



DAN ONORATO
COUNTY EXECUTIVE



COUNTY OF ALLEGHENY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

May 10, 2010

CONTACTS:

Kevin Evanto (County)
412-350-3171 office
412-352-4075 cell

David Hoover (CCAC)
412-237-3035 office
724-841-1568 cell

Onorato, Johnson Encourage Residents to Apply for FireVEST Scholarships

Program offers full scholarships to new volunteer recruits and existing volunteer firefighters

PITTSBURGH — Allegheny County Executive Dan Onorato and Community College of Allegheny County President Alex Johnson today encouraged residents to take advantage the Fire Volunteer Education, Service & Training Scholarship Program (FireVEST), which offers 200 full scholarships annually for an associate's degree or certificate program at CCAC, as well as training at the Allegheny County Fire Academy. Scholarship recipients must commit to serving as a volunteer firefighter in Allegheny County for five years. The deadline for applying for the fall semester is May 15.

“There are 203 volunteer fire companies in Allegheny County that protect more than 910,000 people,” said Onorato. “We introduced FireVEST to help volunteer fire departments that are experiencing difficulty in recruiting and retaining firefighters. This program creates a strong incentive to enlist, and it is working. Seventy-six people have made the commitment to be volunteer firefighters and enrolled in CCAC through FireVEST, and two have already graduated.”

Of the 200 scholarships, 150 go to new volunteer firefighter recruits who commit to five years of service, and 50 scholarships are awarded to current volunteers who commit to five additional years of service. Scholarship applicants must be residents of Allegheny County and serve with a volunteer fire department in Allegheny County. Applicants must apply and be accepted to CCAC, file for federal and state financial aid, and complete the financial aid process on time and in its entirety.

“The FireVEST program is one of our vital partnerships with Allegheny County,” said Johnson. “Through this program, CCAC is able to give back to those who so generously contribute their time and place themselves in harm’s way to protect their neighbors. It is our hope that more individuals will choose to support their communities as a result of this program.”

If awarded a scholarship, the recipient must meet the following obligations:

- Serve as a volunteer firefighter for five years in Allegheny County;
- Maintain an acceptable level of service as monitored by his or her fire department;
- Complete two required courses at the Allegheny County Fire Academy and a course in first aid and CPR;
- Obtain Firefighter I Certification through the Allegheny County Fire Academy;
- Maintain a minimum grade point average of 2.0 for the duration of his or her studies; and
- Repay a portion of the scholarship if service or academic requirements are not met.

Applications for the FireVEST program are available on CCAC’s web site at www.ccac.edu, search keyword “FireVEST,” through CCAC campus and center admissions offices, or by contacting the Allegheny County Fire Academy at 412-931-3158 ext. 5.

Applications must be postmarked by May 15, and scholarships will be awarded for CCAC’s fall 2010 semester, which begins on August 23.

The FireVEST Advisory Board will review all applications and other forms to assess scholarship eligibility and to determine scholarship recipients. Being accepted into membership of the sponsoring agency (volunteer fire company) and/or being accepted for enrollment at CCAC does not guarantee the student will be awarded a scholarship under the FireVEST program, nor does it guarantee acceptance into limited enrollment CCAC programs. Instead, the recruitment needs of the sponsoring agencies are the first priority when selecting scholarship recipients.

For additional information on the FireVEST program, contact the Allegheny County Fire Academy at 412-931-3158 ext. 5 or firevest@alleghenycounty.us.

###

The Community College of Allegheny County is the largest institution of postsecondary higher education in Pennsylvania. The college serves 31,000 credit students through 170 degree and certificate programs and offers thousands of lifelong learning non-credit and workforce development course to 33,000 students annually. Incorporating and a learning-centered environment committed to the future of the region, CCAC continues to expand its reach through innovative programming and accessible instruction offered via convenient day, evening, weekend and online courses. With four campuses and six centers serving Allegheny County and surrounding communities, CCAC endeavors to fulfill its mission to provide affordable access to quality education and offer a dynamic, diverse and supportive learning environment that prepares the region’s residents for academic, professional and personal success in our changing global society.