

PENSACOLA CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

UPDATE

Winter 2020-21 | pcci.edu/Update



NEW
Opportunities
pg. 4 ►

From the **President**

Dr. Troy A. Shoemaker @PresidentPCC



No doubt as 2020 ended and 2021 began, you heard expressions of joy that 2020 was finally over, along with hopes that the new year would be better than the previous. From man's perspective, it's easy to compare experiences from year to year, even from week to week, and long for better times.

But the Bible advises against this type of thinking. In his insightful book exploring the earthly and spiritual perspectives of life, Solomon shared, "Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this" (Ecc. 7:10).

This simple question posed by the wisest of men is a great reminder to avoid fixing our eyes on life "under the sun," and instead to focus on the eternal. Instead of longing for "better days" of the past, or following too closely the latest news of the present, we are to press on with the Lord's work in preparation of the future. We are to continue sharing God's Word with the lost, meeting the needs of our fellow man, and serving Christ with fervency and gratitude.

Here at PCC, I've been grateful watching our faculty, staff, and students keep their focus on God's calling as they prepare for the future. Though changes have altered the "normal" college experience somewhat, our PCC family has

demonstrated resilience and adaptability in the face of those changes. And they have continued working faithfully to accomplish the Lord's work.

In December, the faculty and staff went above and beyond in a way that touched my family personally. While wrapping up the fall semester, they took the time to write personal notes of encouragement and appreciation, which they presented to my wife and me with a lovely gift. The unexpected outpouring of love shown to us was truly remarkable and deserving of a public expression of our gratitude.

So many of the notes we received spoke of God's faithfulness through the ups and downs of 2020, an encouragement to me that God is faithful and unchanging no matter what is taking place in the world around us. ■





FEATURE

Student Care Initiatives

02



HAPPENINGS

Seizing New Opportunities

04

SPOTLIGHT

Weathering Life's Storms

06



MAJOR FOCUS

Elementary Education Program

08

HIGHLIGHTS

Career Link

10

Bible Certificate Programs

11

CONNECTIONS

Looking Forward to Serving

12

Employment Opportunities

13



Connect with Us





Supporting EACH OTHER

In a time of adapting, students are stepping up to support each other as they navigate college life in a pandemic.

Ahead of the fall semester, PCC released the Return to Campus Plan, which outlined how the College was poised to take care of students in the midst of COVID-19. Those plans proved successful and helped keep on-campus case numbers low, but plans on paper can sometimes need adjusting when put in motion.

Always ready with ideas, some students offered suggestions to make those efforts even better for their peers. And with administrative support, they formed the Student COVID Support Team, a student-led team that collaborates on and implements ways to boost morale on campus and encourage those in quarantine.

During the initial meetings, using resources available through Johns Hopkins University, team members learned about COVID-19 and what they could do



to slow the spread. “After the training we received in Student Support Team, I understood why the school had to implement measures that are uncomfortable to help us finish this semester,” said **Keren Korineza** (Sr., Burundi). “I thought they were too harsh at first, but now I believe they are realistic and help us keep a healthy campus in this time.”

Student COVID Support Team members focus on one of three different areas—activities, communication, and quarantine. These focused groups discuss on-campus experiences, how to encourage students through social media and during chapel, and how to better support students in quarantine.

Before long, the team suggested several quality-of-life changes for students on campus and in quarantine. Some of



“The current administration at PCC understands the value of student input. By organizing this group, they have reminded the students that they want to make campus a safe and enjoyable place!”

these changes provided more options for outdoor seating, such as adding picnic tables outside Four Winds and opening Eagle Field for mixed groups after sunset. Other ideas have allowed students to be more on top of their health, like providing touchless thermometers in all residence halls.

For those in quarantine, the team worked to reserve East Field for their use, allowing them to get outside while still safely isolating from others. Because the identities of quarantined students are not made public to the student body, the team also opened a snack donation drive, letting students supply others with a much needed bottled coffee or study snack. On Fridays, quarantined students have the option to join a Zoom call for fun, games, and socialization with each other.

