

# THE INSIDE STORY



## **New Partnership between County & CCAC**

In June 2008, Allegheny County Executive Dan Onorato and Community College of Allegheny County President Dr. Alex Johnson announced a new strategic partnership between the County and CCAC to strengthen the local economy and respond to the workforce needs of businesses and other organizations.

The first joint effort was the Allegheny County-CCAC Workforce Alliance, which collaborates with employers, unions and other organizations throughout the region to identify and meet workforce needs. The Alliance established an advisory council with representatives from workforce investment boards, business and industry, labor, economic development groups, foundations and educational institutions to provide insight into the area's immediate needs and opportunities. Focus was given to recruitment, training and retention of qualified employees, especially in the burgeoning industries of health care, biotechnology, tourism, recreation and environmental reclamation. Significant efforts were also made to train incumbent workers in new skills required for fields such as manufacturing, automotive technology and information technology.

The second effort was a reinstatement and enhancement of the Allegheny County Fire Volunteer Education, Service & Training Scholarship Program (FireVEST), which provides 200 full scholarships for an associate's degree or certificate program at CCAC, as well as training at the Allegheny County Fire Academy. Of the 200 scholarships, 150 will go to new recruits in exchange for a commitment of five years of service to a volunteer fire department in Allegheny County, and 50 scholarships will be awarded to existing volunteers in exchange for a commitment of five additional years of service.

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