



## Newsletter from the Office of the President November 2021

**Greetings!** Welcome to our November Newsletter. We are proud to share with you the exciting happenings at NPRC over the past couple of months.

August and September were exciting engaging months of Town Hall Meetings. The entire NPRC team pulled together and supported this effort. We had representation from both academics and workforce development at each event. We extend a huge thank you to all the Trustees that were able to participate in one or more of these events. Attendance varied at each site and included state legislators, county commissioners, stakeholders, and students. The agenda provided for an introduction of the president overview of our strategic plan, academics, and workforce development; and a community engagement activity. Attendees were asked to answer the general question – “What are the greatest opportunities for NPRC to help your community?” We received invaluable input from community members that resulted in robust conversations. A summary of this feedback was provided at the October Board of Trustees (BOT) meeting with recommendations for integration into our Strategic Plan 2020-2025 update at the November BOT meeting. A summary of feedback includes:

- Recommendations for workforce development offerings
- Support career pathways
- Expand dual enrollment
- Flexible scheduling
- Day-time academic courses
- Partner with employers and stakeholders throughout the region
- Increase visibility and benefits of NPRC offerings



Our First Annual Staff Retreat was held on October 22<sup>nd</sup> at Port Farms in Waterford. Team building sprinkled with fun was the goal for the day and a great time was had by all. We are fortunate to have such a dedicated team here at NPRC. A day to thank them for their hard work was definitely needed.

## From the Division of Academic and Student Affairs:

### Retention and Perseverance Rates

Based on NPRC's institutional definition, the College's Spring 2020 to Spring 2021 retention was 52.73% and the Fall 2020 to Fall 2021 retention rate was 61.84%. The College's Fall 2020 to Fall 2021 IPEDS's reported retention rate was 40.00%.

The College defines retention as having a student continue enrollment from one academic year to the next academic year in at least one term thus maintaining their catalog of record. In contrast, retention is defined by the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) as retaining first-time, full-time degree-seeking students from fall of one academic term to fall of the following academic year. (Standard community college Fall 2019 to Fall 2020 retention rate of 51.6% as reported through National Student Clearinghouse).

### Student Enrollment

#### Summer 2020 to Summer 2021 Census\* Comparison

	Summer 2020	Summer 2021
<b>Total # of Students</b>	40	44
<b>Total # of Classes Taken</b>	74	64
<b>Full-Time Equivalency (FTE)***</b>	14.2	12.47
<b>Average # of Credits per student</b>	5.35	4.25

#### Fall 2020 to Fall 2021 Census Comparison

			Fall 2020	Fall 2021
Total Students			70	76
	Total Degree Seeking		64	58
	Total Non-degree Seeking	Guest	0	14
		Early Entry	2	1
		Other Non-degree	4	3
FTE	IPEDS Definition**		17	53
	Institutional Definition***		41.13	35.93
Total # of Courses Taken			226	189
Total # of Unique Courses Offered			23	29
Total # of Sections Offered			26	32
Average # of Credits Taken per Student			8.81	7.09
*Census is the “freeze date” for enrollment for a term. Students can adjust their schedule up until the day after each class has met for at least 2.5 hours. <b>Census</b> happens the day after each class has met for at least 7.5 hours in regular terms. Any student who withdraws after census would still be counted in our enrollment count for the term.				
**IPEDS Definition of FTE: Number of credit hours taken during the reporting period divided by 30. The reporting period is July 1, 20XX to June 30, 20XX. Therefore, the only numbers we were able to report for Fall 2020 survey were for the Spring 2020 and partial Summer 2020 terms.				
***Institutional Definition of FTE: Number of credit hours taken during a given term divided by 15.				

## Accreditation Update

The NPRC team is pleased to share the response to the college's September 1 submission of all required documentation associated with the Accreditation Readiness Report (ARR) Update received from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). In part, the response read, "Thank you for your timely submission. I can confirm the successful upload of the ARR, Federal Compliance Report..." This first update to NPRC's ARR included an 80+ page report and more than 800 new and updated documents. The full submission contained more than 1500 references to evidentiary documents provided to the assigned peer review team.

