

hetalon

The Community Magazine of Laramie County Community College



theTALON

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The Talon is provided to the community and its stakeholders as an opportunity to share the stories of the students, alumni, employees, and others connected with LCCC.

The opinions expressed on these pages do not necessarily represent the views of the administration or Laramie County Community College's official policy.

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ON THE COVER

A Wyoming sunset is reflected in the glass of the Ludden Library on the LCCC campus

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extracurricular, athletic or other programs or in the context of employment.

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Springtime in Laramie County is rejuvenating. It's when we celebrate our collective success as hundreds of LCCC graduates cross the stage and into their future. It's when we see newness and rebirth, plan for the near and long-term future, and are reminded that we are part of a greater purpose. Springtime is also when we have the opportunity to share special stories about our students, our people, and our great institution of higher learning right here in the pages of The Talon.

Newness is evident on campus in a variety of ways. Most notable is the wonderful renovation and expansion activity that continues to happen here at LCCC. This spring, we celebrated the grand reopening of a newly renovated and expanded Ludden Library, which has been a transformation to the heart of LCCC. The Albany County Campus is also expanding this summer with the addition of two large multi-use classrooms. We are underway with the construction of new student housing, which will become a 350-bed residence hall that—more importantly—puts many more students living and learning on campus. Finally, the long-awaited renovation and expansion of the LCCC Fine Arts building is also getting started, and we'll soon celebrate the addition of the new 400-seat auditorium to accompany the comprehensive renovation.

We have some existing new things occurring with our programming as well. This past legislative session, Senate File 111 passed; this allows Wyoming community colleges to offer applied baccalaureate degrees. These degrees are designed to provide a local opportunity for students who have earned technical degrees and credentials, such as the many associate of applied science degrees we award every year, to seamlessly move into a program leading to a bachelor's degree.

We anticipate being one of the first community colleges in the state to offer these degrees, and we are working first on programs in applied management and health care administration. Stay tuned.

There is just so much more, but nothing probably more transformative than our work on Guided Pathways. LCCC is just one of 13 community colleges in the nation that was selected to become part of the American Association of Community Colleges Guided Pathways 2.0 project, which focuses on institutional transformation centered on improving the student experience and ultimately student success. You'll have the opportunity to learn much more about his work in our next edition of The Talon.

I cannot stress enough how fortunate we are to have the support of our communities or, honestly, how fortunate our communities are to have LCCC serving them. The dedication of our faculty and staff, and the deep commitment we have to helping our students succeed in their educational journey is inspiring. We are fortunate to be part of this great enterprise, and I invite you to campus anytime you want to be rejuvenated!

Warm regards,

Dr. Joe Schaffer President







Successful people almost never forget their roots. They always look back and offer a helping hand to those who follow them. That is why we chose to endow the library. A library is a refuge for everyone—young and old, poor and privileged, educated and uneducated—to go relax, to go and seek knowledge, truth, understanding and wisdom. May all who enter these hallowed halls find joy and happiness, knowledge and wisdom, and an everlasting and insatiable thirst to serve others.

