

UNC Partners with Johnson College to Meet Workforce Development Needs

Throughout these challenging times, many individuals have found themselves unemployed or under-employed and struggling to meet their basic needs. Yet local employers report open positions that they cannot fill because of a lack of qualified applicants. To bridge this gap, UNC is partnering with Johnson College to offer the Upward Economic Mobility Program. The program provides participants with the skills needed to be both successful in a technical education program and meet the needs of area employers.

With grant support from the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation and the NEPA Health Care Foundation's Careers in Care program, UNC is offering workforce development training focused on career exploration, soft skills, and foundational education prior to enrollment in a technical certification program. Throughout the training program UNC will also offer support to participants to help them overcome barriers to class attendance and successful completion of the program.

"UNC is educating potential students on the region's high-demand occupations and identifying career pathways that match their interests," says UNC Director of Community Education Terilynn Brechtel. "We're helping students with skills like communication, networking, problem solving, and professionalism to help them build a range of skills that contribute to success in training and on the job."

Students are then enrolled in one of Johnson College's essential services certification programs to train for in-demand occupations that can provide family-sustaining wages. Certified Nursing Assistants, Medical Assistants, Basic Maintenance, Machinist, Welding,



Pictured from left: Jessica Wallo, vice president of programs and services, UNC; Lisa Durkin, president and CEO, UNC; Terilynn Brechtel, director of community education, UNC; Katie Leonard, Ed.D., president and CEO, Johnson College; Kellyn Williams, Ph.D., chief academic officer, Johnson College; Karen Baker, senior director of college advancement, Johnson College.

Plumbing, and Forklift Operator are some of the certifications currently in high demand in our area that students can train for through the program.

Johnson College President and CEO Katie Leonard, Ed.D. says, "We believe this program will have a profound and lasting impact on the regional employment landscape for those who are willing to work hard for a brighter future."

Throughout training, students will receive additional instruction and case management from UNC to support them in completing the program. These support services may include English language classes, child care, food, transportation, or other assistance to help them achieve their education goals and prepare for a successful career.

While many of the participants come from UNC's housing and adult education programs, the program is open to the public. If you or someone you know could benefit from this program or would like more information, please call UNC's Community Education Department at (570) 346-6203.





Lisa Durkin

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

Spring is in the air and in our step! The light at the end of the tunnel is shining and spotlighting opportunities. As options become available to safely gather with others, the team at UNC is paving a path forward. We've been anxious to reconnect with older adults at our Oppenheim and Fallbrook Healthy Aging Campuses and have begun some smaller activities. Before long, we'll be able to expand these gatherings and cheer on the faces we've missed as well as some new ones as they compete at bocce ball, cornhole and other group activities.

Our Community Education department has developed an Upward Economic Mobility program to provide support and training for community members looking to return to the workforce or climb the career ladder. We are eager to expand the program and recruit more participants. Our partners at the city and county have made resources available for community members who have fallen behind on rent or utility payments over the past year ensuring the housing counseling professionals at UNC are ready, willing and able to assist! It is our intention to deliver services and relief to all those who have suffered financial setbacks, social isolation, or any loss as a result of the pandemic.

As we look ahead, we are excited to join our community on June 4 in the second annual NEPA Gives. This day of giving will help local nonprofits recover and rebuild after a long, difficult stretch. We hope all our community members share our enthusiasm for the possibilities that lie ahead.

UNC Partners with City and Other Agencies to Provide Pandemic-Related Assistance

UNC is partnering with the City of Scranton, NeighborWorks Northeastern Pennsylvania, and North Penn Legal Services to provide rent, mortgage, utilities, and legal assistance to residents who have been adversely affected financially by the pandemic. The program is funded by CARES Act funding.

UNC joined representatives from the city and other partnering agencies for a press conference on March 22. Pictured top right: John Bogdanovicz, supervising attorney, North Penn Legal Services and UNC Board Member; Jesse Ergott, president and CEO, NeighborWorks NEPA; Lisa Durkin, president and CEO, UNC; and Paige Cognetti, Mayor of Scranton. Pictured bottom right: Liza Carroll, director of housing, City of Scranton Office of Economic and Community Development; Pamela Anslinger, homeownership and financial services manager, NeighborWorks NEPA; Jesse Ergott, president and CEO, NeighborWorks NEPA; Lisa Durkin, president and CEO, UNC; Paige Cognetti, Mayor of Scranton; Eileen Cipriani, executive director, City of Scranton Office of Economic and Community Development; Lori Malloy, executive director, North Penn Legal Services; and Jessica Wallo, vice president of programs and services, UNC.