“The Student Support Team has been an important part of student life this semester because we are students ourselves, and we face the same challenges in most ways,” said Keren. “Some improvements are being made because each day we hear, we experience, and we observe the things that are affecting the student body as a whole. So far, we have received good feedback concerning fast solutions to problems that we addressed in our meetings. I was told [by one student] how wonderful it has been to be allowed to go outside and have some sun and fresh air while in quarantine.”

The Student Body officers, including president Jordan Griffin (*Jr., NV*), collaborated with the Student Support Team to help them in offering the best campus experiences for all students. “These students exist to help with decision-making during this COVID time. They have started Zoom calls, game nights, and even got snacks for [students] while in quarantine,” said Jordan. “I was blessed getting to help lead a Zoom call. The one I had was hard the first 5 minutes. No one wanted to say anything, but by the end, we were all laughing and having a good time. It was a blessing to hear how they have grown, even being in isolation.”

“It has been encouraging to see the students take ownership [through this team],” said Brad Mullenix, director of Alumni and Career Services. “They are all willing to jump in and get the tasks done. The brainstorming, communication, and spirit of help have been tremendous among team members and also between the support team and the Student Body officers. This has all made it a very productive environment.”

As a senior with a flexible schedule, **Ethan Regier** (*GA*) jumped at the chance to help his peers through the Student



Support Team. For him, the experience has proven to what end PCC will go to care for its students.

“I thought [joining the team] would be a unique way to minister to the student body! We know what it’s like to live on campus and have to follow the new guidelines,” Ethan said. “The current administration at PCC understands the value of student input. We are fortunate to attend a school where the leadership cares about the students and their needs. By organizing this group, they have reminded the students that they want to make the campus of PCC a safe and enjoyable place!” ■



Seizing New OPPORTUNITIES

Following the example of other institutions in reducing exposure to COVID-19, PCC introduced a new change to the calendar—students would finish the final three weeks of the fall semester online from home. With the reduced campus population, several student work opportunities opened up, giving those who remained the ability to earn money while finishing the semester online.

For his final three weeks of the semester, freshman **Jarrold Waytan** (NC) had signed up for one more new experience—a temporary 15-hour work position, earning him free room and board for those three weeks in addition to salary. As a collator in the Abeka Print Shop, Jarrold stacked and organized textbook pages before they were bound together. “The



friendly environment at the Print Shop definitely made the job enjoyable. I’m thankful for coworkers who injected the occasional fun into serious work,” he said. “The incentive of free room and board was great because it left one less payment to worry about for college as I continued earning money to pay the rest.”

Fully online classes and a restructured work schedule allowed **Kylie Loftus** (Jr., FL) to better tailor her classwork time and brought welcome opportunities to meet more of her Environmental Services coworkers. “I did well with the



transition because I could pick my time to watch the class lectures, giving me more time to focus on specifics,” she said. “With my work schedule changing, I



“I just want to thank God for being my provider of opportunity. He was able to safely bring me to PCC when I was completely unsure of my next step in life. He continues to direct us through these times.”

worked with many different people, some I already knew from previous work and some being new. It gave me the opportunity to get more out there socially since I tend to be a shy person.”

Abigail Shubert (Sr., MO), who works at the circulation desk in the Rebekah Horton Library, has appreciated the skills she’s learned while being in a customer-centric position. “Sometimes people will come to the library with questions I



just don’t know how to answer. I have been able to learn how to find answers people need, even if I had no idea before then,” she said. “I’ve been able to apply things like people skills, time management, and self-motivation, which are vital in any workplace. Even many of the grad schools I’m looking at right now love candidates who have done work-study programs.”

