success focuses on educating individuals on how to properly coordinate financial decisions. Alex is passionate about helping others and is active in various volunteer and fundraising activities including his local Rotary International Club and has recently joined the Charter Oak Alumni Association.

Charter Oak State College Foundation Elects New President



In September 2022, the Foundation Board elected a new President. Long-time Board member, **Joyce Petrella**, Managing Partner of Calculus of Talent, has been elected to a two-year term as President of the Charter Oak State College Foundation.

Having served on the Foundation Board for a decade and recruiting the best talent to serve alongside her, Petrella was the next natural leader to step into the role as successor to long-time president and Charter Oak Alum, Rebeka Scalia.

"Joyce has a super talent – the ability to foster cooperation and lead thought-provoking discussions as she creates enthusiasm for the plan ahead." Carol Hall, Executive Director of the Charter Oak State College Foundation, reported. "She is not afraid to roll up her sleeves and dig in. Joyce is a volunteer extraordinaire, and I look forward to serving under her leadership."

to innovate to meet student need with programs like the **Student Crisis Fund** which provides financial support for unexpected financial emergencies that can stop a student from continuing with their education, and the **Parents Intent on Improving Tomorrow Scholarship**, an intentional resource created out of the Shea Lecture, aimed at parents in poverty."

Charter Oak State College President, Ed Klonoski expressed excitement about both the Foundation's new President and its rededication to providing even more support to Charter Oak's students. "Joyce is deeply committed to the College mission, talented, and resourceful. I look forward to her leadership. She and I have collaborated for many years, and I expect great things during her term of office."

The Foundation is committed to removing economic disparity in Higher Education by providing scholarships, grants, and emergency funding for our students. Petrella acknowledges that we have helped so many students over the years; however, she admits that the Foundation is at an inflection point, and the mission is critical now more than ever.

"Joyce has a super talent – the ability to foster cooperation and lead thought-provoking discussions as she creates enthusiasm for the plan ahead."

– Carol Hall, Executive Director of the Charter Oak State College Foundation

Petrella shared her reasons for accepting the position, "I continue to volunteer for the Charter Oak State College Foundation for the same reasons that attracted me to the school in the first place – to support and accelerate adults who seek to complete their degree while managing their families and the challenges of modern life. Over the years, I have seen the Foundation as an innovator of equity. We began lifting women up through the **Women in Transition** degree completion program and have since created a variety of endowed scholarship funds. The Foundation continues

Petrella shared that the Board's aspirational goal is to fund more scholarships, reach more students, and reduce the financial barriers to our student's success. Student need is increasing due to a variety of factors, student loan debt is daunting, and employers need workforce ready candidates.

Petrella concludes, "If you are an employer looking for highly capable employees to stay competitive, let's talk! It's an exciting time!"

**STAY
CONNECTED!**

We always like to hear from our alumni about promotions, graduate degrees, awards, marriages, births, and other significant successes in your life. Email updates to share to chall@charteroak.edu.

Foundation Welcomes New Board Members

Albert W. A. Schmid, *Class of 1997, Author, Kentucky Colonel and Chef Instructor at Auguste Escoffier School of Culinary Arts, Online*

Albert is a Charter Oak Alum and educator with over 25-years of post-secondary teaching and administration experience. He has taught a variety of classes including business and legal classes related to the hospitality industry and directed four academic departments. He regularly consults with large companies and is the author of more than 12 books, including textbooks, cookbooks, and cocktail books, some of which have won national and international awards. He joined the board to return the generosity that meant so much to him. He shared, "when I was a student at Charter Oak, the Foundation granted me a scholarship to cover my graduation fee. At the time, I was raising two small boys, the small gift amounted to \$125 but had a huge impact for my family."

Mary McCallister, *Class of 2020, Scholarship Recipient, Advocate, Planning Analyst, CT DSS Planning Improvement Office (PIO) and mostly recently, she earned her Master of Public Administration with a focus on Law and Public Policy at UCONN Department of Public Policy.*

Mary is an Equity Champion and advocate in her spare time and works full time for the CT Department of Social Services as a Planning Analyst. She has worked with Hartford Healthcare bringing a diversity and social justice lens to the hospital system's community assessment, served as a consultant for the Consolidated School District of New Britain, CT developing and coordinating a city wide parent project to assess the social/emotional needs of parents of children ages birth to 24, and as a program model/coalition designer for the CT Office of Early Childhood.

