APC Bulletin

2018 Commencement Edition

New York's Proprietary Colleges Recognize Academic Achievement

The Commencement Edition: Honoring the Class of 2018

Continuing a legacy of academic success for over 100 years, New York's proprietary colleges have been educating students and helping them achieve their personal, professional and academic goals. Last year, APC member Colleges conferred more than 3,500 bachelor's degrees, 3,100 associate's degrees, nearly 800 master's degrees and 294 certificates. In total, that is over 7,700 individuals who made a commitment to enhancing their education and improving their lives. APC is extremely proud of its member colleges' history of providing an affordable and quality education. This commencement edition features our member colleges, showcases student achievement and provides a line of sight to the faculty who together make all of those degrees a reality.

Berkeley College Graduates Write Their Own Stories

Berkeley College celebrated the more than 2,300 students who have been awarded Certificates, Associate's, Bachelor's, and Master's degrees during the 2018 Commencement. The ceremony was held at the Prudential Center in Newark, NJ on May 11, 2018 and included the second graduating class of students receiving a Master of Business Administration in Management degree, as well as students graduating from New Jersey's first and only on-site Licensed Practical Nurse to Bachelor of Science in Nursing program. Two hundred and ninety-eight graduates received Certificates, 757 received Associate's, 1,248 received Bachelor's, and 58 received Master's degrees.

Berkeley College's Class of 2018 reflects a diverse population of students. The Class includes more than 140

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Lachanee Scott happily receives her Robert Maher award at the 2018 Berkeley College Commencement ceremony on May 11, 2018.

military and veteran students, and 180 international students representing 40 countries. Many students are the first in their families to earn a college degree. Others are not native English speakers. Just over 31 percent of graduates entered Berkeley as first time, full-time students, and more than 82 percent identify as minorities. The average age of a Berkeley College graduate in 2018 is 29.6 years.

Michael J. Smith, President of Berkeley College, addressed the graduates saying, "Know that the future isn't written for us. The future is written by us. In your heart, you truly need to understand that the only person you are destined to become ... is the person that you decide to be."

This year's class joins a network of more than 60,000 alumni and receives lifetime career assistance.

Robert Maher Award Recipient Exemplifies Story of Perseverance

Among the 2018 Berkeley College graduates is Lachanee Scott, this year's recipient of the Robert Maher award. The award is an honor given to a graduate who has met high standards of excellence while overcoming personal, professional, or financial obstacles. A resident of Newark, NJ, Ms. Scott had ambitions to earn a college degree and eventually become a judge.

Ms. Scott immigrated to the United States with her older brother at age 13, but their situation did not work out and she returned home to Jamaica where she graduated from high school. Ms. Scott and her brother returned to the U.S., and she enrolled in Berkeley College to pursue her dream.

Tough times befell her again with her residential situation and familial circumstances. There were times when she considered leaving college and going to work full-time because of the struggles she faced, but she persevered. Ms. Scott recalls her saying, "The way out of poverty is through education."

At this year's commencement, Ms. Scott graduated summa cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Legal Studies. She is a member of three national honor societies, and the founder and president of the Berkeley College Newark Caribbean Club. Ms. Scott has secured a positon as a Records Associate at the McCarter & English, LLP law firm and expects to attend law school in the near future.

Watch video from Berkeley College's commencement

LIM College Celebrates 79th Commencement

On May 24, 2018, LIM College celebrated its 79th commencement ceremony, held at Carnegie Hall in Manhattan. The ceremony graduated more than 550 students earning Associates, Bachelor's, and Master's degrees. This year's Commencement also included the College's first group of graduates to receive Bachelor of Science degrees. This was