“Switching to completely online learning was very freeing for my sched-

ule,” Abigail continued, appreciating the temporary change of pace before Christmas break. “I was able to spend more time with friends and even pick up a few more hours at work. Sometimes it was hard to make sure I got everything done, but a lot of the online teachers made it so that you could work ahead. Overall, I was very grateful for my teachers and the way they made the transition to online classes easier.”

After a well-deserved break, many students have returned for Interterm work and classes. And newer students will soon be eagerly starting their second college semester. “I just want to thank God for being my provider of opportunity,” said Jarrod Waytan, who is glad to have completed his first semester. “He was able to safely bring me to PCC when I was completely unsure of my next step in life. He continues to direct us through these times. He will surely guide the next semester according to His perfect plan.” ■

Jermaine Watkins: WEATHERING *Life's Storms*

After attending PCC, pastoral ministries grad Jermaine Watkins is helping others through difficulties, great and small.

The journey of life is like a map made up of winding roads, few routes labeled and detours unmarked. As for **Jermaine Watkins** ('05), his journey has been dotted with storms, joys, and provisions along the way. "I've been molded through storms—personal storms, rela-



tional storms," he said. "I thought I would have been doing one thing for the rest of my life: I graduate, I pastor a church, I live there 35 or 40 years, I die. That's

what you think, but I think God has got to shake you through the process."

Jermaine, a pastoral ministries graduate, has worn many hats during his time ministering to others. Currently, he's an executive pastor in Charleston, SC, and an interim executive pastor in Charlotte, NC, but he also advises and does consultation work for other churches. His training at PCC, especially his ministerial classes, helped him to be what any group or individual he worked with needed. "I used to see myself as just a pastor, or that's all I wanted to do," he said. "But I've realized that I'm a little

bit more than that because different people need something different. I've been equipped over the years with not only my education, but my experience to not only be a pastor, but to be a mentor, to be an advisor, to be a consultant, and to be a better friend," he said. "It's meeting people where they are."

Inspired by his evangelist father, Pastor Watkins felt led to go into the ministry himself, but as a pastor who cultivates and grows his congregation. As others heard of his calling, Jermaine's journey soon shifted away from his Bahamian home and toward a Christian college in Northwest Florida. "One of my mentors, Cranston Knowles ('93, '95, '04, '06), went [to PCC]. He actually put me in a corner and was like, this is where you need to go. If I was going to be trained to be in ministry, I needed to be in one of the best places for ministry," he explained.

While in college, Jermaine found several sources of encouragement and learning from friends, peers, and college faculty, including participating in Christian Service with Kwame Selver ('02, '03) and brothers Daniel ('01, '03) and David ('01, '03) Pigott. "I remember Kwame giving me my first opportunity to preach in front of people. Someone saw my gifted-

ness and believed in me,” he recalled. “My roommate for three years, GJ Role (’05), kept me focused on the purpose, what we were going to do, and how we were going to impact our home country.”

After graduating from PCC, Jermaine went on to earn a master’s degree in counseling from Luther Rice College & Seminary (GA) and began investing in churches, first in the Bahamas and later in the States. Through his consultation work, he counseled churches by learning their vision and helping them to strategize and attain their goals. “That’s probably the most difficult part—understanding the context and understanding the specific calling, so that we can help them walk in focus of that. And also being sensitive to what the Lord is doing in the moment and not assuming [that] what God did over there, He wants to do over here,” he said.

After disaster struck in the Bahamas, many of Jermaine’s established relationships, before and since college, were tested and strengthened. On September 1, 2019, Hurricane Dorian made landfall on Great Abaco Island in the Bahamas, beginning its several-days-long crawl across the island nation. The category 5 storm leveled communities that hadn’t experienced such intensity in years. In the aftermath, Jermaine saw support pour in from college friends and mentors across the U.S. and elsewhere. He also reconnected with high school friends and distant relatives, all doing what they could to support each other and their hurting community.