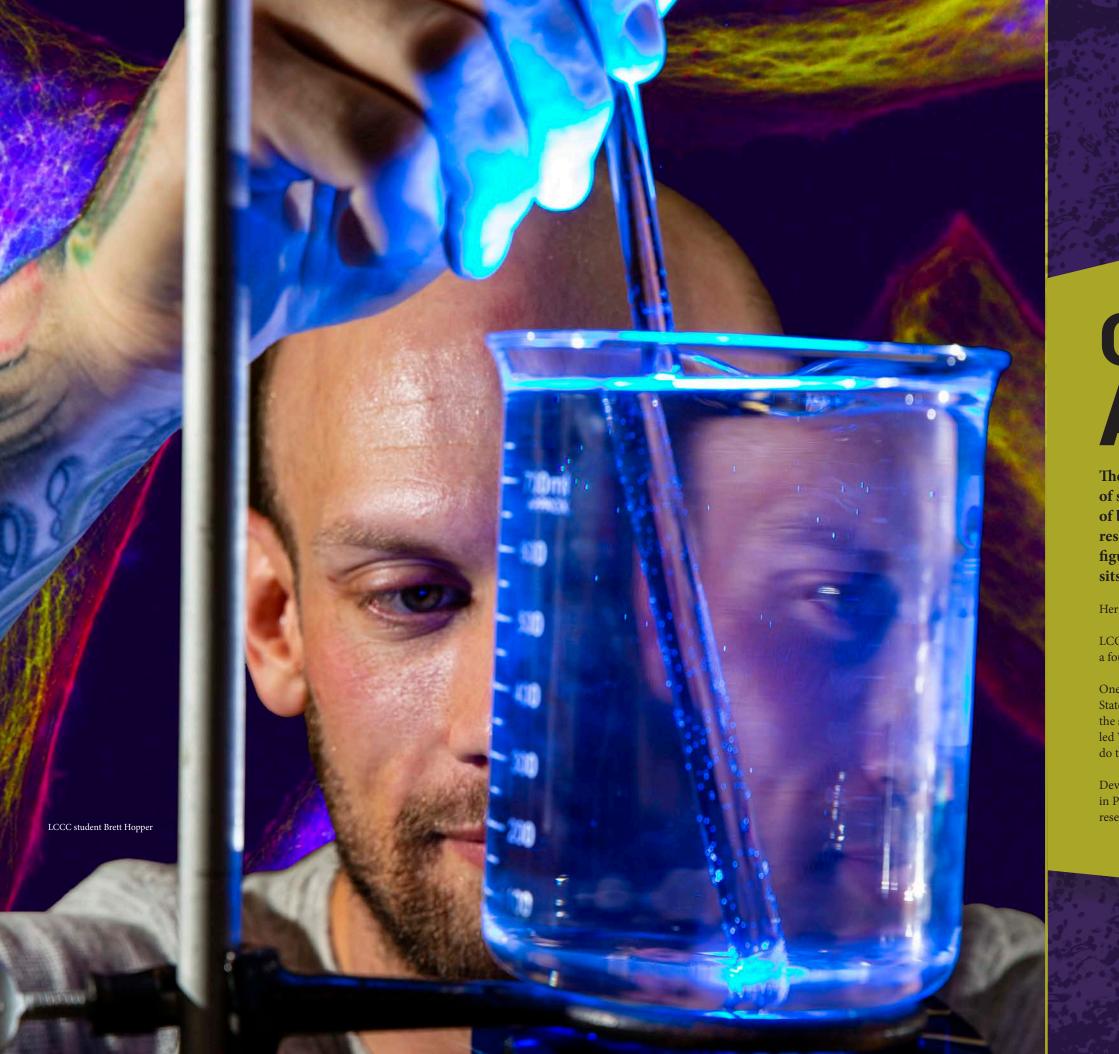
—Randy Ludden, at the rededication ceremony

THE **NEW**LUDDEN LIBRARY

After years of anticipation, this spring the newly renovated and expanded Ludden Library opened to the students and the community for the spring 2019 semester. This \$6.2 million project was made possible through a mix of private donations, LCCC monies, and funds provided by the Wyoming Legislature.

This expansion—in addition to improving the entire aesthetic and access—includes a variety of new amenities including improved instructional areas, additional meeting space, a dedicated family study room, quiet space for students, innovation lab, individual study rooms, cultural heritage area, vastly improved power and Wi-Fi, and so much more.

This 21,000-square-foot space is named for Randy and Yvonne Ludden, two of the college's generous and long-term friends. In 2006, the Ludden Library became one of the first named building on the LCCC campus. The Luddens immediately dreamed of a way to expand and update the library; that dream came true this spring, with the rededication of the library.



CULTIVATING A PASSION

The back wall of Dr. Ami Wangeline's office is blanketed in covers of science magazines. The homemade décor and the shelves full of books on botany and fungi tell a story of the biology instructor's research expertise. Alongside those hardbound books are plastic figurines iconic of her generation and her students'. On her desk sits a dish of toys built for fiddly, fidgeting fingers.

Her enthusiasm for teaching is obvious. It also rivals her passion for science.

LCCC offers a high-quality science education and enables students who are eyeing a four-year degree to move forward in their academic and professional careers.

One of those students is Bert Devilbiss, who was part of a collaboration with Colorado State University while an LCCC biology student in 2012. His passion for mycology—the study of fungi—and a superior performance in an entry level biology course led Wangeline to offer him a position in the LCCC research group and specifically do the fungal identification for the CSU group.

Devilbiss' work lead to a study published last year in the scientific journal Frontiers in Plant Science as original research—an amazing recognition for a student whose research was done at a community college.



The natural science program (with concentrations in biology, chemistry, human biology, molecular biology, physics, physiology, wildlife biology, and zoology) carves opportunity through academic rigors and surprising access to highly specialized equipment.

WHAT WE'RE ABOUT HERE IS REALLY THE STUDENT

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Of the many resources offered at LCCC, the cadaver and anatomy lab are among the most advanced, including a cadaver table. A 3D virtual anatomy system built to scale, students can "dissect" a cadaver and identify structures and body systems just as they would on a physical cadaver.

The realistic view of the bodies is the result of computed tomography (CT) scans, which makes it possible to see the models in three dimensions as well as examine cross-sectional images.

"This means the table can be used to render and interpret other CT data besides what comes loaded on the table," says zoology instructor Dr. Joshua Schmerge. "Some of the models come with animated sequences to show the movement of specific organs, like

the lungs as they expand during inhalation."

The array of equipment offered to students at LCCC is broad, and so is student access.

Take, for example, the school's electron microscope. Or the X-ray fluorescence spectrometer (XRF) used for elemental analysis of plants and animal tissues. Or the confocal suite of microscopes used for increasing optical resolution and contrast of a micrograph.