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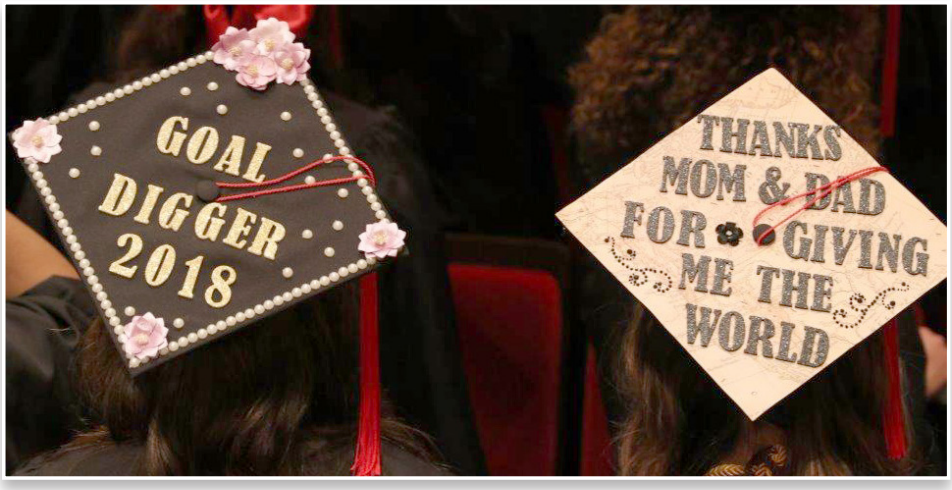

LIM College graduates express gratitude and ambition on their 2018 mortarboards.

the largest ceremony since the College was founded in 1939.

For a college focused exclusively on fashion and business, Shawn R. Outler, Executive Vice President of Licensed Businesses, Food Services, and Multicultural Initiatives at Macy's Inc. was a perfect fit for keynote speaker.

"Our industry is global, diverse, and built upon relationships," Ms. Outler said. "Today more than ever, we need to develop meaningful connections with individuals from varied cultures, backgrounds, and generations. The ability to understand, appreciate, and empathize with individuals from backgrounds whose life experiences are different from yours is essential."

Watch video from LIM College's commencement

Monroe College Celebrates More Than 2,600 Graduates

Monroe College, a national leader in educating urban and international students, held its 85th Commencement on June 13, 2018 at Radio City Music Hall. The ceremony conferred Associate's, Bachelor's, and Master's degrees, as well as professional certificates, upon more than 2,600 graduates. The College conferred 450 Master's degrees, 1,095 Bachelor's, 1,036 Associate's, and awarded 50 professional certificates.

With such a large graduating class, the College held two separate ceremonies to accommodate all of the graduates and guests. The morning ceremony, for the Schools of Allied Health Professionals, Criminal Justice, Education, and Nursing, received their keynote speech from Benjamin Tucker, First Deputy Commissioner of the New York Police Department.

The afternoon ceremony, for the Schools of Business and Accounting, Information Technology, and Hospitality Management and the Culinary Institute of New York, received their keynote speech from New York State Assembly Member Marcos Crespo, who represents the 85th Assembly District.

Watch video from Monroe College's commencement

Monroe College graduates happily pose for a commencement photo at Radio City Music Hall.

SVA Student Speakers Offer Encouraging Words To Fellow Graduates

On May 7, the Manhattan Radio City Music Hall was filled with the School of Visual Arts Class of 2018 and their guests. There were 1,180 graduates receiving their degrees. The diverse class is comprised of students from 30 different states, Puerto Rico, and 53 countries.

Students receiving Bachelor's degrees were represented by Student Speaker Ariana Storm Ascher. "What is your cause, and what will your contributions to the art world mean in the context of the art world at large," Ms. Ascher asked of her colleagues. She continued on to say, "Don't feel paralyzed by the many avenues you can take. We are lucky to have so much in front of us to solve. We notice things, so use your intuition to make an impact".

For those receiving a Master's degree, the Student Speaker was Michael L. Dubose (below).

"Never fold under the societal pressure, and always keep an open mind," Mr. Dubose said. "When the world shows you chaos and hatred, channel your energy and fight it with love." Mr. Dubose's speech recognized the hardships and battles of racial and societal challenges, and encouraged the graduates to face them, with poise. He concluded his speech by saying, "I challenge you to broaden your horizons, take action, lose control to gain control, and find your place in society."

Watch video from SVA's commencement

Plaza College Celebrates 101st Commencement Ceremony

Plaza College celebrated its 101st Commencement on June 24 at Queens College in Flushing, New York. The Schools of Business Administration, Allied Health, and Legal Studies graduated students from several programs.

The ceremony was introduced with the procession of students, faculty, and staff that was accompanied by musical ensemble Wholly Brass. The National Anthem was then performed by student Sharlene Valvano.

Charles Callahan IV, COO greeted Commencement attendees. Marie Dolla, Dean of Academic Affairs and Dean Lin Loffert introduced Student Speaker Olexa Capili. Jonathan Howe, Dean of Student Life, and Candace Nixon, Director of Student Advisement closed the ceremony by reciting the alumni pledge for the newest group of Plaza College alumni.

