



160 Years

Honoring Our Legacy. Embracing Our Future.



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OUR MISSION:

We empower adult learners to improve their lives by achieving career goals through academic offerings aligned with evolving workforce needs.

OUR VISION:

To be a transformational leader focused on providing adult learners with innovative academic programs through flexible delivery options and dynamic partnerships.



Message from the President



Dear friends and supporters,

So much has changed in the 160 years since our institution was established.

From the ratification of the 13th Amendment to the rise of technology and artificial intelligence, Peirce has been a witness to it all.

One thing that has remained constant during the entire time is keeping our focus on providing programs and services that are based on the needs of our students, our partners and the workforce.

This report provides a reflection point for the past 160 years, especially the past few years during which we forged new partnerships, introduced exciting offers into the market and reversed declining enrollments.

I am grateful for the support of our Board of Trustees, our faculty and staff, and our dedicated students and alumni who bring our institution to life.

As we approach our next chapter, we remain a unique institution in the city, the region and the country, and our mission will continue on as an important part of Lackawanna College.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary Ellen Caro". The script is fluid and cursive, with a light blue circular stamp partially visible behind the text.

Dr. Mary Ellen Caro
President & CEO

Our Story

Innovation has been at the heart of Peirce College from the very beginning.

The institution was established in 1865 as Union Business College to provide career-focused education for soldiers returning from the Civil War. It was also one of the first schools in the country to embrace women as students.

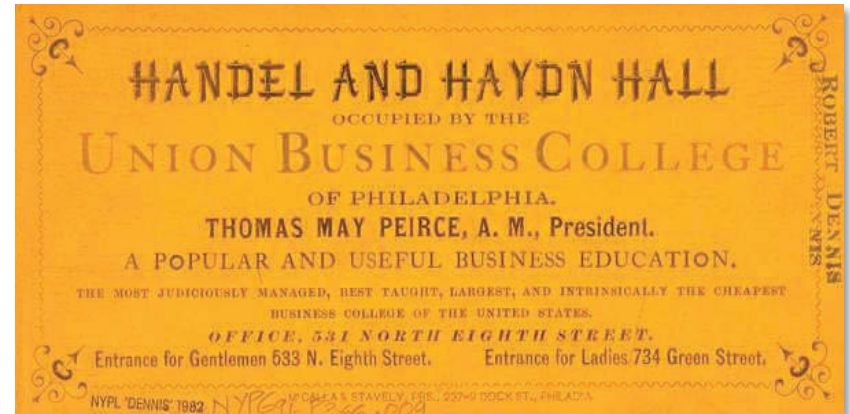
Thomas May Peirce believed that northern manufacturing would fuel prosperity after the war. He knew this growth would create jobs, especially in factory business offices and the financial institutions that served them.

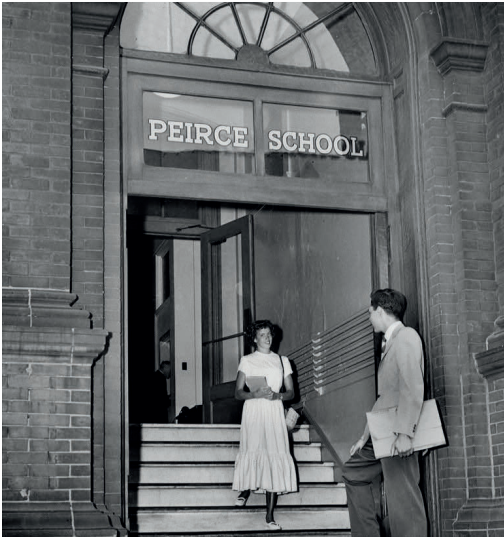
Business skills, such as bookkeeping and accounting, were typically learned outside the classroom – through work experience.

At the time, no college or university in America offered a formal business program.

Peirce changed that for men and women.

From its first courses in penmanship and bookkeeping to online programs in business administration, information technology and health information management, Peirce has kept its focus on the needs of students, employers and emerging workforce trends.





Meeting the Needs of the Market

Peirce leveraged early advances in office technology to develop new curriculum, increase enrollment and prepare students with skills that employers were looking for in a new economy.