“We saw God work in retrospect. Twenty years ago, he brought me to PCC, and the hand of God connected us so that we’re in the right place at the right

time. I wish I could say that there was a great revival that took place [after the storm]. I can’t necessarily say that; I think God is still working. There’s still brokenness,” Jermaine said. “I often say that God lives in the Bahamas; it’s so beautiful. I think He’s using the storms to make His home better in the Bahamas.”

Six months later, Jermaine found himself counseling and advising churches through a separate disaster—a pandemic. Jermaine assisted pastors as they learned how to excel in reaching people online and with strategizing reopening plans for their communities.

“Some churches didn’t have an online presence and didn’t have a platform for the people to give and be connected and plugged in. They’re already reaching people that would’ve never

walked through their doors,” he said. “There’s a church that I’ve been helping that has a membership of about 70. They’ve been reaching almost 1,000 people a week. Instead of them meeting us where we are in our buildings, we’re meeting people where they are on their phones, on their tablets and computers. It’s going to them.”

Throughout his journey, Jermaine has been able to use his talents to help people move through difficult storms in their lives. He rejoices with each victory others experience, whether as part of the church or in their personal walk with God. “It’s trusting the Lord that this too shall pass. This is a season. If I just continue moving forward, the joy comes in the morning,” he said. “So just keep moving forward. The only way you don’t win is if you stop.” ■

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ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

Training Beside the Masters

Beginning with structured training and preparation, PCC's education program produces teachers who make a difference in children's lives.

With teaching, no two days are exactly the same. I like the challenge that it brings me and the fresh start of each new school year," said **Brooke Park** (*Elementary Education '12*). She has taught at



Pensacola Christian Academy for seven years and has been the first grade principal for the past two. "I continued in education because I wanted to be a part of something bigger than myself and help train the next generation of teachers, pastors, electricians, etc., while giving them a Biblical educational foundation," she said. "I love being able to introduce children to Christ and give them a quality, Christian education, helping my teachers to become better, and interacting with the families in our community."

PCC's reputation for producing excellent, prepared teachers with a heart for service places education graduates in high demand at Christian schools. Their training enables them to enter the classroom on the first day confident and capable, prepared and professional.

"The education department is superior—you will graduate with everything you need to step into a classroom and begin teaching," Park said. "It's a wonderful thing to go to a college where you are surrounded by like-minded peers who are pursuing the same big goals as you are."

Mirna Guillen (*Early Childhood '19*), a teacher at Rochester Hills Christian School, said she is encouraged to keep teaching when "a parent tells me their little one can't stop talking about how

school is so much fun; or when one of my students gives me a hug and tells me they love me.” What appeals the most to her is the opportunity to influence the lives of future leaders.

Beginning their freshman year, elementary education students begin laying a solid foundation on a biblical teaching philosophy. They observe classes and learn methods from veteran teachers. Through their sophomore and junior years, students practice teaching their peers and applying techniques that develop confidence. And rather than experimenting with unproven teaching techniques, students learn what genuinely works and apply tried-and-true traditional methods to succeed in the classroom.

“I was well-prepared to control a classroom and deal with student behaviors,” said Amy Erickson (*Elementary Education '14*), a middle school English/PE teacher at Raleigh Christian Academy. “I am glad to have the foundation in elementary education to give me confidence while standing before a class and the ability to focus on mastering my content instead of on classroom management,” she said. “I learned many tips and tricks during my internship. My advisory teacher was very helpful in preparing me to enter the classroom. PCC places a high priority on excellence, and will definitely prepare you to excel. I knew that my very best was expected of me every day.”

Pensacola Christian Academy, home of the well-known Abeka curriculum, becomes the education students’ laboratory as they complete their teaching internship. They receive thorough train-

ing, develop classroom management, and practice teaching skills under the supervision of a master teacher. Their advisory teacher becomes a type of mentor to them and often keeps in contact with them even after graduation. The experience seniors receive prepares them to be effective teachers during their first year and beyond.