Plaza College Class of 2018 celebrates their achievements.

Bryant And Stratton College Celebrates Over 1,000 Graduates Across Its NY Campuses

During its 161st graduation season, Bryant & Stratton College celebrated more than 1,000 students who participated in commencement ceremonies across New York State. This year marked the college's first graduating class in its new Physical Therapy Assistant program. Also of note, the cohort completing the Occupational Therapy Assistant program had a 100% graduation rate!

On April 28, 2018 at the Empire State Plaza Convention Center, the Bryant & Stratton College (BSC) Albany campus conferred 26 Diplomas, 114 Associate's degrees, and 4 Bachelor's degrees upon its graduates. The commencement speaker was Michael Skiba, PhD, VP of International Counter Fraud Strategies at INFORM.

On June 1, 2018 at Kodak Performing Arts Center, the BSC Rochester campus awarded 27 Diplomas, 145 Associate's degrees, and 7 Bachelor's degrees. The commencement speaker was Jennifer Johnson, Anchor, 13WHAM, ABC.

On April 28, 2018 at Oncenter Civic Center, the BSC Syracuse campus awarded 17 Diplomas, 209 Associate's degrees, and 20 Bachelor's degrees. The commencement speaker was Robert Diano, President and CEO of WCNY Public Media.

On May 19, 2018 at Hamburg Fair Grounds, the BSC Western New York campus presented 41 Diplomas, 318 Associate's degrees, and 77 Bachelor's degrees.

Jamestown Business College Welcomes George Borello as 2018 Graduation Speaker

On June 3 at First Lutheran Church, Jamestown Business College (JBC) celebrated the 132 graduates of the class of 2018 during the College's 132nd commencement ceremony. The College, graduates, and guests welcomed George Borello, Chautauqua County Executive, as their commencement speaker.

"As we celebrate another year of student success," said JBC President, David Conklin, "we are especially pleased to have Mr. Borello share his experiences and address the JBC Class of 2018."

Borello graduated from Purdue University and went on to work in business and then politics. He spent many years working in high levels of business before retiring and pursuing full time public service in 2017. In January of 2018, he was elected Chautauqua County Executive. In this position, he serves as CEO of Chautauqua County Government and dedicates himself to serving the county's residents.

Class of 2018 graduates pose with JBC President David Conklin.

Addressing the Class of 2018, he said, "So this is what I hope for all of you ... That you choose your own path in life but a path that makes you a leader. Not just a business leader but a community leader." Borrello acknowledged the need for and importance of community leaders and those willing to give back before congratulating the graduates and concluding his speech.

FiveTowns College Celebrates Class of 2018

Five Towns College held its 44th annual Commencement exercises on Saturday, May 19, 2018. During the ceremony, the College conferred 141 degrees.

President David M. Cohen, J.D. presented an Honorary Doctor of Music (Mus.D.) Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Inductee, Danny Seraphine. Pioneering jazz-rock drummer Seraphine is perhaps best known as the iconic drummer and founding member of the band Chicago.

President Cohen presented an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters (L.H.D.) to John Caracciolo, a radio station pioneer and founder of the JVC Broadcasting Corporation. President Cohen noted Five Towns College was awarding the degree to Caraciolo, "for his contributions to the Mass Communication Industry, for assuring an independent voice for journalists, and for serving as a role model for aspiring broadcasters."

In addition to the two honorary degrees, Dr. Scott Ballin, Professor of Music, received the Lorraine Kleinman Memorial Award

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for Excellence in Teaching. Mr. Gene Salnave received the Presidential Award for Distinguished Service for his contributions to the students, faculty, and staff of Five Towns College, for reminding us that it does take a community of dedicated people to make the dream of college education possible. Five Towns College alumnus Charles Foerschner '07 receved the Distinguished Alumnus Award for representing this alma mater with honor and distinction, for demonstrating excellence in motion pictures, and for serving as a role model for Film/Video students.

The class of 2018 Valedictorian was Amada Procopio (Music Education) from Center Moriches, NY. Ms. Procopio joined the class of 2018 as a transfer student from Molloy College in the fall of 2015. In addition to her academic achievements, she was also elected as President of The Five Towns College Chamber Singers. The Salutatorian was Jessica Chertock (Jazz/Commerical Music). Ms. Chertock began her time at Five Towns College after transferring from Hofstra University in 2015 to pursue a Bachelor of Music degree in Jazz/Commercial Music with a concentration in Songwriting and Composition. After graduation, she plans to continue her songwriting journey in hopes of becoming both a popular songwriter and composer.

