

PENSACOLA CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

UPDATE

Fall 2021 | pcci.edu/Update



Remembering

9/11

pg. 2 ▶

From the **President**

Dr. Troy A. Shoemaker @PresidentPCC



The events of this past year have brought many changes throughout the world, not to mention in our country and on campus. As I think of how PCC has responded to new and unexpected challenges, I'm amazed at how the Lord goes before us. Not only does He direct our paths, but He also clears the path for us! We have certainly seen His hand of protection and provision, bringing ministry facilities and technology solutions before we even knew we'd need them, so we could adapt our operations for the changes brought on by the global pandemic.

As we move into a new academic year, we are cautiously hopeful for the days ahead while continuously monitoring and responding to the health and safety of students and staff.

As I begin my tenth year serving as president, I am especially eager to see how the year unfolds. Looking back over the past decade brings to mind so many evidences of God's grace—from steady growth in enrollment to updated facilities and programs, from expanded technology to enhanced student services.

Some things that stand out to me from the past ten years include the cultural advancements in how PCC carries out its mission and purpose, our response to students when they

have needs, elevated residence experience, and the incredible team God has brought here to serve. And I am so grateful for the foundation that was established for this ministry many decades ago—a foundation built on God's Word that must be preserved and strengthened.

Every great and enduring business or ministry has foundational elements for which they are known. For PCC, what we want to be known for can be found in our vision statement:

Our ministry will be distinguished as a growing multifaceted educational organization committed to academic distinction, guided by the biblical worldview, demonstrated through service excellence, supported by innovation and resourcefulness, resulting in thoroughly equipped graduates.

This educational ministry has been entrusted to us by God; we are mere stewards of His work. What matters is not in superficial quantity but fulfilling God's calling in this place, in this time, for the people He has brought here. Our focus is on quality instruction, a rich spiritual life, and a rewarding student experience. Success isn't having a certain number of students but fulfilling our mission and meeting the needs of those students. ■



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NEVER FORGET

Reflecting on 9/11

It was a Tuesday that many—including those in the PCC community—will never forget: 2,977 lives were lost in the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

That morning, future PCC student **Tania Young** (*Biology '07, M.S. '10*) was walking to class in New York City. Only blocks away from her high school, she encountered distressed and confused bystanders running past her. “As I turned the corner on W. Broadway and Warren Street, I remember looking in disbelief at the tail of an airplane jutting from one of the towers. Smoke, dust, and flying papers filled the sky surrounding the towers,” she recalled.



Amid the shouting and sirens, a group of officers and first responders told Young and those around her to flee the area, so she ran. “Looking behind me, I stared in dismay as the south and north towers both collapsed within minutes of each other. Covered in dust, I remember being filled with fear,” she said. “In those moments, I remembered

God’s Word and His promises to me, and in those desperate times, I asked Him to help me. Help me get home. Help me get to my family. After hours and hours of walking, the subway finally was opened, and I was able to go home.”

After finishing a one-and-a-half-hour class on campus that morning, **Mike Smith** (*Pre-Law '02, History Ed. '05, M.S. '07*) caught fragments of what was happening on his way back to Young Tower. “I left that class at 9:30 and walked to my room waiting for chapel to begin at 10. That’s when one of my roommates passed me outside and said that he heard that a plane had flown into one of the World Trade Center towers,” he said. “I certainly was not expecting it to be intentional.”



Smith and another roommate turned on their radio to find out more. It seemed

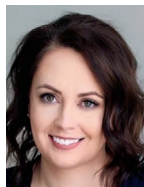
all stations were broadcasting the events as they became known—a second plane hitting the south tower, a third crashing into the Pentagon, a fourth one likely headed for the National Mall put down in a field. “I remember walking to Chapel thinking that so many people around me were oblivious to what was happening at that very moment, as I would have been unless someone had told me,” Smith recalled. TVs placed in the Four Winds and residence hall day rooms to air news showed the destruction taking place. “I was standing by my best friend in college as the towers collapsed. He would later serve our country in Afghanistan for the U.S. Army.”