Mary explains her passion for giving back to her alma mater, "I am interested in joining the Foundation Board because Charter Oak provided me a scholarship during COVID when I was out of work. It helped my family then and the Foundation has the potential to make a huge impact in more people's lives. I believe this vital resource can greatly expand its influence and impact. I believe I can help this by bringing my perspective on customer voice, strategic planning, DEI, and community engagement."

Paul Chaplinsky, *Henkel Corporation and Southington, CT Town Council Member*

Paul values family and education as a pathway to career mobility. He holds a BS in Chemistry, an MS in Engineering Sciences, and an MBA.

Paul is an elected official on the Southington Town Council. He leads the Open Space & Farm Heritage Committee and serves on the Public Works Committee as Vice Chair. He also served 11 years as an elected official on the Southington Planning and Zoning Commission. Paul is also active as a board member for the Mill Foundation for Kids. The focus has been to raise funds for children

with severe illnesses who need a little something in their lives to cheer them up and to support their families. After attending a Charter Oak Employer Appreciation Breakfast and learning about the College and Foundation, he noted "It is clear they are doing wonderful things and he was excited and honored to join the Board!"

Charter Oak State College Foundation Board of Directors

Officers

President, Joyce Petrella, *Managing Partner, Calculus of Talent*

Vice President, Steven Taylor, *Vice President, Business Banking Officer, Liberty Bank*

Secretary, Joe Waxman, *Guru Enterprises Group LLC and SCORE Volunteer*

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Dave Calibey, *Principal, BigThunk*

Julio Casiano, *Retired SBA Director, Currently, Entrepreneur*

Paul Chaplinsky, *Henkel Corporation*

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Susan Lewis, *Senior Director, Marketing, Human Nutrition & Health, Balchem Corp.*

Mary McCallister, *COSC 2020, Planning Analyst, CT Department of Social Services*

Daniel Purushotham, *Professor, CCSU*

Albert W. A. Schmid, *COSC 1997, Chef Instructor, Auguste Escoffier School of Culinary Arts*

Betsy Udal, *Partner, Financial Advisor, Ameriprise Financial Services, LLC*

College Representatives

Faculty, Carlita RB Cotton, PhD

Alumni, Joel Raffone, *COSC 2019, Connecticut Counseling Center Student, vacant (Amy Jimmo has graduated!)*

President, Ed Klonoski

Executive Director, Carol Hall

A special note of appreciation for unwavering commitment and dedicated service of long-serving, out-going Foundation Board Members. Thank you all!

Rebeca Scalia, *COSC 1996*

Neal Cunningham, *COSC 2000*

Cecilia Kozlowski, *COSC 2011*

Anne Elwell, *2001*

Randall Orner, *Faculty Representative and COSC 2003*

Notes from the desk of Carol Hall, *Director, Alumni and Donor Relations*



Greetings! Please allow me to introduce myself. I am **Carol Hall**, in June of 2022, I was appointed the *Director of Alumni and Donor Relations at Charter Oak State College*.

My path to degree completion and ultimately my “dream job” came to fruition because President Ed Klonoski considered the founding mission of Charter Oak in his hiring of me.

Charter Oak began as a credit aggregator to help women earn their degrees, to remove barriers and create equity in higher education and our workforce. Well, I am a late bloomer (educationally speaking) and came to Charter Oak as a single mom with a few decades of work experience and training, U.S. Navy experience and training, having served active duty for over seven years, plus some college credit.

I was qualified for my original position that I applied for, checked all the experience boxes, but did not have the credentials. I was hired and given the opportunity to earn my degree while working. In 2020, I graduated with my associate degree and am on track to finish my bachelor's in Organizational Leadership. I reached my personal goal of degree completion because of Charter Oak and President Klonoski!

This helps me really appreciate and relate with the underdog, the lifelong learner, and the single or married parents who, against many odds, persevere to complete their degree. In my dream job at Charter Oak, I have the distinct honor and privilege to work with two all-volunteer boards, The Charter Oak State College Foundation and The Charter Oak State College Alumni Association. Together, we work to ensure our legacy of providing financial support to single mothers through our **Women In Transition Program**, remove equity and barriers with our **Parents Intent on Improving Tomorrow Program**, and build our Endowment for a strong and stable future to award scholarships to many more students into the future. While also working to create community and connection, by building up our Ambassador and Networking programs.

This year, I am also charged with leading the College's 50th Anniversary Celebration. As we plan for this milestone, I am excited to meet many of you as we ‘shake our tree branches’, connect with our graduates, faculty, staff, and students - and illuminate the transformative power of education!

Volunteering is one of the easiest ways to connect with others.