Electron microscopes render images with high magnification and resolution by employing electron beams in place of light in combination with electron lenses. At a cost of about \$450,000, the equipment is well out of reach for small science programs, but Wangeline is a relationship-builder, constructing collaborations with universities and agencies to support her students' growth in the classroom and in life.

That electron microscope came to LCCC through the University of Northern Colorado. When that program saw need for a new microscope, they asked Wangeline to partner on a grant. UNC was awarded its grant, and it needed a new home for its old electron microscope. LCCC eagerly accepted it.

Other pieces of equipment come to the Science Center through the Wyoming

Department of Health's Public Health Lab and the Wyoming State Crime Lab, which wants to send its highly specialized equipment to a working lab. Otherwise, it might sit somewhere, uselessly.

Wangeline points to an Isotemp basic—a black upright freezer similar to what shoppers see at appliance stores. It keeps samples, particularly tissues, intact and viable for students' scientific discoveries for a very long time, she says as she points to a skinned bat that's drying in a fume hood. Research samples like these are headed to a museum, and its tissues, which might be of interest to a future student project, are in the Isotemp.

Students drive the LCCC natural science experience they want to have, says Dr. Zac Roehrs, a wildlife biologist by training with a background in genetics and museums. Like Wangeline, he has been part of larger universities' teaching staffs. He, too, prefers the student experience he can influence at LCCC.

"Our biology classes are generally fewer than 24 students, and that fosters a much more direct teaching experience in a community setting," Roehrs explains. "Community colleges are much more focused on the teaching side. What we're about here is really the student."

Unlike four-year institutions, LCCC isn't beholden to research grants, and students

aren't tracked into a program because of the institution's need to maintain funding requirements. Rather, the research done by LCCC students is driven by the students themselves. This is an important distinction both for students and the quality of the science education being offered at LCCC.

Take the time three Ph.D. candidates at Colorado State University needed support on analyzing the antioxidant capacity of biological samples with a microplate reader. CSU didn't have the equipment or the expertise. But Wangeline had both, and she trained a student to use the equipment and run the samples.

"At LCCC, students get to do science," she says. "Students who are passionate about science should come here because we are going to train you in science immediately."

In the chemistry instrument lab sits the donated XRF. It was a big win for Wangeline, who set a personal goal for acquiring one. Through XRF, analysis can determine the elemental composition of materials, either in a particular spot or on a larger area, such as a whole leaf.

"We can, and do, design courses in ways that allow for hands-on experience with science," Roehrs says. "We've been building a more inquiry-kind of learning environment." That's the very idea that led Wangeline to use her sabbatical leave in 2017 to break down the parts of the biology coursework experience and propose a new way for LCCC to engage students in science.

Most students learn science the traditional way—content first, lab experience later. It's how Wangeline learned science, she says, but she, Roehrs and fellow instructor Dr. Courtney Springer saw an opportunity at LCCC. Her revamp of the program was successfully implemented in 2018.

Brett Hopper is one of the first students to benefit from the new approach. He started at LCCC to pursue a career in welding and diesel technology. When a back injury sidelined him, he decided the universe was giving him permission to pursue his dual passions of science and the outdoors.

His current focus in a four-credit lab is researching the RNA of a fungus collected by Wangeline. He uses a machine to view gels of the genetic material. Hopper plans to pursue his bachelor's degree at UW or CSU so he can stay in the region.

The program revamp was possible because of the college's small size, solid relationships with the science community in the region, and the support of the administration in continually developing a high-quality program. But it was also driven by students' experiences: instructors

wanted to find a way to better support scientific literacy.

"Ami and I like research; the grants and the things we're doing here help build students," Roehrs says. "That gives us a lot more flexibility."

Indeed, students report that they enjoy the class time more and feel excitement about their futures in science, Wangeline says, noting she's still collecting data from students.

Roehrs says the LCCC natural science program has a great reputation at UW in terms of student preparation.

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STUDENTS DRIVE THE LCCC NATURAL SCIENCE EXPERIENCE THEY WANT TO HAVE

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"We as faculty put a high value on our students doing real science that expands into tangible experiences for them," Wangeline says. "As an instructor, I'm better equipped to do that at LCCC."

PHOTOS: Dr. Jason Schmerge and Dr. Marie Yearling (right) at the cadaver table; Dr. Zac Roehrs (in green) outdoors with students collecting samples: an image from the confocal microscope; Student Katherine Peel studying the skull of a red fox; Student Brittany West and Dr. Ami Wangeline extracting RNA from fungus





When a child talks about a challenging home life, most people are inclined to say, "I'm sorry that happened to you." But not Derede Darden (formerly Heim). She's going to say, "That's your story. How are you going to write the ending?"

It might sound like tough love, but it's Derede (pronounced DARE-uh-dee) speaking with experience and hope for their future.

Derede is the youngest of five children, and her family struggled financially. "By the time I came along, my parents were just kind of done raising kids," she said.

By the age of seven, her parents came in and out of her life. She left home at an early age and hopped from place to place, staying with family and friends over the years.