UNC Needs Your Help on Friday, June 4

Mark your calendars! UNC will be participating in the second annual NEPA Gives on Friday, June 4. **If you are planning to donate to UNC this year, this is the day!** Donations made to UNC on June 4 through the NEPA Gives website, www.nepagives.org, are eligible for bonus funds from the Scranton Area Community Foundation and other sponsors.

Last year, UNC raised \$11,000 through NEPA Gives donations and bonus funds. This year, we're aiming higher! With COVID-19 continuing to put our in-person fundraisers on hold, our goal for NEPA Gives is \$20,000. Please help us reach our goal by spreading the word and making a donation on June 4. For more information, visit our website at www.uncnepa.org and follow us on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter.



UNC Presents Pine Brook Progress and Plans at Press Conference



Pictured from left: UNC Board Member Daniel Ginsberg, Ph.D., UNC Vice President of Community Development Martin Fotta, UNC Board Members James Caffrey and Meegan Possemato, UNC President and CEO Lisa Durkin, and UNC Board Members Judge Terrence Nealon, Bernard McGurl, and Andrew Hailstone, Esq.

UNC hosted a press conference and pop-up event in the parking lot of National Bakery on April 28 to share information about the Pine Brook Neighborhood Plan. Representatives from the city, county, and state as well as local residents, business owners, and members of the media gathered to hear remarks from UNC Director of Community Revitalization Chrissy Manuel, UNC President and CEO Lisa Durkin, and Mayor of Scranton Paige Cagnetti. The speakers gave an update about the work that has been done so far and the plans to move forward.

Based on research of the area and feedback from residents and business owners, four catalyst sites have been identified as most important for improvement. The sites include the gateway from Pine Brook to downtown at Capouse Avenue and Olive Street, housing in the lower Capouse Avenue area, the defunct Penn Ridge pool on Capouse Avenue, and the connection between Sweeney's Beach and Chic Feldman Field.



Pictured from left: Pine Brook Steering Committee Members Kyle Donahue, Todd Pousley, Bernard McGurl, and Meegan Possemato, UNC Director of Community Revitalization Chrissy Manuel, UNC President and CEO Lisa Durkin, and Pine Brook Steering Committee Member Cathy Wechsler.



Family Support Network Connects Loved Ones to Resources

It can be challenging to care for and monitor a loved one as they age from a distance. For those family members who are caring for a senior from outside the local area, UNC now offers the Family Support Network. Long-distance family members can request that a health navigator at UNC check in with their senior living in Lackawanna County, and link them to UNC's wrap-around services and other community resources.

UNC can provide services such as telephone social support, community recreation, mental health assessment and counseling, access to healthy food and transportation services, and assistance in securing level-of-care assessments to ensure the senior continues to live safely and independently. To request a check-in, please complete the form online at <https://www.uncnepa.org/older-adult/> or call (570) 346-6203 ext. 111.

UNC NEWS



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UNC Assists with COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic



UNC's Community Health and Education teams assisted with a COVID-19 vaccination clinic for local minority residents, including the Bhutanese-Nepali refugee community, in South Scranton on April 6. Administered by Commonwealth Health, the Lackawanna County Area Agency on Aging, the Bhutanese Cultural Foundation of Scranton Association, and nursing students from the University of Scranton, the clinic administered approximately 300 vaccines to local residents. Pictured from left: UNC ESL Instructor Audrey Golosky and Community Education Intern Junger Herazo-Vargas pass out information to individuals as they wait for their vaccinations.

New LanguageLine Service Facilitates Communication



Approximately 14 percent of clients who come to UNC for services speak limited English or speak a primary language other than

English. These clients come to UNC not only for English language classes and refugee resettlement, but for other services like food, housing, and child care. Bilingual staff are able to help Spanish-speaking clients in some departments, but last year alone, UNC worked with individuals speaking 18 different languages.

UNC now has a new tool to help staff and clients communicate more clearly and directly. The Moses Taylor Foundation recently awarded UNC with a \$20,000 grant for LanguageLine Solutions. This interpretation service enables staff to connect to an interpreter by phone or video at any time of day and receive translation services for 240 languages. The new interpreter service is already improving and simplifying communications and helping staff meet client needs more efficiently and effectively.