



Campus News

Jefferson State Student Named Recipient of Lanza Scholarship

Jefferson State Community College student Sibusisiwe Phiri has been named by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society as one of 25 Frank Lanza Memorial Scholarship recipients nationwide. The scholarships recognize the accomplishments of students enrolled in allied health programs offered by regionally accredited community colleges. Twenty-five students received scholarships of \$1,000 each.

Frank Lanza Scholars will be recognized April 9th during the Third General Session of the Phi Theta Kappa Convention in Seattle, Washington. In addition, recipients will have the opportunity to personally meet Lou Oberndorf, Chairman, and Tom Doyle, Vice President and Chief Learning Officer, from METI. Oberndorf and Doyle were influential in establishing this scholarship in honor of their friend, Frank Lanza.

The scholarships target part-time, full-time and international students who have completed 50 percent of their course work leading toward achieving an associate degree and who demonstrated financial need. Candidates did not have to be members of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society to apply. A panel of independent judges selected the recipients by application based on academic and leadership accomplishments as well as community service.

"Funding provided for these scholarships is critical to helping community colleges students meet the high cost of completing these rigorous health-related programs," said Phi Theta Kappa's Executive Director, Dr. Rod A. Risley.

Most of the 2011 award recipients are enrolled in registered nursing programs and allied health fields. Community colleges educate 63 percent of allied health professionals. According to the U.S.

Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics 2010 figures, employment outlook in the health care industry has continued to increase. The largest gains were in ambulatory health care services and in nursing and residential care facilities.

The scholarship is named in honor of Frank Lanza, founder of L-3 Communications, a global aerospace and defense company that produces \$15 billion in annual revenues and employs close to 66,000 people worldwide. The scholarship endowment is funded equally by L-3 Communications and METI, one of 73 operating units of L-3. In creating the endowment, Oberndorf, METI CEO and a long-time friend of Lanza, cited Lanza's visionary leadership and commitment to charitable causes as inspiration for the program.

Lanza served in the U.S. Coast Guard during the Korean War. He was a member of the board of directors for the Coast Guard Foundation and received the 2003 Distinguished Corporate Leadership award from the Soldiers', Sailors', Marines' and Airmen's Club. Lanza was also a member of the board of governors for the Aerospace Industries Association and the American-Italian Cancer Foundation. A philanthropist, Lanza and his wife supported a variety of charities through a family foundation.

Based in Washington, D.C., AACC is the primary advocacy organization for community colleges at the national level and works closely with directors of state offices to inform and to affect state policy. AACC represents almost 1,200 two-year, associate degree-granting institutions and more than 11 million students. Community colleges are the largest and fastest-growing sector of U.S. higher education, enrolling close to half (43 percent) of all U.S. undergraduates.

Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, headquartered in Jackson, Mississippi, is the largest honor society in higher education with 1,270 chapters on college campuses in all 50 of the United States, Canada, Germany, the Republic of Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the British Virgin Islands, the United Arab Emirates and U.S. territorial possessions. More than 2.5 million students have been inducted since its founding in 1918, with approximately 125,000 students inducted annually.