Founding member of the band Chicago Danny Seraphine receives an honorary degree.

College of Westchester Student Speaker Shares Personal Story With Peers

The College of Westchester celebrated the graduating class of 2018 on May 31 at the Westchester County Center. 337 students received degrees and awards as their guests and peers proudly looked on.

The ceremony was attended by George Latimer, Westchester County Executive, who was this year's keynote speaker. The ceremony also included a speech from Student Speaker Marie Russo.

Ms. Russo is a mother and adult student who hit hard times at a young age, and was extremely proud to receive her diploma and share her story at this year's commencement ceremony. She told her peers of her high school pregnancy, the harsh words thrown at her, and the difficult jobs she worked to keep herself and her child on their feet. She also told her peers of the power and importance of perseverance.

"Now in a few short moments I will walk across the stage and with pride and dignity accept this degree and fulfill a promise I made to my mother 42 long years ago," Ms. Russo says in remembering the promise she made to earn a college a degree. She concluded her speech by saying, "It's never too late to give up on a dream. If you can believe it, you can achieve it."

Student speaker Marie Russo shares her inspiring story with fellow graduates.

Watch video from The College of Westchester's commencement

Monroe College President Marc Jerome Named to Higher Education Service Corporation (HESC) Board of Trustees

Monroe College President and APC Board Member Marc M. Jerome was named to Higher Education Service Corporation's (HESC) Board of Trustees following unanimous confirmation by the New York State Senate on June 19. Mr. Jerome was nominated to the position by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo.

The Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC) is New York State's higher education student financial aid agency. It administers the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP), various state scholarship and loan forgiveness programs, the state's 529 College Savings Program, and other programs and initiatives to make college more affordable for New York students and their families. Mr. Jerome is president of Bronx-based Monroe College, a national leader in urban education that delivers some of the best outcomes in the country for first-generation urban students. He has played an integral role in leading Monroe College for more than two decades, serving as Executive Vice President for 22 years prior to his elevation to President in January 2017. He has served as an APC Board Member since 2000. "I look forward to the opportunity to help HESC in its important work to improve college access and affordability for New York's students and am honored to be named to its Board of Trustees," said Mr. Jerome. A seasoned educator and recognized expert on the impact of higher education policy on underrepresented student populations, Mr. Jerome has long championed students' interests in Albany and Washington, DC. He has shared his perspectives on higher education policy and regulatory design with the White House, the Department of Education, the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, and NASFAA, among others, and provided counsel on fair and balanced solutions to achieve desired outcomes.

"For more than two decades, Marc Jerome has been a state and national leader in the field of higher education," said Donna Gurnett, President and CEO of APC. "His perspectives on higher education policy and insights on college access and affordability will no doubt be of great benefit to HESC as it continues its work to help college-bound New Yorkers achieve their college dreams."

Marc Jerome, Monroe College President

HESC's Board of Trustees is a 13-member governance body that provides strategic guidance and fiduciary oversight. Mr. Jerome was selected to represent New York's vibrant proprietary sector, which educates nearly 35,000 students at institutions across the state. His non-compensated position begins immediately.

Mr. Jerome earned his undergraduate degree at Tufts University and his juris doctor from University of Pennsylvania's School of Law.

Meet the Professor

Dr. Erica Schacht,
Chairperson, General Education Department, The College of Westchester

Q: What brought you to the College of Westchester?

Eleven years ago, I had recently finished graduate school and was adjuncting at a few colleges, and truly was just trying to find my path. About a year later, I noticed an ad in the paper, yes the newspaper. This was before the majority of people were searching for their jobs online. I was such a novice and still in my 20s. I never thought I would be hired because I didn't have much experience. But, I took a chance and on a whim, I decided to apply for the full time General Education instructor. The rest is history. I like to think I was at the right place, right time.

Q: In your opinion, what makes College of Westchester so unique?

Our college is unique because of our students. They are predominantly urban students who just want to experience something outside of the cities they grew up in and who want to further their education and be someone. They have such a thirst for learning and most are first generation college students, which makes it even more special for these students to obtain their degree. I also feel our faculty truly add to the uniqueness of the college as we try very hard to put an individual emphasis on our students to ensure their success.