Life was hard without parental support. In high school, she

Derede remembers her history instructor noticing she wasn't doing well in class and working with her on how to study. Because she struggled early in life, she was learning some subjects and skills for the first time in college. She finally had teachers who connected with her and inspired her.

"LCCC gave me the confidence that I didn't get during the first 17 years of my life," she said. "I needed to know that I was not disposable to the world."

In 1991, she completed her bachelor's degree in elementary education at the University of Wyoming, followed by a stint teaching at Noah Webster Christian School. Over the years and through different jobs, she kept running into students who struggled with learning. No one could tell her what she could do to help them. That inspired her to earn her master's degree in special education at UW.

Derede worked as a special education consultant for Laramie County School District No. 1 for about six years, but she

the story of DEREDE

worked to support herself and afford an apartment, leaving her exhausted for class. Derede remembers during those days that if people saw you without your parents, "they thought it was because you were a bad kid."

People told her, "You won't amount to anything."

In the fall of 1986, Derede walked into LCCC and said, "I don't have any money, but I want to go to college." She was ready to prove the naysayers wrong.

Derede took a job with LCCC's Veterans Affairs, working for Michelle Massey. That job led to money, classes, and so much more.

"I didn't have a lot of confidence, and Michelle was the first person that I can remember reassuring me that I could do this thing called college," Derede shared. Michelle counseled Derede when she was struggling and helped her find ways to earn money on campus, such as proctoring tests.

"Derede is probably the most determined person I've met," said Michelle, who now works in LCCC's Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships. "Like many of our students, she had to overcome tremendous obstacles in order to go to college."

missed working with the kids. She moved to Carey Junior High in Cheyenne where she became the school's principal.

Most recently, she served as the principal at Hobbs Elementary, and this fall she takes on a new role as the student support district administrator in Cheyenne to help schools with areas such as safety, positive behavior, and intervention support.

Derede's made it her mission to leave a positive imprint on every stakeholder she encounters. She feels drawn to support those students and families in challenging situations because she's been there.

"It's the reason I am who I am," she said. She wants to share with them what they don't always hear, "You will be okay. It's not easy. You can do this. I believe in you."

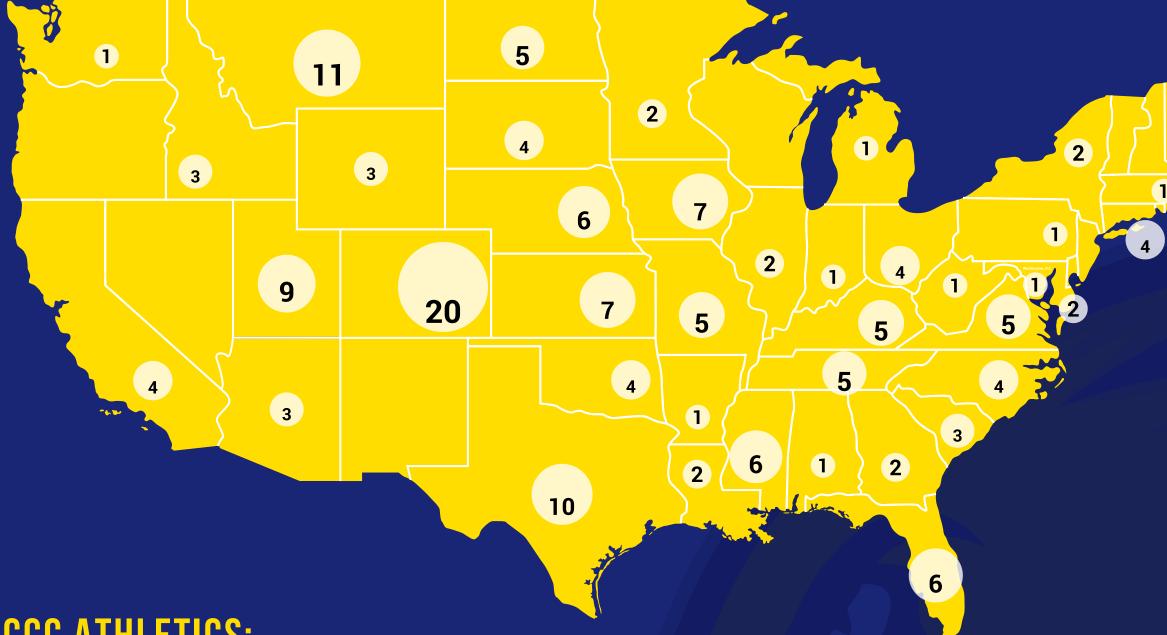
Not only did LCCC help Derede get her start, but it did the same for her family. Her husband and two daughters have attended and graduated from LCCC.

"I am so thankful for LCCC, and I share that daily," Derede said.