By the turn of the century, the institution earned international recognition for its courses and programs in business education. Peirce broke new ground in 1959 by offering the first courses on the East Coast in computer operation and data processing.

In 1963, Peirce was granted its status as a non-profit institution. A year later, Peirce received approval to award associate degrees and operate as Peirce Junior College.

Peirce reached new heights in the 1990s with the launch of the Corporate College program in 1994, gaining baccalaureate-degree granting status in 1997 and piloting its first online courses in 1999.

This focus on serving working adults and exploring more flexible course delivery options reaffirmed Peirce's place as a pioneer in higher education and helped the College evolve into the 21st Century.



Blazing New Trails

In the 2000s, Peirce has continued to blaze new trails for its students and partners by leveraging technology, expanding the academic portfolio and building new partnerships.

Peirce became the first institution of higher learning in Philadelphia - and one of the first in the nation - to offer a bachelor's degree completely online in 2000.

Since then, the College has developed several degree programs and stackable certificates that can be completed entirely online that are aligned with the needs of students, partners and employers.

Peirce launched its first graduate program in 2013. Today, the College offers five master's degree programs that can be completed entirely online.

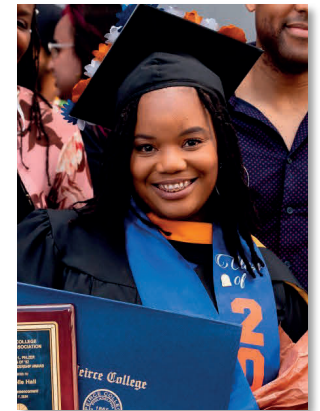
The College has also added several career-relevant, stackable undergraduate certificates that prepare students for jobs before they complete a full degree. These certificates were central to the launch of the Career Bridge program in 2021, which was created to help the region recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and prepares students with the skills, certifications and credentials needed for jobs with family-sustaining wages.

By the Numbers: 2025 Academic Portfolio

21 undergraduate degree programs

13 stackable undergraduate certificates

5 master's degree programs



"As soon as I received my accounting degree, I was promoted six months later. After my master's degree was conferred, I received another offer paying more money. I have two children, and I am a single woman who works. If I can do it, anybody can do it!"

Michelle Hall '19, '21, '23

100+

partnerships, including

▶ **74** corporate partners

▶ **8** workforce partners

▶ **25** academic partners

The same spirit of innovation that drove Peirce to become an early adopter of online learning also helped it become a national leader in the assessment of prior learning.

This competency, rare among colleges and universities in the Philadelphia region, helped Peirce expand partnerships with employers and other organizations, from major airlines and global corporations to regional brands and local businesses and organizations.

The College has evaluated training programs offered by several of its partners, which allow their employees and clients to earn credit for the training they have completed and save both time and money.

Peirce has created opportunities for all students to lower costs in two additional ways. Students can complete no-cost and low-cost courses and exams that have been evaluated by the College, which can be applied as transfer credit to degree programs at the both the undergraduate and graduate level. Also, Peirce currently has 85 courses where Open and Affordable Educational Resources (OAER) are available as an alternative to costly textbooks.

Collectively, these efforts have expanded access to college for busy adults, including those in underserved communities.

Our Impact

What makes Peirce College unique is that we serve our students in ways that fit their lives.

Cost is the main barrier that prevents most adults from returning to college to advance their education. Maximizing transfer credit is an effective way that Peirce expands access and helps students save money.

In addition to credits earned at other colleges and universities, Peirce awards credit for select credit-by-exam programs, low-cost and no-cost online courses, professional and military training, and select professional certifications and licenses. This allows students to leverage what they already know to save time and money.

Since the 2014-2015 academic year, Peirce has awarded more than 184,000 transfer credits to undergraduate and graduate students, which has saved them more than \$92 million in tuition.



"I was able to transfer so many of my credits to Peirce that I was able to graduate faster. It was probably one of the best decisions I've ever made. Peirce has not only given me the confidence to chase my dreams, but to catch them."