Q: What is your favorite class to teach and why?

This is an interesting one. I am an undergraduate and graduate English Literature major so naturally one would assume it would be any English class. And, perhaps back in the day it probably was our English Composition 2 class which focuses heavily on fiction short stories since there's just so much you can do with that, and so many new stories and authors you are bringing to the table for our students. But, recently, I have truly begun to love our American Media and Culture class because it digs at the heart of our media dating as far back as the pre-American Revolution. It also looks at the impact of the radio, television, certain decades in history and really shows the students the way all of that has shaped and changed our society. I also get to bring a lot of history into that course and the students learn things they previously hadn't been taught.

Q: What unique/interesting techniques do you use to keep students interested and motivated?

Well, I am a bit high energy. I never sit still. I talk super fast. Pretty much your traditional New Yorker. However, I try to teach to every student's learning style. I incorporate a variety of teaching techniques and delivery methods. I try to make the class fun and interesting, even if the material might be boring to them. I change my tone of voice a lot. Sometimes, I even act silly to get their attention.

And other times, I make the class more like a talking/hanging out session but they are learning in the process. This way they truly want to be there, and they want to keep coming to class. I think about what would keep me engaged and motivated in class, and I try to reflect that in my teaching.

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Q: What sorts of things do you enjoy doing outside of work?

I have always been an athlete. I was a runner all through High School and half of college. But the last two years, I have developed a passion for spinning. I love the feeling of accomplishment after a 45 minute session. I even went ahead and became certified to teach spin. In the summer, I love being by the pool as I am a summer baby, and I love spending time with friends and family, and my 4 month old nephew. I also read a lot, I'm a vegetarian and love experimenting with different dishes.

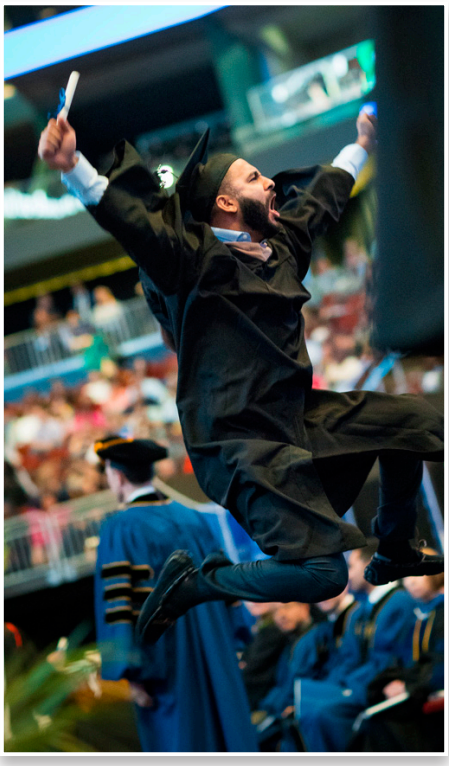
Q: What's the best advice you have to offer your recent graduates?

The world is yours. At times it will not be easy, and you might want to just give up, but it will so be worth it. Anything that is worth pursuing will require perseverance and hard work. Just because someone else might get there faster doesn't mean you won't get there or get even further. The key is to believe in yourself and never give up. You can be there for others but remember it is your game and your journey. You hold the key. Go after your dreams.

Did You Know?

APC member colleges employ more than 6,000 New Yorkers.

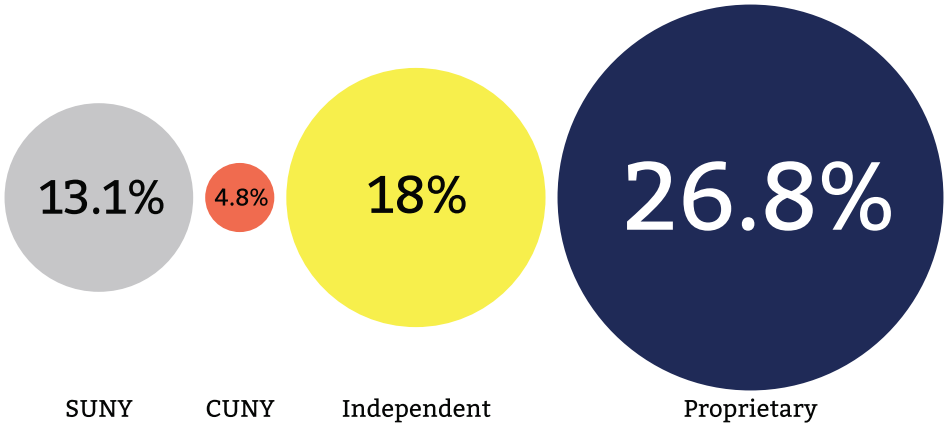
APC member colleges provide students with more that $92 million in grants, scholarships and institutional aid.