I invite you to join our growing Anniversary Team. Perhaps you would like to:

- Engage with our emeriti staff and faculty to create a meaningful historical compilation. Charter Oak's history will come to life with personal insights from our storied past!
- Represent your graduating class and help us ‘shake the Charter Oak branches’ as we discover where our Alumni are now!
- Become an Ambassador and help develop a higher degree of awareness of Connecticut's online degree completion engine!
- Help us create a pipeline for our qualified, educated, and hard-working students and graduates to re-enter the workforce into career-enhancing positions.

50 years of innovation, dedication, and transformation is reason to celebrate! We need you to make it complete! Visit www.charteroak.edu/50years to learn more about volunteering for our anniversary activities! Or call me, **Carol Hall, 860.515.3889**.

Let me introduce Alumna, Fire Chief Shelly Carter

To say Shelly Carter is an inspiration would be an understatement. She has, and continues to, create access and opportunity for women, and especially women of color as she reaches for personal (and remarkable) levels of professional success.

Shelly remembers her Charter Oak Commencement Day as the Student Speaker; she congratulated and challenged her peers to continue to strive for bold goals. She exclaimed that one day she “would be a Fire Chief.”

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Shelly Leona Carter, Class of 2018

"Fire Chief Shelly Carter" cont. from pg. 8

At the age of 28, she took a leap of faith and decided to change career paths by applying to be a firefighter. Starting off as a driver, she worked to break layers in the glass ceiling on her way to the top.

Today, she is Connecticut's first black female fire chief, leading the Fire and Emergency Services for the Connecticut Department of Developmental Services.

Aside from building an impressive career and being a dedicated wife and mother to 5 boys, Shelly is also the founder and CEO of Girls Future Firefighter Camp. Through this program, she instills confidence and opens the minds of young women by teaching them about careers in public safety. In fact, Shelly recently received

a Hometown Hero Award for her work "igniting interest in firefighter careers for girls."

Shelly is committed to her family and her faith, to the advancement and equality of women, her career, and her education. She was apprehensive about going back to school, but with much effort and the guidance and support of her advisor, Shelly persevered. She graduated from Charter Oak State College in 2018 and is now pursuing a Doctorate degree in Public Administration. To Shelly, education equals opportunity and Charter Oak State College is "the open door."

Allow me to introduce notable Charter Oak staff and faculty member Linda Perfetto, PhD, RN, FAADN, CNE, CNOR, Director and Faculty, RN/ADN to BSN Program

After a lifetime of serving others, Linda Perfetto, PhD, RN, is determined to leave a measurable impact on the nursing profession and first-generation students!

After a fulfilling clinical nursing career, Dr. Linda Perfetto entered academe in 2000, serving in faculty and director roles at Three Rivers Community College, Norwich, CT and as the first Connecticut Community College Nursing Program (CT-CCNP) Director. Linda led teams of nursing faculty to implement, assess, evaluate, and redesign the first system-wide academic program for the Connecticut Community Colleges. Working collaboratively with a variety of stakeholders, Linda and the team were successful in establishing system-wide standards, practices, and curriculum while also enabling a centralized admissions application and selection process.

As a result of her work with these very capable nursing faculty and students she developed a strong interest in the academic progression of CT-CCNP graduates and imagined a path to higher degrees. In 2018, Linda earned a PhD in Nursing from the University of Connecticut. Her research focused on the experience of associate degree nurses progressing to baccalaureate degrees and the variables associated with their persistence. Based upon this research and her experience, Perfetto obtained the support of the college system leaders when she proposed the development of the RN/ADN to BSN program at Charter Oak State College.

As Connecticut's only online public college, Charter Oak meets the needs of working RN's and provides flexibility for a nurse's schedule

perfectly. With leadership and know-how to establish the RN/ADN to BSN program, Linda led the program's accreditation by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) in September 2020. She then proudly observed as this nursing program quickly became a top pathway for CT-CCNP graduates seeking to advance to the Bachelor of Science in Nursing.

Linda will officially retire in June 2023 and is compelled to leave behind a (bigger) legacy – an endowed scholarship. She is making a year-end gift to begin the fund. Her gallant goal could use a little help from her colleagues and friends. In honor of her retirement, commitment, and abundant contributions to the nursing profession, we invite you to give a donation along with a note of congratulations today!

You can honor Linda with a donation online or if you prefer, please send a check payable to **COSC Foundation / Perfetto Scholarship - Charter Oak State College Foundation, 55 Paul Manafort Drive, New Britain, CT 06053.**



I wish you all well and look forward to updating you on more notable Charter Oak community members in the next issue!