Campus Church pastor Jeff Redlin (*Youth Ministries '87*) had just finished teaching his morning Bible class at Pensacola Christian Academy when Dr. Troy Shoemaker, the Academy administrator at the time, called him to his office. “I went and we listened on the radio to what was unfolding in our nation. The uncertainty we felt was incredible. One tower had fallen, and the other implosion was imminent,” he said. “I went home after he and I listened for some time and began watching the news images. For the next several hours, I was transfixed on the events that were being pieced together.”

“While we will never fully experience the raw emotion of the day in the same way, the day should remind us that there are things that America stands for that are worth standing for,” Redlin continued. “In the midst of great evil, God’s goodness was reflected with incredible acts of sacrifice and heroism. The heroes we discovered on 9/11 were not ‘born’ that day, they were simply revealed.”

After returning to her room, **Trina Donohew** (*Biology '03*) heard about the attacks from a roommate. “Students, staff, and leadership supported each

other by communicating their feelings and thoughts. I specifically remember not feeling fearful, and I believe this was in large part due to leadership and how



they handled the situation and the guidance and encouragement they gave us as students,” Trina said. “This was the first time in my lifetime that I had seen not only such a devastating event but also the incredible way America came together to support its fellow countrymen. It is important to remember that fundamentally we have so many things in common, and in times like 9/11, we have risen above our differences to care for one another.”

Those at PCC haven’t forgotten those lost in the attacks. Since 2018, the student-led and organized academic club, Freedom Forum, have arranged American flags for display in the grassy median down Main Drive, one for each life, to mark the day’s anniversary. For students who may be too young to remember the events themselves, the memorial is a visual representation of lives lost, a poignant reminder to encourage reflection and gratitude.

“Twenty years have passed since the tragic events of 9/11, but we should never forget the thousands of victims who lost their lives that day,” said Tania Young. “I hope that those who don’t know, or know very little of the tragic events of 9/11, will get a small glimpse of that day by reading this. My hope is that they understand James 4:14, ‘Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.’ But it doesn’t end there: Psalm 121:1, ‘I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.’” ■



Semester Old **SEMESTER NEW**

Excitement, and a tinge of nervousness—the feelings begin just before the family vehicle turns onto the campus Main Drive. The first semester of a new school year sparks similar feelings in most. Soon, campus will feel familiar again.

Up and down the mall of the Administration Building, in the Commons, and across sidewalks, returning students worked on the usual list of preparations—wrapping up class registration, collecting textbooks, and setting up their new rooms. Sprinkled throughout campus, small bunches of new students with their families steadily made their way through several firsts, some pausing to capture the moment with a quick photo. From receiving their first Student ID to learning their PCC mailbox combination and finding their residence hall, campus slowly started to feel like a home away from home.

As a returning sophomore, Paul Roofner (VA), who is studying business management, is looking forward to enjoying

experiences that weren't offered his first year. "I'm excited for all the stuff that we can do with the collegians because I had fun last semester, but everyone was talking about how great it was before. So I'm excited for all those things," he said.

During the weeks prior, staff and faculty were busy getting campus ready for the return of students. Staff readied work areas and arranged new work schedules, and faculty prepared and finalized lesson plans for the semester ahead.

Nikki Martinez and other English faculty used this time to improve their classes. This included preparing tutorial videos on the learning management system, Canvas, and introducing new pieces for her American Literature class.



- ◀ Opening Convocation, which continued into the first chapel hour of the semester, marked the first time students were all together for chapel since spring 2020.
- ▼ Freshmen attended the 2025 Connection where they met peers, swapped stories, and played games.



She's especially looking forward to seeing all her students face-to-face again. "I'm extremely excited about the more normal capacity. I always love to walk around my room as I teach, but I did not want to do that last year under the circumstances," said Martinez. "This semester, I'm excited to be able to do some of those simple things that I took for granted, while still taking measures to protect my students' health."

Opening Convocation, traditionally held at the start of the semester, offered time to focus on and be encouraged by God's Word. No longer holding multiple times for each service, the large Crowne Centre auditorium felt a little smaller. The loud and excited chatter of students—a welcome sound that many have missed for well over a year—filled the room as they and their families filed into each row on the main

floor and in the balcony.