Adams State University Alaska Anchorage University Alderson Broaddus University American International University Auburn University Aurora University **Baker University** Benedictine University at Mesa Black Hills State University Briar Cliff University Buena Vista University Cal Poly Pomona Cal State Fullerton Canisius University Central Michigan University Chadron State University Colorado Mesa University Colorado State University Colorado State University—Pueblo Columbia College Cumberland University Delta State University Dickinson State University Dixie State University East Central University Eastern Washington University Fairfield University Fort Hays State University Francis Marion University Friends University Gannon University Gardner-Webb Graceland University Grand Canyon University

Hannibal University Hastings College Howard University Indiana Tech University Jacksonville University Kent State University Langston University Lenoir-Rhyne University Lewis-Clark State College Liberty University Limestone University Lincoln Memorial University Long Beach State Louisianna-Lafayette University Martin Methodist College McPherson College Metro State University Mid-America Christian University Midwestern State University Minn. State U. Moorhead Mississippi College Mississippi State University Missouri Valley College Montana State Northern Montana State University Billings Morehead State University Mount Royal University New England University Northern Illinois University Northwest Nazarene University Nyack College Ohio Wesleyan University Ottawa University





Since Golden Eagle athletics returned to LCCC in 2002, nearly 200 students—so far—have been recruited and successfully transferred to four-year schools to continue their student-athlete journey. In fact, more than half of this group moved on to NCAA Division 1 and Division 2 institutions. Stretching coast to coast across 40 states (as well as Canada, Alaska, and the District of Columbia), this map showcases the geographical breadth of these Golden Eagles around the country.

Ouachita Baptist University Pepperdine University Pfeiffer University Rocky Mountain College Rogers State University Sacred Heart University Shawnee State University Simon Fraser University South Dakota University Southeastern Louisiana University Southern Connecticut State Southern Mississippi University Southern Nazarene University Southern Utah University Southern Virginia University Southwest Minnesota State University St. Catherine College Tennessee Wesleyan University Texas A&M International Texas A&M University—Commerce Texas Tech University Tiffin University Tougaloo College Trinity Baptist College UNC-Pembroke Union College

University of Colorado—Colorado Springs University of Denver University of Maine University of Mary University of Maryland University of Maryland Eastern Shore University of Missouri Kansas City University of Montana University of North Florida University of Providence University of Sioux Falls University of South Carolina Aiken University of Texas Brownsville University of Texas El Paso University of West Florida University of Wyoming Utah State University Valdosta State University Vanguard University Waldorf College West Texas A&M University Western State University Westminster University Westminster University William Penn University York College

BREAKDOWN BY SPORT









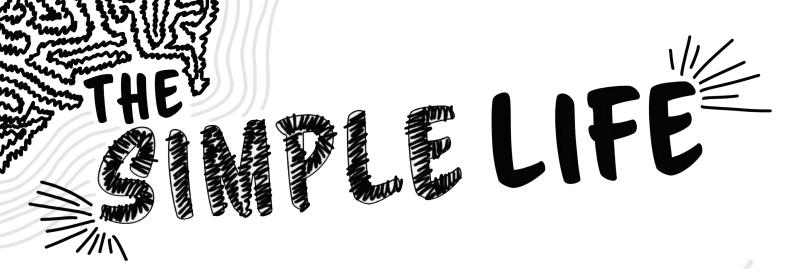








*Women's basketball returned to LCCC for the 2016-17 season



It seems that often life is full of busy, harried days, when life feels like an endless to-do list. But for some college students, that chaos can ultimately lead to some fantastic opportunities, even if the path to get there is a little daunting.

Take Zach Hammons, for example. A Cheyenne native and graduate of East High, Zach started out in the restaurant industry when he was just 15. Always a hard worker, he successfully worked his way to the position of manager at a couple of high-traffic eateries in the city.

After 17 years in that field though, he knew it was time for something more. Almost casually at first, Zach explored the idea of getting a college degree.

"I decided I wanted to come to school. I thought through what would work best for me and my family, what I'm passionate about," he said.

LCCC was that school, and exercise science ended up being the program that called to him. As a child, Zach's dad coached youth sports, and that passion grew in Zach as well. He began exploring a degree in physical education.

But there was a challenge: Zach is married and a dad to five kids. Plus, he'd need to stay at his job, working 30 hours every week. "It was stressful, especially since it's been more than 10 years since I'd taken any kind of classes," he said.

Zach even had some concerns coming in as someone older than the traditional student, even though nearly one-third of all LCCC students are 25 or older. "But it went smoothly," he said with a chuckle.

His wife, Sarah, had an idea how difficult this entire change of lifestyle could be. "We had to recreate our balance, get organized with all five kids. It takes a village to raise a child, and we have five of them," she said. "But we get it done."

Dr. Cindy Henning, program director for exercise science at LCCC, is one of Zach's instructors. She finds that his background and challenging lifestyle make him a better student. "He works hard to take advantage of his time. He asks question and overlays his

experiences with what he is learning," she said. "Zach is open to things he can change and even when he has taught a lesson exceptionally well, he still wants to know what can be improved upon."