Gregory Wright, Jr. '18

By the Numbers: **Maximizing Transfer Credit**

184,000+

in transfer credits awarded to Peirce students since FY 2015.

\$92M+

in tuition saved from those transfer credits applied to their programs.



By the Numbers: Scholarships & Discounts

\$19.9M

in scholarships and tuition discounts awarded to Peirce students since FY 2017.



Partnerships have always been crucial for colleges and universities, and they have never been more important to institutions than they are right now.

Peirce currently has more than 70 corporate partners that benefit from discounted tuition for their employees. In addition, Peirce has several scholarship programs that reduce costs for students, including those who do not work for a corporate partner.

Since the 2016 - 2017 academic year, Peirce has awarded nearly \$20 million in scholarships and tuition discounts to make education more accessible for students.

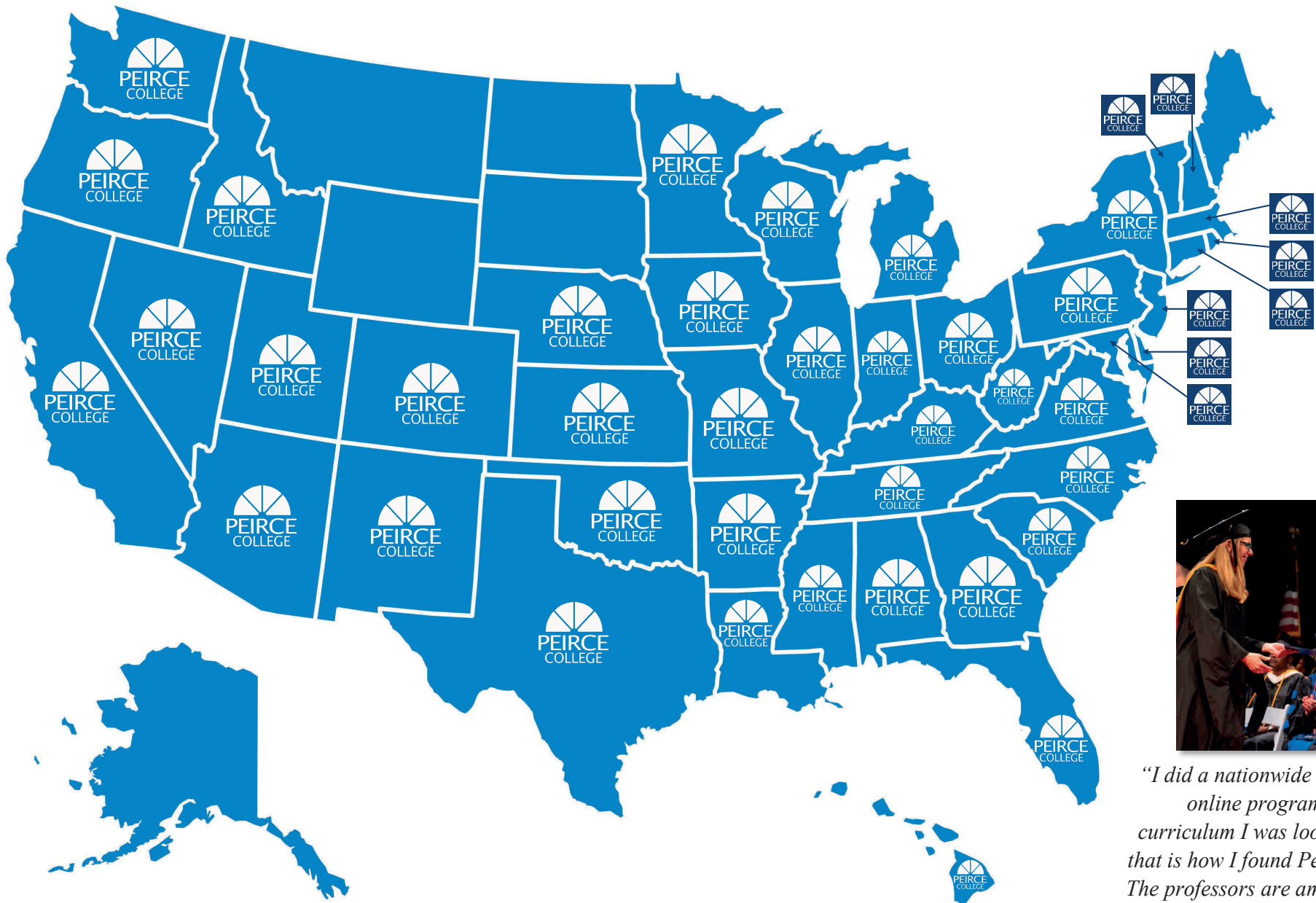


"Returning to Peirce for my education was one of the best decisions I have ever made. I completed both my bachelor's and master's degrees debt-free. At Peirce, I was able to take advantage of the corporate partner discount provided to my employer and was given the opportunity to go on a payment plan for the remainder of my balance per session."

Hilda Rivera '18

By the Numbers: Where Our Students Live

While a large majority of Peirce students live in Pennsylvania, the College serves students across the country and throughout the world. In the past 10 years, Peirce has served students in 44 states as well as Washington, DC, Puerto Rico, Canada and Jamaica.

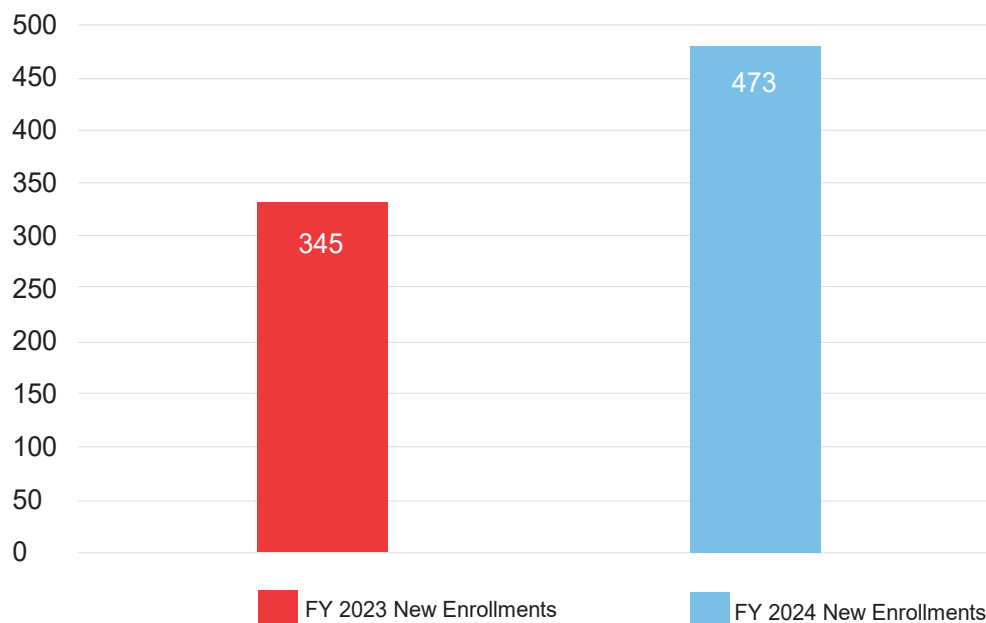


"I did a nationwide search for an online program that had the curriculum I was looking for, and that is how I found Peirce College. The professors are amazing. It was everything I was hoping for."

