

Delaware County Community College – Graduate: Jay Rhoades

Jay Rhoades, who graduated from Delaware County Community College in 2024, was a Mathematics/Natural Science major focused on Biology. He was a part of the National Science Foundation-funded STARS program on campus that provided community college students with the opportunity to participate in research and learn more about careers in STEM. He was awarded a \$4,800 tuition waiver through STARS for the 2023-2024 academic year. Additionally, Rhoades served as a work-study student with the Earth and Space Science department as a laboratory assistant, assisting in creating microscope adapters that provide a higher level of accessibility to students in Biology courses. He was named to the 2024 All-PA Academic Team, which is sponsored by Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society for two-year colleges, and the Pennsylvania Commission for Community Colleges. As an All-PA Transfer Pathway honoree, he received a full-tuition scholarship for two years to one of the ten universities that make up the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education. He also was awarded a DCCC Educational Foundation scholarship of \$1,000 through PECO and served as president of Phi Theta Kappa, Alpha Tau Epsilon chapter.

Rhoades was one of seven Delaware County Community College students who took part in advanced biomedical research in the summer of 2024 after being selected to participate in the highly competitive Wistar Institute Biomedical Technician Training Program (BTT).

The Wistar Institute is a Philadelphia-based global leader in biomedical research with special expertise in cancer, immunology, infectious disease and vaccine development. BTT is a paid, credit-earning 12-week pre-apprenticeship program designed to respond to the growing demand for well-trained laboratory technicians and research assistants in life sciences. The summer program consisted of a two-week intensive laboratory course at the Wistar Institute followed by two five-week internship placements in academic or industry biomedical laboratories. The students received academic credits through the DCCC Student Employment Services' internship program.

Jay transferred to West Chester University last fall to major in Cellular and Molecular Biology. After earning his bachelor's degree, he plans to attend graduate school related to medicine and pathology and hopes to work in a pathology lab. "My goal is to work in the field of medicine. My experience volunteering in the emergency room has confirmed it is where I belong. Understanding and diagnosing disease in the pathology lab is where I see myself."