By their senior year, “their education training climaxes into a 15-week internship at Pensacola Christian Academy,” explained **Dr. Chris Bowman** of the education faculty. “These students join PCA faculty a week before students come back for the school year as opposed to joining when school is already in session. This is an advantage to receiving education training at PCC.”



After 17 years of teaching at Franklin Road Christian Academy, Trina Lyles (*Elementary Education '14*) now owns and operates an in-home daycare. She shared what appeals to her about teaching and what encourages her to continue: “I love being able to instill in these children at a young age that God loves them and made them for a reason. Our world needs Christian childcare workers to love these kids and teach them about God,” she said.

“Based on the training they have received and their performance in the classroom, it’s as if they are not first-year teachers,” said Dr. Bowman. “School administrators recognize that PCC students’ training puts them ahead of graduates from other colleges and universities.” ■

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To learn more, visit pcci.edu/Education.

New **Career Services** **Platform:** **Career Link**



Through a newly launched platform used by Career Services, students and alumni can connect with businesses and ministries seeking to hire the right candidates.

Approaching graduation often sparks a question—“Where will I go next?” The Career Services office helps students prepare for that next step in their calling.

“Career Services connects students with businesses and ministries, not just for employment opportunities, but also so they can learn more about the field they are interested in,” said Brad Mullenix, director of Alumni and Career Services. “This support does not stop at graduation; it is also available to alumni. We desire to help, however and whenever we can.”

Through Career Link, accessed on a browser or smartphone app, employers and ministries can directly post jobs for candidates to view as well as register for any recruiting opportunities hosted on campus. Students can filter options quickly to find positions and businesses they’re looking for and what qualifications are required. If they’re interested in a specific position, they can also favorite it for the program to suggest similar ones.

Students have access to resources such as how to prepare for an interview or put together a cover letter or résumé. There’s even a feature for mock interviews, where they can video record

answers to pre-uploaded interview questions and use the recording to self-evaluate or send to the Career Services office for additional tips or feedback.

By personalizing their Career Link profile, students can cultivate how businesses and ministries perceive them. “They can upload a headshot and banner image, upload their résumé, add a personal statement, show their experience,” said Mullenix. “It’s more than just information. They can add their own personality and human touch, which will give recruiters a better view of who they are.”

With Educator Recruitment, Career Fair, and a new Health Professions Career Fair, Career Services staff are excited for students to establish and build valuable connections through this new program.



“Students should start thinking and preparing for their career early in their college years. This will help them get exposure and not miss any opportunities the Lord may have for them,” said **Anna Maxwell**, coordinator of Alumni and Career Services. We’re here to help students now, as well as when they are first getting started in their careers.” ■



Bible Graduate Certificates

For those interested in increasing their understanding of God's Word, Pensacola Theological Seminary offers online Bible certificates, whether for personal growth and learning or for continuing development in ministry.

These certificates cover five different areas of study: Biblical Studies, New Testament Studies, Old Testament Studies, Pastoral Ministries, and Theological Studies. Requiring only a bachelor's degree with a minimum 2.00 cumulative GPA to apply, each certificate can either be earned independently or can be transferred into a seminary degree at PTS.

While the certificates can be earned online or through in-person instruction, Kayla Sanders's ('18) online courses have allowed her to work around her weekly schedule. She has been eager to gain a deeper understanding of the Bible through the program. "I'm learning answers to questions I never even thought to ask about New Testament culture and how Jewish traditions changed from the Old Testament practices and New Testament practices," she said. "It's truly amazing to follow the narrative of scripture in classes like Advanced Old Testament and Advanced New Testament and see how God worked out all the details to bring us back to Him."

To learn more about PTS's Bible graduate certificates, visit pcci.edu/Certificates. ■

Upcoming Events

With uncertainty due to COVID-19, events listed below should be considered tentative.