## A Focus on Career Services

Over the past year (2020-2021), four primary goals guided the work of the NPRC Career Services Office. In abbreviated terms, they were: 1) Creation of a multi-year Career Services Plan; 2) Development of Career Services Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs); 3) Construction of a digital presence; and 4) Creation of partnerships to strengthen the Career Services' Office work. A few of the highlights from assessment results include:

- An internal Career Services Advisory and Collaboration Team (CSAC Team) developed to work and guide the actions and priorities of the Career Services Office from a multi-disciplinary perspective;
- Development of a multi-year Career Services Plan to determine the priorities of the Career Services initiative at NPRC for the next several years;
- Thirteen career education student learning outcomes (SLOs) developed in collaboration with the full-time faculty and incorporate skills that include how to:
  - Access career resources
  - Explore/evaluate the regional occupational outlook
  - Create a professional resume and cover letter
  - Implement a networking strategy
  - Learn employment success skills from current professionals
- A digital presence for Career Services both on the web as well as through a partnership with College Central Network.
  - The Career Services web presence offers students a multitude of tools to learn about career areas, strengthen their tools and skills to seek work, and to provide links to actual job opportunities
  - College Central Network (CCN) allows regional employers to develop accounts within the NPRC platform, post work and internship opportunities, and connect with students
  - NPRC currently has 35 regional employers registered on the CCN platform. FT- and PT-positions come in and are posted regularly for NPRC students
  - Every NPRC student (credit and non-credit) is entered into the CCN platform and can activate their accounts via the Career Services website

Throughout the organization, there is overwhelming support for the notion that career education needs to be woven together with classroom learning. That how to successfully learn about careers, how to acquire work, and how to be an exemplary employee not only provides the best opportunities for our students but will also grow our northern Pennsylvania regional workforce in powerful ways. It is these underpinnings that motivate the work of the Career Services Office and collaborations.

## Student Services Team

Fall 2021 saw the initiation of the new Student Services structure, beginning with the appointments of Dannielle Fickenworth and Lauren Zickefoose to their new roles as Assistant Director of Student Engagement and Assistant Director of Community Engagement, respectively. Each leads a team of student service professionals with targeted roles and responsibilities. Three new Student Engagement Specialists (SES) have been hired as well as two Community Engagement Specialists (CSES).

The SES team is complete with three teammates having started on September 30<sup>th</sup>: Monica Schloder, Laurel Lucas, and Sandie Rohlin. All three teammates come to NPRC with master's degrees as well as diverse experiences. These



teammates has been allocated advising loads and has begun developing relationships with students in conjunction with their 4-week and midterm grade report checks.

### **From the Department of Workforce Development:**

Child Development Associate credential classes make up most of the enrollment in workforce development classes, with 21 students registered in two classes, including a Saturday session. We have conducted 15 sections of this course over the last two years.

Customized training programs have also kept workforce development staff busy with three sections of a basic machining class, including third shift, presented at Betts Industries in Warren with 35 students enrolled. Another precision machining program is being conducted with seven students at Machining Concepts in Erie. These apprenticeship students are learning G- and M-Code programming. Staff members are also working with W.R. Case in Bradford, and Metco Industries, Metal Powder Products, and SGL all in St. Marys to determine their needs for training.

### **NPRC Celebrates Ribbon Cutting at the Education and Training Center – Erie**



On November 4, we celebrated the Ribbon Cutting and Grand Opening of our new facility in Erie on West Ridge Road. The Education and Training Center – Erie is the first of several planned facilities that give students access to both academic classes and a wide range of workforce development training opportunities that require the use of larger equipment and specialized training aids. This facility combines traditional classroom space with significant industry-specific laboratory space.

NPRC invested nearly \$989,000 in equipment and building updates to allow students the opportunity to work with the most current technology used in our region's industries. Some of the equipment in these spaces include lathes, milling

machines, hydraulics and pneumatics training equipment, a robot that performs advanced industrial automation processes, and electrical motor controls.

At the Ribbon Cutting and Grand Opening Event, guests were welcomed from across the region to learn more about the facility. One of the main themes discussed by speakers throughout the event included the value of education as an economic driver for our region.

Classes began in Fall 2021 at the Education and Training Center – Erie. NPRC looks forward to bringing more students into the classrooms and continuing to provide the much-needed training to the region's workforce.