In his message from Joshua 1:1–9, guest speaker Kurt Skelly, pastor of Faith Baptist Church in Virginia, shared how God's presence and support is unwavering even during times of transition or change, such as moving from home to college for the first time. "God speaks in a very clear way during transitional times," he said. "When God is moving you, listen. God has moved you to Pensacola, Florida, 'for such a time as this.' Listen. I challenge all of you tonight to make a recommitment to this book [the Bible]."

From here, students will look forward to the promise of potential new experiences, participating in some campus events for the first time since 2019. May God use the time ahead to provide growth and direction in their lives. ■

From Foster Care TO THE PENTAGON



Inspired by the police officers that rescued her, Ashleigh Howard pursued a criminal justice degree, leading her to rewarding work defending the U.S.

As a teenager, **Ashleigh Howard** (*Criminal Justice '06*) loved watching TV shows focused on crime and investigation. “And I loved a good mystery novel,” she said. “I spent many hours in my high school library and the library at PCC devouring many good books.” Before that, as a young girl, Ashleigh entered foster care after police officers rescued her from a horrific living situation. The experience planted a seed of appreciation for law enforcement, for the justice system as a whole, and for the idea of holding people accountable for wrongdoing.

Through all of those experiences, Ashleigh became passionate about criminal justice and was excited to see



a degree program for it at PCC when she applied. “Problem solving and root cause analysis has repeatedly been a part of my career,” she said. “When I first started at PCC, I planned to go into law enforcement.”

A lot of what she recalls as a student, Ashleigh learned from former criminal justice faculty member Mr. Darrell Pope, who was also a retired Michigan State police officer with thirty years’ experience. “He was my professor in many classes over my 4 years, and has since passed,” she said. “But a large majority of my memories from the program come from him. His expertise, humor, and understanding of

the nuances that come with law enforcement really stuck with me.”

Apart from “a phenomenal educational experience at PCC,” Ashleigh had the opportunity to work at Abeka as a customer service agent. “Having grown up using Abeka [in Christian school], it was a huge deal,” she said. “I was able to establish solid work experience, get an education, and make some lifelong friends, all at the same time.”

After she graduated, Ashleigh enlisted in the Air Force and served as a Dari linguist for 8 years. Ashleigh’s service involved collecting information through classified techniques and equipment and then disseminating it to military and law enforcement.

“I wanted to go federal, so I thought joining the military as a linguist would get me a foreign language and a Top Secret clearance that would set me up for the FBI,” she said. “I did get those things but loved being in the military, so I stayed, and the rest is history.”

Although she didn’t actually enter law enforcement, “what I learned at PCC—management, government, structure, etc.—are relevant to my work today,” she said. Her undergraduate degree complimented the Master of Arts, Homeland Security: Counterterrorism that she earned from the American Military University.

Ashleigh’s knack for solving things developed with her hobby in genealogy. “I came to find out that my grandfather was in the Air Force during the early 1950s when it was brand new,” she said. “Knowing that I was unknowingly carrying on a family legacy was also very exciting.”

An Air Force veteran, Ashleigh has

worked as a federal contractor for Booz Allen Hamilton (BAH) for the past two years. As a Senior Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) Force Readiness Analyst at the Pentagon, Ashleigh helps defend the U.S. “I split my time between the Pentagon and the Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling,” she said.

Every day, Ashleigh helps manage the Air Force ISR Cryptologic Language Analyst program for several thousand Airmen. Both in flight and on the ground, language analysts apply foreign language skills to decipher intelligence communications. “We set up the career field for success to fight for the nation,” she said. What they achieve shapes what the AF ISR Foreign Language force will look like in the future. Her responsibilities

include “many engagements with agencies across the Department of Defense (DoD) and the Intelligence Community (IC), such as the FBI, CIA, and sister

services,” Ashleigh said. “Additionally, I identify areas for process improvement, facilitate program optimization and modernization in accordance with DoD Strategic priorities, and work to validate mission requirements with partner agencies and subordinate units.”

