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Bucks County Community College President to serve on House Appropriations panel discussion on student pathways from high school to postsecondary education

Dr. Stephanie Shanblatt to highlight community colleges' role in education and workforce development

HARRISBURG (February 26, 2018) – Bucks County Community College President Dr. Stephanie Shanblatt will appear before the House Appropriations Committee today to stress the critical role Pennsylvania community colleges play in bridging the gap from high school to postsecondary education.

Pennsylvania's 14 community colleges enrolled more than 317,000 students in the last academic year, making it the largest provider of postsecondary education in the commonwealth. The colleges are educating and training students for highly skilled, in-demand professions that are aligned with industry needs.

“Our community colleges regularly evaluate workforce needs and adjust our program offerings to meet those demands,” said Dr. Shanblatt, who also serves as chair of the Pennsylvania Commission for Community Colleges. “Research shows jobs in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields are high-priority and in demand across the United States. Our colleges offer 1,354 credit programs in those subject areas.”

In the next two years, 65 percent of all jobs will require postsecondary education and training beyond high school – and 30 percent of those jobs will require some college or an associates degree, according to the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce.

In addition to providing high-quality education and training, community colleges are the most affordable postsecondary education option in Pennsylvania with tuition nearly half that of a state school.

The Pennsylvania Commission for Community Colleges urges policymakers to consider increasing its financial support to the colleges in the proposed budget so they can continue to offer the critical education and training to fill an existing skills gap in the state. The support is needed so community colleges can continue to provide the vital, cost-effective education and training of future workers.

Dr. Shanblatt will be available following the panel discussion for interviews.

The Pennsylvania Commission for Community Colleges is a voluntary membership association for Pennsylvania's community colleges. Its members include the college presidents, members of the colleges' boards of trustees and key college administrators. The Commission represents the interests of and advocates for the collective needs of the community colleges to federal and state policymakers. For more information, visit www.pacommunitycolleges.org.

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