For more information on this event visit -- <https://regionalcollegepa.org/nprc-celebrates-ribbon-cutting-at-the-education-and-training-center-erie/>

### **Board of Trustee Highlight – Kate Brock**

Kate Brock is the Executive Director of the Community Education Center of Elk & Cameron Counties (CEC), where she provides overall strategic leadership and management for the organization. She began at the CEC as the Director of Educational Services in 2011.

Prior to joining the CEC, Kate worked as a senior project coordinator and research assistant for the Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation, a 501(c)(3) organization. She assisted in carrying out a needs assessment on community college services in a nine-county region, coordinated programs and research on at-risk youth programs, as well as organizing job training opportunities including the Workforce Investment Act and YouthBuild programs. Kate has also provided independent consulting to organizations throughout the state related to career education, industry, and community partnerships. She was also an AmeriCorps volunteer with the National Civilian Conservation Corps where she gained experience in community development with organizations across the country including the Boys and Girls Club, the National Park Service, and Habitat for Humanity.



Kate holds a Master's Degree in Public Administration from Penn State University and Bachelor's Degree in History and Art History from Bloomsburg University.

Among Kate's greatest professional achievements has been the opportunity to help shepherd NPRC from infancy to now. "The board and staff make a great team. We have had a lot of challenges over the years; but also a ton of successes. Our team weathered the storms together; and celebrated our achievements proudly. And most importantly, it is very rewarding when I get to interact with the students, hear their stories, and see them succeed after graduation."

### **Employee Spotlight – Brian Russell**

This month's employee spotlight focuses on our facility coordinator and tech support, Brian Russell. Russell is no stranger to NPRC. Before his employment with the College, he completed an associate degree alongside his sister, Regina Russell, as part of the pilot program with Gannon University. Since then, he worked part-time for the college as tech support in 2020 and joined NPRC's team full-time in September 2021.

From PA Virtual Charter School, to NPRC, and now Southern New Hampshire for his bachelor's degree, Brian has been distance learning his whole life.

The mission of NPRC resonates with Brian strongly because he has lived it. Bringing affordable higher education to underserved, economically depressed areas is a noble goal, and he's glad to be part of the team that is making it all possible.





Prior to working with NPRC, Brian spent five years living and working in a former monastery at the top of a mountain. He shares that he's reacclimating to working with people, having a commute, and getting used to living in a town where the people outnumber the trees for the first time in his life. In his free time, he likes to hike, read, and participate in online gaming, enjoy nice drives, and has even started dabbling in hypermiling, the practice of getting the best possible gas mileage out of a vehicle. His best mileage to date was recorded on his way home from work with an incredible 60 mpg city in a regular 4-cylinder sedan!

### Student Spotlight – Zachary Kick

This month's student spotlight is Zachary Kick. Zachary began pursuing an Associate Degree in Business Administration in Spring 2020. For Zachary, NPRC has been an affordable and accessible way for him to continue his education and obtain his degree. His current employer, Superior Tire and Rubber Corp., has also been extremely supportive of Zachary's pursuit of his educational goals.



Zachary finds his instructors to be excellent in engaging students on both an academic and personal level. The highlight of his experiences has been his writing classes with Benjamin Blood. He believes that both the cognitive and non-cognitive skills that Mr. Blood teaches throughout his classes will be tools that he will continue to use well after the completion of his degree.

NPRC has also been a way for Zachary to invest in himself. After he completes his degree at NPRC, Zachary plans to continue his education and obtain a bachelor's degree in organizational leadership and credits NPRC with playing a vital role in achieving that goal.

Outside of work and school, Zachary enjoys outdoor activities like hiking, fishing, and hunting. His vacations always include some time outdoors or an opportunity to explore a place he's never been before.



Photos from our First Annual Staff Retreat

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Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if there are opportunities for our regional college to assist you in your career, with your constituents, in partnerships, etc. – we are here for you!

Thank you for your continued support and for reading the excerpts of information from across departments at NPRC.

**Northern Pennsylvania Regional College's Mission** is to provide affordable and accessible post-secondary education to the residents of northern Pennsylvania.

NPRC proudly serves students in Cameron, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Forest, McKean, Potter, Warren, and Venango Counties.