According to Henning, Zach maintains a 4.0 grade point average and is a member of the program's honor society. "I'm trying my best, trying hard every day," Zach said. "I'm serious about doing this." He is the first person in his family to go to college or even take college courses and talks about how much he wants to be a role model for his children.

"I want to inspire them as well."

Zach shared that it can be interesting at home, with books scattered about and his kids asking "How was your day at school?" He still strives to be involved in his family's life as much as possible, knowing how important they are to achieving this dream.

Tears well up in Sarah's eyes, thinking about her husband working toward his lifelong goals. "He gets to follow in his father's footsteps," she said. "He gets to be the father to his own kids that he had growing up."

Zach is on track to complete his degree next fall. He's already completed an internship with the women's Golden Eagle basketball team, and he's looking to transfer to the University of Wyoming or the University of Northern Colorado. After that, he hopes to teach and coach elementary school students in this area.

What advice would Zach offer to other adults thinking about starting their college journey?

"No matter what stage of life you're in, you can always better yourself. Juggling everything as a non-traditional student is tough, but the work will be worth it in the long run. Get out there, do what makes you truly happy, and the rest will fall into place."





According to Talisha Mottinger, the director of operations at LCCC's Albany County Campus, or the ACC team, a partnership like this between the college and the high school (working with Albany County School District) created a perfect opportunity.

"With the high school being built close to ACC, it made sense for a partnership to develop. The new building provided state-of-the-art spaces, but staffing was difficult, and that's where ACC was able to help." she said.

Two of the students, Hailey Hysong and Jessica Predmore, each earned a credit diploma from LCCC in automotive technology and engine management/drivability in May.

"Working so hard for that was a great incentive," Hysong said. "Even if you aren't going into an automotive field, you have the work ethic to get it done." She talks about the sense of accomplishment this built for her future whether applying for college or applying for a job.

Predmore likes working with vehicles, but after high school, she's heading to North Carolina to study baking and pastry arts.

"When I started the program, it was more of my mom wanting me to explore the basics. It was just something that I really enjoyed learning," Predmore said

That initial interest lead to something much greater. In no small part, that's due to Seth Robbins, the LCCC automotive/diesel technology instructor who also teaches this class at LHS.

have been through these classes, has a sincere love of teaching this subject—and it shows in the success of his students.

just now seeing our first class of graduating seniors apply for the credit diploma, many of whom are moving on to college careers," he added.

The planning process took several years, Mottinger shared. With the nationwide push to improve technical training options for students, the ACC team was happy to help.

"Research showed a high need for auto diesel technicians. Add in the desire of businesses to donate equipment,

and we found ourselves with a unique opportunity where a full program emerged," Mottinger said.

This program is definitely a hands-on experience. Students bring in their own vehicles—or those of friends and families—to practice their skills. Robbins guides the students through the process, giving them the independence to learn with gentle support steeped

Plus, there are practical applications to all of this. The students talked about the extensive work they've done on vehicles, and the tremendous cost savin it had for them: from oil changes to changing leaf springs, and still a lot more that we can learn.

"We can do pretty much anything in the shop and learn from it, which is really cool because I like how I know what I can do and I can't do," Predmore said. "And there's still a lot more that we can learn."

This experience also gave them insight into college.

66 IT WAS MORE THAN JUST AN AUTO CLASS. IT WAS A DOOR OPENING TO LCCC. 99

Robbins, who estimates that more than 300 LHS students

"Since the dual enrollment agreement was signed, we're

to LCCC," Hysong said. "Now I'm more familiar with the college scene and how much LCCC has to offer."

"It was more than just an auto class. It was a door opening

Being a high school student created this rare opportunity

"It's cool that it counts as credits at my high school and my college. Because I did all these programs and I'm getting the credit diploma, it's like I'm graduating from LCCC. I feel that I'm part of the college."

Ultimately, the Laramie community gains a lot from this collaboration.