“The DoD is a nuanced environment, and I would say the biggest challenge I face on a day-to-day basis is learning to navigate that environment skillfully to both accomplish what I set out to do and do it diplomatically.”

Passionate about military service and intelligence, Ashleigh loves that she can continue to serve the country as a civilian. “It’s a great field to be a part of something much bigger than yourself and accomplish great and lasting things.” ■

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Office Administration *Prepared for Many Fields*

With competence and integrity, office administration graduates are prepared to keep stride in any office setting.

Eight years ago, **Jessica Ross** (*Office Admin. '07*) began her first day at Ramsey Solutions, Dave Ramsey's popular program to solve money challenges. Jessica served as the administrative assistant for EntreLeadership for 4 years until she progressed into



her current role as a customer success agent. Listening to customers with empathy, Jessica ensures they feel heard and applies their feedback

to improving products and services. "I love the customer interaction because it's always a challenge, and each day is different," she said. "You never know what the next day will hold."

Every day is also different for **Connie Beneteau** (*Office Admin. '04*). While she



calls herself a bookkeeper, Connie does many essential tasks for her husband's credit card processing business. "I chose to study office administration for the variety of tasks I would learn," said Connie. "I've used my major ever since graduation and have been prepared for my jobs as a teller, receptionist, and now bookkeeper." As their business and their family grew, the Beneteaus hired more employees to relieve some of Connie's many responsibilities.

Strategically trained to serve in any school, church, law, or medical office, office administration students are prepared to master practical skills and confidently keep up in a fast-paced world and changing times. "The variety of jobs available appeals to me," said Anna Williams (*Office Admin. '21*). "I could work as a receptionist, personal assistant, or executive assistant in a variety of fields."

I could work in a law office, hospital, vet clinic, or a billion other businesses. I know the door is open to me to do so many different things with my degree because of how broad it was.”

By balancing a full class load, students immediately get a taste of a real office environment, with each class providing relevant projects and course material. Dean of professional studies, Dr. Donna Marion, said, “Because we realize most office situations require that the assistant be able to work under pressure while balancing multiple responsibilities, we try to simulate that in the classroom.”



In the Office Procedures class she took as a junior, **Amanda Smith** (*Office Admin. '21*) actively applied freshly learned concepts. “We took minutes

for guest speakers visiting the class, created an office manual, and planned a tour of the staff offices,” she said. “When the guest speakers came in, they treated the class as an actual staff meeting, and it was our responsibility to accurately type out what was said. These class periods made me extremely thankful for the typing and computer classes I had taken in previous semesters.”

After receiving a solid foundation in general business and computer concepts, students advance their knowledge with upper-level classes. The current technologies that students learn enable them to adapt to many different types of office settings. “Many of our graduates can step into the roles for which they are hired with little training time required,” said Dr. Marion. “In many instances, graduates are promoted to leadership roles after a short time of employment.”

Before graduation, each student

completes a 40-hour practicum spent observing and performing various duties in a real-life office setting. “During my practicum, I felt equipped to deal with important legal documents at a CPA office,” said Anna. “The detail-oriented, broad nature of my degree prepared me and gave me a foundation to grow on. I appreciate the Christ-centered training I received because it helped me be mindful of balancing efficiency with biblical principles/testimony. While working in the CPA office, I had the opportunity to lead my coworker to the Lord—all during the crazy, COVID tax season.”

Because employees, clients, and customers interact with the office assistant, PCC strives to instill in students a heart for service and to be a testimony for the Lord by exhibiting courtesy, flexibility, integrity, and an eye for details.

“I’m thankful for my time at PCC because it taught me to have balance in my role,” said Jessica. “I quickly learned to respect the guidelines that PCC put on their students because they set me

up for success. PCC helped set expectations for what things would be like in the workforce.”

Bethany Bowman (*Legal Office Admin. '14, Bible Exposition '20*) acknowledges that some parts of office administration are more challenging than others. “But there is no other job that I can imagine being more rewarding than the opportunity to be Jesus’ hands and feet to the people God has graciously placed in my life,” she said. “And really, that’s what we’re supposed to do as Christians, period, no matter what our job—inside or outside the home.”