Bible Conference Uplifting Bible Preaching

February 22-24

1-800-PCC-INFO (1-800-722-4636)

PCC Educator Recruitment for churches and Christian schools seeking candidates from among PCC students

February 25-26, March 1-2

1-800-PCC-INFO (1-800-722-4636)

PCC Career Fair for organizations and businesses seeking candidates from among PCC students

March 4

1-800-PCC-INFO (1-800-722-4636)

PCC Commencement for families and friends of graduating students

May 14

1-800-PCC-INFO (1-800-722-4636)

Teen Extreme Youth Camp for grades 7-12, including class of 2021 graduates

**June 14-18 • June 21-25 • June 28-July 2
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Connections

Stories from PCC

Looking Forward to Serving

Happy to serve for as long as God will use him, **Dr. Michael Colucci** ministers to PCC students with an attitude of gratefulness.

When he was considering his college options, Dr. Michael Colucci ('98, M.Div. '00, D.Min. '11) was drawn to PCC partly because of its clearly outlined expectations for students. With a heart for ministry, Colucci wanted a school that would prepare him for service, and he felt that PCC was concerned with both Bible content and student testimony.

Three years after completing his master's at PCC, Colucci decided to apply to serve on faculty. "I was already comfortable with the mission and practice of the ministry and believed that if the Lord opened the door for me to serve here, it would be a very good fit for my family and me. Since then, I have looked forward to coming to work every day."

PCC was a good fit for Colucci and his family. Having now worked at PCC for 17 years, Colucci has seen his children grow in an environment that was consistent in supporting the same biblical values that he and his wife were teaching at home. "In addition to providing for our material needs, serving here has also provided for our spiritual needs," Colucci said.

Additionally, Colucci appreciates the camaraderie he has with his coworkers. "When I go to work, I have Christian fellowship with my coworkers. That is re-



ally something special," Colucci said. "I have worked plenty of jobs in the secular workplace. It was rare to find that kind of fellowship with one person let alone the entire workforce of the company."

But there is another aspect of working at PCC that Colucci is thankful for—the college students themselves. As a

"I have looked forward to coming to work every day."

Bible and biblical languages instructor, Colucci is constantly surrounded by students, many of whom are train-

ing for full-time ministry. "What I enjoy most is being surrounded by college-age students. College students have a tendency to be idealistic. That is a good thing when it comes to ministry," Colucci said. "As I age, I find that rubbing shoulders with people who still carry the ideals of youth helps me to be ever mindful that anything is possible if God is in it."

Colucci said that since he started working at PCC, "the mission of the ministry has not changed, and I have never sensed that the Lord has anything else for us. Until He moves me, I am here to stay." ■

Employment Opportunities

Have you considered what you can do for the Lord's work on a growing college campus? *Openings in the following areas—*

PCC Faculty

- Biology • Computer Science • Cybersecurity • Engineering • Nursing • Nursing Clinical Assistant

PCC Staff

- Carpenter • Computer Tech • Designer • Dining Supervisor • Director of Advertising • Electrician
- Electronics Engineer • IT Programmer • IT System Administrator • IT System Analyst • Plumber
- Telecom Technician • Video Editor

Abeka

- Brand Manager • Business Analyst • Copy Editor • Customer Service Supervisor
- Editor/Writer (All Subjects) • Operations Manager
- Textbook Field Representatives (Mid-Atlantic and North Texas/Oklahoma)

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- Visit pcci.edu/EmploymentOpportunities.
- Send résumé with short Christian testimonial to EmployeeServices@pcci.edu.

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Scholarship Fund Giving

Whether you have a friend or loved one at PCC, or you're just a friend of the College and want to help out, giving is simple. You can support the PCC scholarship program or even create your own new scholarship.

Visit pcci.edu/Giving for more information about the Scholarship Fund.

Planned Giving

It is often difficult to make a large donation during one's lifetime, yet many would like to make a significant contribution to PCC. You may consider a bequest to Pensacola Christian College.

Visit pcci.edu/PlannedGiving for information about estate planning. For information about both the Scholarship Fund and Planned Giving, call (850)478-8496, ext. 2327.

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