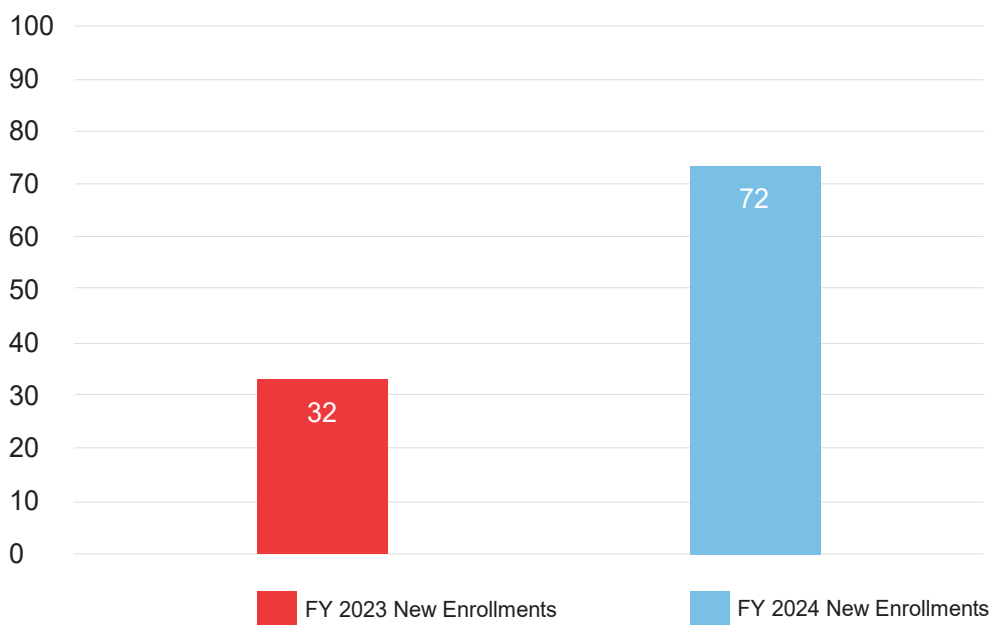
Donna L. Scott '23

By the Numbers: New Student Enrollment Growth

New Undergraduate Enrollments (FY 2023 & FY 2024)



New Graduate Enrollments (FY 2023 & FY 2024)



Peirce College has been able to reverse years of declines in new student enrollments due to a combination of strategic partnerships and incentives that have expanded access for more prospective students.

The College's decision to develop pipeline partnerships has been instrumental in finding academically-prepared students from a wider geography, which has greatly helped grow new undergraduate enrollments.

More prospective students are also taking advantage of being able to earn credits at no cost at the undergraduate and graduate level through Peirce's partnership with Coursera, which is saving students thousands in tuition.

In addition, the College has continued to offer a total tuition price point of \$9,900 for select master's degree programs, which has been well-received in the market.

In FY 2024, Peirce grew new undergraduate student enrollments by 37% and more than doubled new graduate student enrollments over the previous year. The College expects to maintain its enrollment level in FY 2025 and increase new graduate student enrollments by 40%, according to the College's latest projections.

Our Next Chapter

In August 2024, Lackawanna College and Peirce College announced that they intend to merge, based on the shared belief that both institutions are better and stronger together and aptly positioned to help more residents of Pennsylvania transform their lives.

At the end of June 2025, Peirce will become part of Lackawanna College.

The combined institution will be the largest private, nonprofit, open enrollment institution in Pennsylvania at the undergraduate level with an expanded geographic and programmatic presence to serve students in eight locations and online.

The partnership will leverage Lackawanna's dedication to degrees, certificates and innovative learning experiences and Peirce's commitment to career-focused, flexible academic programs and student services designed around the unique needs of busy adults to empower learning at all stages of life.



“Our combined resources will create exciting opportunities to leverage our core competencies and expand our programs to better serve more students, and increase the pipeline of diverse talent through education and workforce training.”