Learn more about our office administration programs at [go.pcci.edu/Office Admin](http://go.pcci.edu/OfficeAdmin). ■

“In many instances, graduates are promoted to leadership roles after a short time of employment.”



Summer Ministry on Campus

Students and faculty used their time to serve others in a variety of ministries this summer.

When summer was well under way, students and faculty turned their attention away from the classroom and focused their energies on a new goal—encouraging those attending Youth Outreach Ministry’s (YOM) summer camps.

Spending his third summer as a cabin leader at Camp o’ the Pines, Philip Elliot (Sr., MI) helped elementary-aged campers understand what it means to put their faith in Christ for salvation. “I had a camper that had heard the gospel several times but was not entirely sure about what it meant to be able to accept Jesus,” he said. “I was able to sit down with him and explain it to him, and later that day he made a profession of faith.”

Dr. Sebastian Spencer assisted with leading the Pre-Med Academic Camp for YOM. At the camp, high school students eagerly participated in lessons that focused on different topics in science and medicine. “It’s a lot of fun to work with high school students. The camp environment contributes to a high level of energy and enthusiasm,” he said. “I would definitely encourage campers in non-academic camps to consider academic

camps to get an experience that reflects what they would be able to expect as a college student at PCC.”

After hearing testimonies from her friends about serving with Teen Extreme youth camp, Valery Janik (Sr., MD) became interested and signed up to serve. “Everyone says camp is for the campers, but it’s for the counselors too. Just in the short amount of time I served in this ministry, it truly changed my life for the better. I have grown in more ways than I could’ve imagined and developed so many solid friendships through this ministry,” she said. “Teen Extreme was an amazing ministry to serve in. Not only was it a great opportunity to grow spiritually, but it also was a ton of fun!”



Having served in YOM’s Sports Center Day Camp the previous summer, Valery cherishes the time she’s spent with young people and helping them grow in Christ. “This was my last summer before graduation, and I could not have picked a better way to spend it,” she said. ■



Student Earns National Award

In the American Advertising Federation's ADDY Awards, **Ha-Eun Kim** (*Studio Art '21*) earned a student Gold ADDY award on the national level for her illustration "Thy word is better than anything."

"Through this experience, I determined again that I will use my artistic talent only for God's sake," said Ha-Eun, explaining how she felt about earning an award for her illustration. "I know that without God's intervention and His help, I couldn't make it to this point, so I will continue to illustrate what God wants me to illustrate to spread God's kingdom and His Word."



She took inspiration from Luke 12:34 and Psalm 119:72 for her illustration's symbolism. "This piece was my most favorite piece that I had done during 2020," said Ha-Eun. "I wanted to share my testimony through this work with others who would see my illustration through this competition—the judges, the audiences, and the competitors." ■

Upcoming Events

Alumni Homecoming
for PCC grads and their families

October 22–23

850-478-8496, ext. 2828
pcci.edu/Homecoming21

Ladies Celebration
Spiritual retreat with God's Word
at Camp o' the Pines

Nov. 4–6

850-478-8496, ext. 2828
LadiesCelebration.com

College Days
for high school seniors, juniors, sophomores,
and qualified high school graduates

Nov. 18–19

1-800-PCC-INFO (1-800-722-4636)
pcci.edu/CollegeDays

Bring a group of young people to experience PCC college life and participate in exciting activities and classes.

**PCC Spring Semester
Opening Weekend**
for family and friends of students

January 21–23, 2022

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

Bible Conference
Uplifting Bible Preaching

February 21–23, 2022

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

Connections

Stories from PCC

Music to Share

Simultaneously ministering to the community and cultivating the skills of his students as musicians, **Dr. Tim Willingham** lives out his calling.