Contributions to the Charter Oak State College Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization, are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by the IRS Regulations. Tax ID # 06-0969831



Dear Charter Oak Community Member,

Let's Celebrate by Helping Out

Throughout this, **Charter Oak State College's 50th year**, we will be celebrating student and alumni successes as well as our community members' achievements. We encourage you to join us as a part of the COSC community.

As you know, **it is not motivation or determination that derails Charter Oak students** from their degree completion journey. Often it is the lack of available resources.

We've Helped

The Charter Oak State College Foundation was able to **provide financial support to 120 students** in 2022. The generosity of our donors enabled those students to complete their degrees and improve the lives of their families. Here's a message from one recipient:

"Receiving a scholarship means so much to me, but it also means a lot to my son. There is a light at the end of every tunnel, and this helped us get closer to ours. I am so thankful for this extremely helpful hand. Thank you!"

But We Could Have Done More

Due to a lack of funds, the Foundation had to **turn away over 100 other deserving students** who requested assistance. Here's an example:

This applicant is working to earn her Early Childhood Degree while employed full-time as a single mother. In the past, she worked 2 to 3 jobs just to make ends meet but, in order to complete her college degree, she had to cut back to only one.

We know **financial support makes a difference**. It's often the difference between success and frustration. **Can you help us** - help us to make that difference in our students' lives?

▶ **Give Online at bit.ly/COSCFoundationGiveMoreAppeal**
or

▶ **Mail a Check made payable to COSC Foundation**

55 Paul Manafort Drive
New Britain, CT 06053

With gratitude,

Ed Klonoski President, Charter Oak State College
Joyce Petrella President, Charter Oak State College Foundation
Carol Hall Executive Director, Charter Oak State College Foundation





Once in a lifetime, we have the opportunity to celebrate a milestone such as this. To mark the College's Golden Anniversary we are planning activities all year long. We will host "online" and "in-person" celebrations. We will illuminate our alumni, faculty, staff, and students. We will raise awareness of the College, raise community engagement, and raise funds for a brighter future for all students! For current updates visit www.CharterOak.edu/50Years and our Facebook page.

A 50th Anniversary Celebratory Weekend is planned with everyone in mind!

All events are in-person, in downtown Hartford, Connecticut.

Cheers for Fifty Years Mingle | Friday, June 9, 4:30 pm – 6:30 pm

The Friday evening Reception is a casual meet & mingle for our community members, graduating students, and alumni.

Gala Celebration | Saturday, June 10, 6:00 pm – 11:00

Saturday evening, the Gala is a dinner dance fundraiser. A golden celebration not to be missed! We will illuminate the decades of graduates and community members, reminisce, converse with old & new friends, enjoy delicious food, and do some dancing too!

Baseball Game and Reception | Sunday, June 11, 12:00 Noon

Sunday is a time for families and friends to come out for a ball game and reception.

All-In-Ticket price: \$250

includes access to all the weekend activities, and a reserved copy of the long-awaited Charter Oak State College History Book.

À la carte tickets will be available for:

Cheers for Fifty Years Mingle Reception - \$19.73 per person

Gala Dinner Dance - \$150 per person

Baseball Game & Reception - \$20.23 per person

Charter Oak State College History Book \$50.50 (Reserve your copy today!)

Other ways to participate

Illuminating Our Alumni!



As we celebrate the 50th anniversary, we also want to celebrate the achievements and accomplishments of our graduates.

We need your help in finding out where our graduates are now and what they are up to. We want to know where you are working, what you are doing, and how your degree from Charter Oak has

helped you along the way. We want to showcase your success to the world and let them know how Charter Oak has helped you achieve your dreams. Visit <https://bit.ly/CharterOakStory2023> to submit your story or email alumni@charteroak.edu RE: *My Charter Oak Story/Update* and we'll highlight your accomplishments!



Works of Art Contest!

This contest is an opportunity to showcase creativity and illuminate the transformative power of education

through the creative arts. Submissions may include, but are not limited to poetry, short stories, blogs, photos, videos, culinary/mixology, music, and other. **Submissions are due by midnight on April 12th, 2023 – <https://bit.ly/CharterOakArtWork2023>.** This is a chance to be featured in our anniversary celebrations and win some amazing prizes!

Make Your Mark!

- Become a Legacy Sponsor with a Named Scholarship (\$10,000)
- Place an ad or sentiment in the 50th Anniversary Program Book (\$100 or \$50)
- Be a Friend of Charter Oak, purchase Gala Tickets AND Advertise (\$750)

Save the Dates and Plan to Participate! Visit www.CharterOak.edu/Alumni for other upcoming March, April, and June events!

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