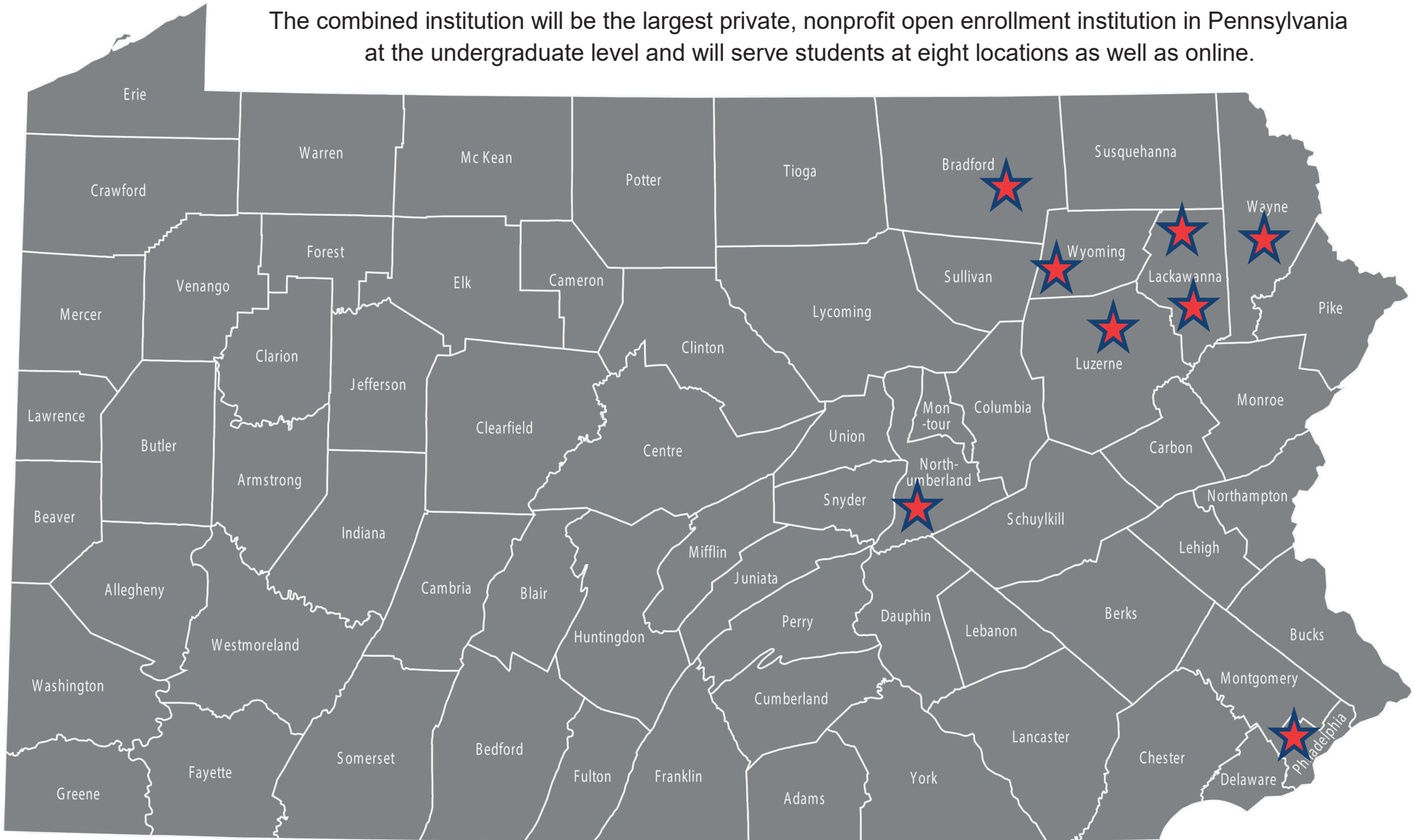
Dr. Jill Murray

President & Chief Innovation Officer
of Lackawanna College

Dr. Mary Ellen Caro

President & CEO
of Peirce College

The combined institution will be the largest private, nonprofit open enrollment institution in Pennsylvania at the undergraduate level and will serve students at eight locations as well as online.



Key Partners: FY 2024 & FY 2025

Corporate Partners

1199c
Adams & Associates
AETNA
Allied Universal
American Heritage Federal Credit Union
American Paradigm Schools
AmeriHealth Caritas
Aqua America, Inc.
Bancroft
BDP International
Beneficial Bank
Benesyst, a TASC Company
Brown's Super Stores
Canon Financial
Cardone Industries
The Carney Group
CHOP
Cigna
City of Philadelphia
Comcast
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Community College of Philadelphia
Congreso
Corizon Health
Corporate Call Center, Inc.
Defender Association of Philadelphia
Delaware County Community College
Easterseals
ECFMG
EdAssist Corporate Clients
Edcor
GCC IBT District Council 9
Global Academies
Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce
Harrah's Philadelphia
Health Partners Plans
hibu
Horizon House
Independence Blue Cross
IREM
JetBlue
JEVS
Lackawanna College
Magee Rehab
The MCS Group
Merakey
MHM Services, Inc.
Montgomery County Community College
NFL Alumni
Penn Medicine
PGW