Traffic slowed to a crawl near a festively dressed assembly outside. With windows down, drivers could hear the pealing of “Carol of the Bells” coming from under an open tent where rows of musicians flourished large and small bells in rhythmic patterns. Oversized Chick-fil-A cows moseyed around the parking lot, handing out candy canes and leaning in for pictures. That evening Pensacola locals welcomed the holiday season with Christmas lights and two handbell choirs led by Dr. Tim Willingham (*Sacred Voice '94, Sacred Music '99, Curr./Instr. in Music Ed. '10*).

Dr. Willingham loves sharing music with the community by directing handbell concerts at local churches as well as other venues. “Since we have been ministering in our local community for almost a decade, a lot of folks from the community come to the handbell concerts,” he said. “Our primary connection is via local churches. This last fall was our second time to ring at Chick-fil-A.”

The musicians performing with Dr. Willingham are music students at PCC. “I have seen many a musician grow through ringing in the handbell program,” he said. “It is thrilling to witness musical growth in the ringers and encouraging to know that all the hard work is worth the effort. This push for excellence is not merely for growth, but from a desire to give God our best.”

Since graduating from PCC, Dr. Willingham taught music in South Carolina

for a year, then in Missouri for several years. After answering an ad in the *PCC Update* seeking music faculty, for the past 18 years he has been teaching in the classroom every semester and many summers. “I lead the two Handbell Choirs and the Symphonic Choirs, and teach Advanced Music Theory, Church Music Philosophy and Administration, and conducting lessons. I also teach many of the Master of Church Music courses,” he said.

During their time at PCC, the Willinghams have benefited from having their children in the on-campus nursery, Pensacola Christian Academy, and recently the College. His wife, Jennifer (*Math Education '94*), had been homeschooling their children before she began serving at Abeka Academy for the past almost 15 years. Dr. Willingham and his wife are grateful for the education their children received from the Abeka curriculum.

In several of his music courses, Dr. Willingham encourages his students to not “leave *from* somewhere but *to* somewhere.” To those interested in joining the ministry, he invites, “If God is calling you, come.”

Dr. Willingham and his students look forward to future performances to connect with the community through music this winter. In the meantime, he and his students continue working to perfect their craft, preparing more music to share in the community. ■



ALUMNI HOMECOMING HAS SOMETHING NEW PLANNED THIS YEAR—



DR. ARLIN HORTON



DR. JOEL MULLENIX



DR. GREG MUTSCH

Special guests

Dr. Arlin Horton, Dr. Joel Mullenix, and Dr. Greg Mutsch will be returning to campus for the Kickoff Reception and Alumni Dinner! Come fellowship with them and reconnect with old friends.

Relive old memories while creating new ones at your alma mater.

- Dolphin Cruise or day at Camp o' the Pines
- Midnight Madness (Eagles sports kickoff event)
- Eagles soccer game
- Behind-the-scenes campus tours
- Sports Center recreation
- And so much more!

Start making your plans at pcci.edu/Alumni/EventSignUp/Homecoming.

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

- Cybersecurity • Finance
- Mechanical Engineering

PCC Staff

- Advertising Writer • Assistant Basketball Coach
- Auto Mechanic • Director of Advertising/Marketing
- Electronics Technician/Engineer • Employee Development Coordinator • IT Development Specialist • Kitchen Supervisor • Office Assistant
- Painter • PCA Elementary Substitute Teacher (full time) • Plumber • Video Editor

Abeka

- Business Analyst • Copy Editor • Editors/Writers (All Subjects) • Inbound Supervisor
- Interactive Content Illustrator
- Interactive Content Production Artist
- Press Operator • Truck Driver/Receiver

Next Steps

- View additional openings or submit your résumé and Christian testimony by visiting pcci.edu/EmploymentOpportunities.

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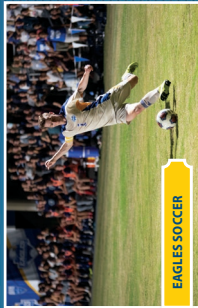
PCC ALUMNI

Homecoming

OCT. 22-23



ALUMNI DINNER



EAGLES SOCCER



DOLPHIN CRUISE

REMINISCe and RECONNECT with friends!

pcci.edu/Homecoming21

See more details inside on pg. 13.