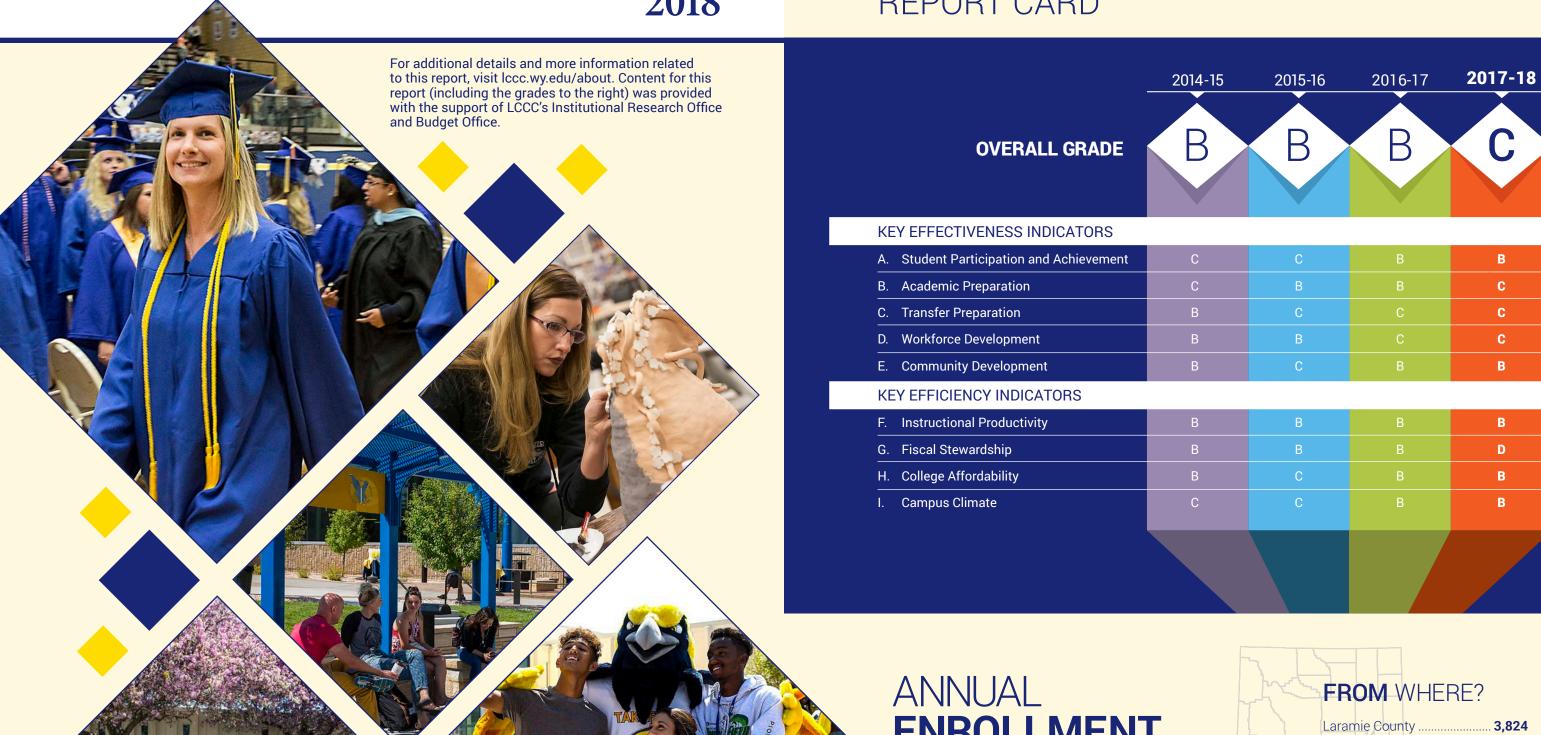
"We have LHS students that are graduating with workready skills and industry credentials. They're leveraged to either start careers in Laramie, or be ahead of the game when furthering their education," Mottinger said. "We sincerely hope to expand programming to support even more Albany County students."

20 THE TALON SUMMER 2019

ANNUALREPORT

2018

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS REPORT CARD

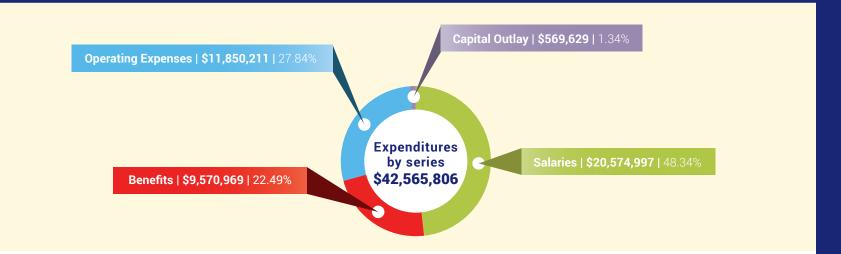


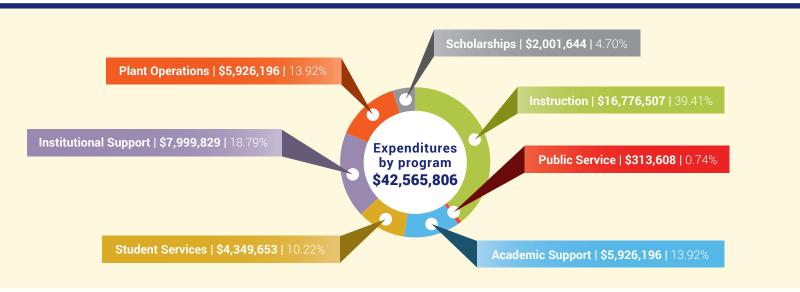
ENROLLMENT

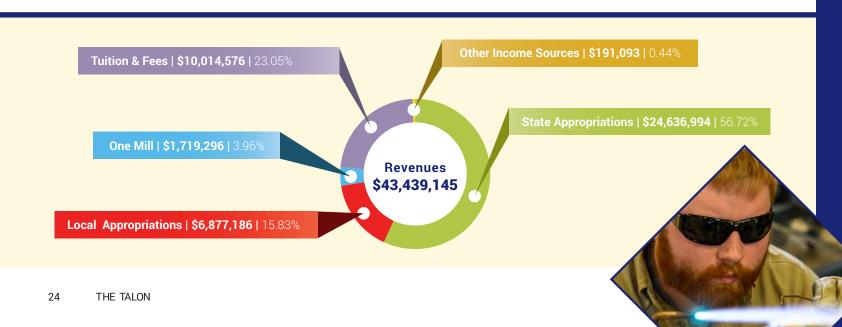
6,148 Unduplicated Credit **3,190** Unduplicated Non-Credit