Philadelphia Education Fund
Philadelphia FIGHT
Philadelphia Housing Authority
Philadelphia Works
PHIMA
PHMC
PPA
Quest Diagnostics
Santander
School District of Philadelphia
SEPTA
St. Christopher's Hospital for Children
St. Mary Medical Center
Subaru of America, Inc.
TD Bank
Union Education Benefit - EDUTrust
United Health Group
Univest
UPS
USPS
Wawa
WSFS
Year Up

Academic Partners

Bergen County Community College
Brookdale Community College
Bucks County Community College
Camden County College
Community College of Philadelphia
Coursera
Delaware County Community College
Delaware Technical Community College
Drexel University
Harcum College
Harrisburg Area Community College
Job Corps
Lackawanna College
Lehigh Carbon Community College
Manor College
Middlesex County College
Montgomery County Community College
Raritan Valley Community College
Rowan College at Burlington County
Rutgers Law School
Pearson
Pennsylvania Institute of Technology
Sophia.org
Straighterline.com
Study.com

Workforce Partners

Bucks County Workforce Development
Campus Philly
Chester County Economic Development Council
Delaware County Workforce Development
Graduate Philadelphia
Lehigh Valley Workforce Board
OIC Philadelphia
Philadelphia Works

Chamber Partners

African American Chamber of Commerce for NJ, PA, DE
The Chamber of Commerce of Greater Philadelphia
Main Line Chamber of Commerce
Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry

Philanthropic & Corporate Giving

Ascendium - Project Success
Bank of America Charitable Foundation
Charlotte W. Newcombe Foundation
Chappell Culpeper Family Foundation
Hollenbach Family Foundation
Patricia Kind Family Foundation
PECO
SeaChange
TD Bank Charitable Foundation
United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey
WSFS Cares Foundation
W.W. Smith Charitable Trust



"Completing the Career Bridge Program gave me the confidence and motivation to pursue a bachelor's degree. I discovered Peirce's generous transfer credit policy and submitted all of my certifications, which ended up covering all of my elective credits. I proudly earned my Bachelor's degree in 2024 and applied to the MS in Professional Studies. I told my advisor that I wanted to complete the program in one year - and she helped me do exactly that. My academic journey is far from over. I've been admitted to Walden University's PhD in Public Health program and was appointed as a Senior Research Service Professor (Health Policy and Media Fellow) at The George Washington University School of Nursing's Center for Health Policy and Media Engagement. As a mother, student and professional, this journey has meant everything to me. I'm grateful to Peirce College for opening the door and walking with me through each milestone. Most of all, I'm proud to show my daughter that I did it - and that she can, too."

Makaila Davis '24, '25



"I was tired of working below my potential. My degree expanded my career options in the healthcare field. I was thrilled by how many credits Peirce College accepted. Peirce gave me the confidence to be successful as an adult learner."

Lisa Washington '19



"Peirce has made a significant impact in my life. I came in knowing I had leadership potential, and I am leaving owning my leadership potential. Peirce totally and absolutely prepared me for my next steps. I am starting to walk in that power that was always in me."

Pamela Washington '19



"The great thing about Peirce College is their dedication to finding every credit possible to transfer into your degree. I got to finish my degree sooner from all my associate degree credits and military experience."

Joseph Juarez '17



"I think many adult students are afraid to go back to school because they fear they are not smart enough, but the truth is, they only need to be willing to put forth the effort. My experience at Peirce has taught me that my effort is matched by faculty that have encouraged and supported my path to graduation."

Stephanie Sheeley '18



"I decided to come to Peirce because I felt this was the institution where I would get the best support as an adult learner. I was able to reach any professor and any advisor whenever I needed them."

Stephanie Gonzalez Adorno '16



"When you get to know your peers in the classroom and realize you're all in the same boat and that it's safe to be transparent, a wonderful thing happens. You really get insight to other industries, and how other people do things and how others view you or perceive your ideas. That insight that gives you an advantage when you get back to the workplace."

Steven Amster '16



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