Get the facts about New York's proprietary sector of higher education

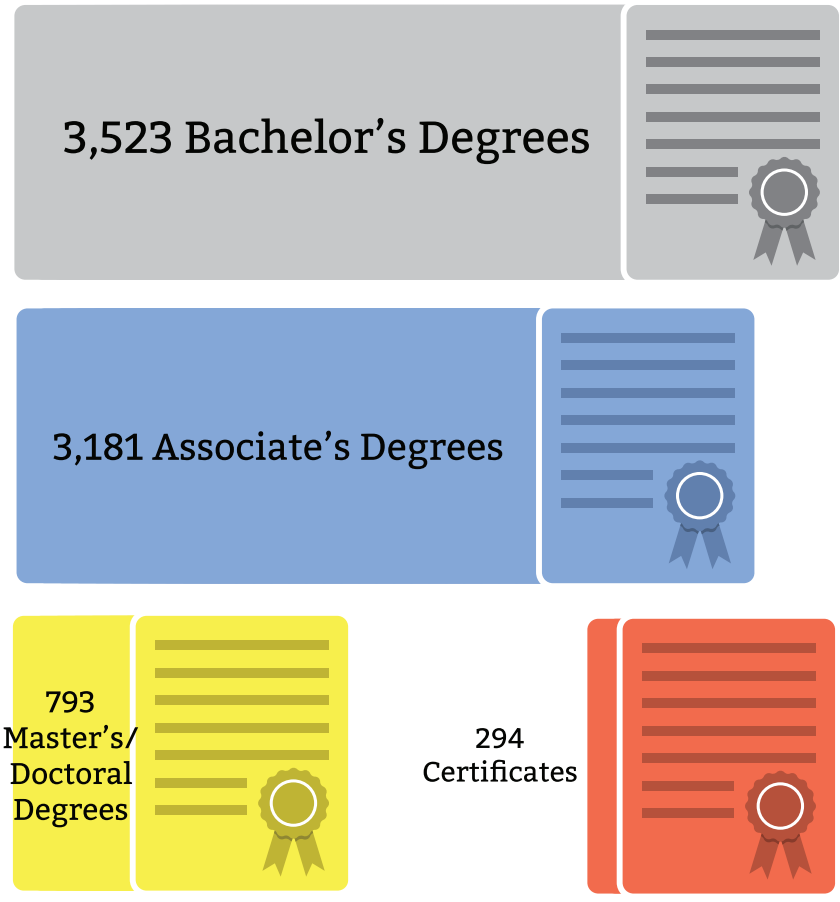
APC member colleges believe on-time graduation is the key to success for students. Graduation helps ensure students are able to find good jobs and repay their student loans. In fact, recent studies have shown that student loan borrowers who struggle the most to repay their loans are often non-completers.

On-Time Associate Degree Graduation Rates for All Students



Source: NYS Education Department, 2016 Data

Number of Degrees Conferred to APC Students



Source: IPEDS, U.S. Department of Education

Based on recent IPED's data, in the 2015-2016 academic year, APC member colleges conferred 7,791 certificate, associate, bachelor, master and doctorate degrees. Of those degrees, 793 were master's and doctoral degrees.

APC member colleges have a long history of providing an affordable and quality education. The average APC member college has been in existence for more than 90 years and more than half were founded more than 100 years ago.

We're proud to represent 12 degree granting colleges

Berkeley College - Est. 1931

Bryant & Stratton College - Est. 1854

The College of Westchester - Est. 1915

Elmira Business Institute - Est. 1858

Five Towns College - Est. 1972

Island Drafting & Technical Institute - Est. 1957

Jamestown Business College - Est. 1886

LIM College - Est. 1939

Monroe College - Est. 1933

Plaza College - Est. 1916

School of Visual Arts - Est. 1947

The Swedish Institute - Est. 1916

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