Laramie County	3,824
Albany County	
Other WY Counties	
Out-Of-State	613
International	39
Unknown	9

FINANCIALBREAKDOWN



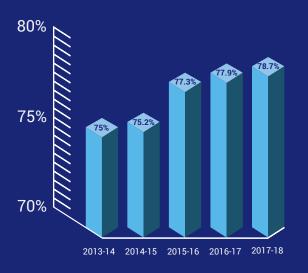




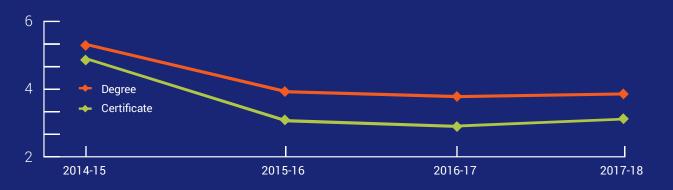


COURSE SUCCESS RATES

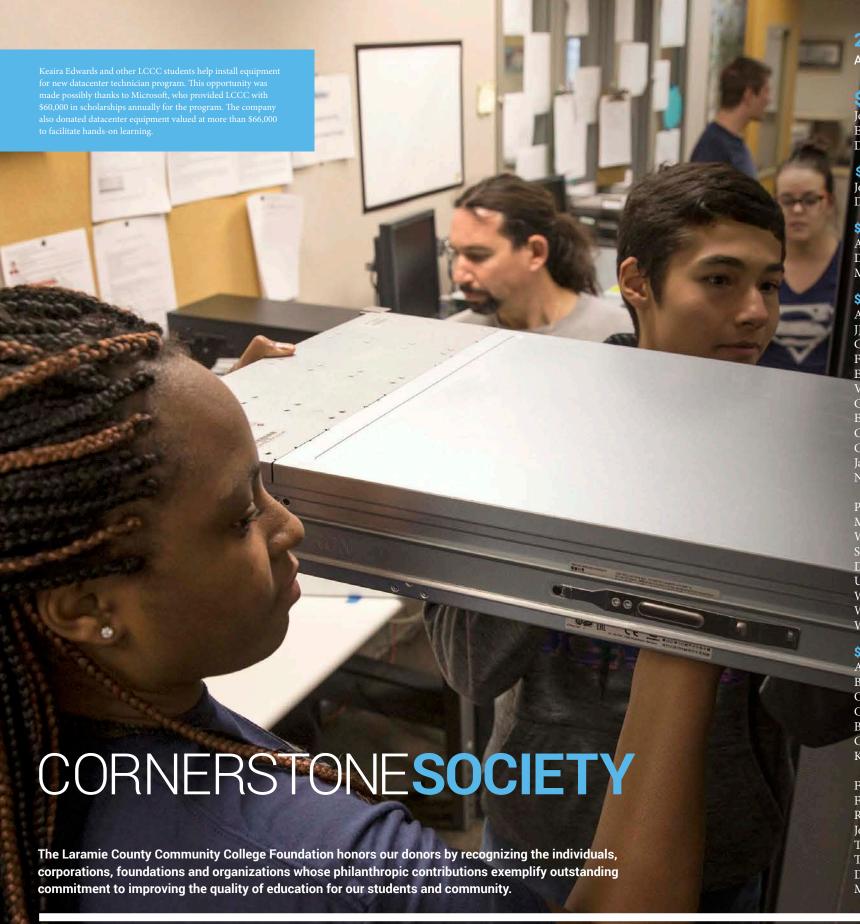
The percent of students who earn a passing grade (A, B, C, or S) out of those who officially enrolled.



AVERAGE TIME TO COMPLETION (YEARS)



LCCC is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.



2018 Contributions

Annual Giving

\$250,000 +

ohn C. Clay Estate of Lois C. Mottonen

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\$100,000-\$249,999

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Marine Corps League Detachments 772 Mark Alan Doherty Scholarship Fund New York Life Foundation William and Cynthia Pomeroy Joe and Brooke Schaffer Mark and Patsy Stege UW Family Medicine Residency Program Wyoming Media Professionals

\$500-\$2,499

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Alliance of Therapy Dogs Larry and Connie Atwell Aztec Construction Co., Inc.

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Tom and Chris Bass Belmont Stable

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For Calendar Year 2018

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