



**ANNUAL
REPORT
TO OUR
COMMUNITY**



**Empowering
Through
Education**

2023

2024



A Letter to Our Community

Dear DCIU Community,

At the heart of our mission lies a fundamental belief: education is the most powerful tool for empowerment. This annual report, themed "*Empowering Through Education*," showcases the transformative impact of our initiatives on students, educators, partners and the community. Through compelling stories and real-world examples of how we carry out our mission, we highlight how our work has empowered individuals and communities in profound ways.

Our professional development programs play a crucial role in equipping educators with innovative teaching strategies, creating an environment where they can effectively inspire and support their students. Our student programs are designed to educate, inspire, and nurture future leaders, instilling in them a sense of confidence and responsibility. Our special programs provide instruction and support that are specially designed to meet the unique needs of each child whose disability affects his or her educational performance or ability to learn in a regular classroom.

Our dedication to equity and inclusion shines through in our achievements. We take great pride in our skill development programs, such as career and technical education (CTE), which are designed to prepare students for a rapidly evolving world and ensure that they possess the competencies needed for the jobs of tomorrow.

Our diverse student activities and educational and adult programs provide enriching experiences that extend beyond the classroom, promoting holistic growth, and lifelong learning. We remain committed to building an educational environment where every individual, regardless of their background, can thrive and succeed.

By providing access to quality education, we are not just imparting knowledge, but also empowering our clients to make informed decisions, solve problems, and seize opportunities that lead to better living conditions, economic growth and social inclusion. This report reflects our unwavering dedication to helping students and others learn and grow, paving the way for a brighter future for all.

As we celebrate the stories of empowerment and the milestones we have achieved together, we want to thank our Board of Directors, administrators, staff, students, school district partners, and all local, county, state and federal partners for their hard work and dedication to providing quality educational programs to our students. We believe that together, we are making a difference—one educational journey at a time.

Looking ahead, we are excited about the future that lies before us. Our commitment to empowering individuals through education remains steadfast. With innovation, collaboration and an unwavering dedication to excellence, we will continue to create opportunities that inspire and transform lives. The future is bright, and by continuing to work together, we will achieve even greater heights, fostering an environment where every learner can thrive and reach their full potential.

With appreciation,



Tracy Karwoski
Board President



Maria Edelberg, EdD.
Executive Director

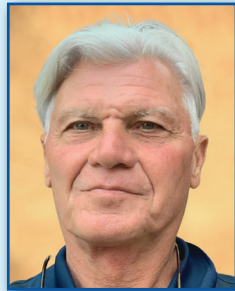
Board of Directors

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, concerned citizens can **change the world**.
Indeed, it is the **only thing** that ever has.”

-Margaret Mead



Bettie McClairen
Chester Upland
School District



Frank Sill
Chichester
School District



Tracy Karowski
Garnet Valley
School District



Dr. Kristin Larsen
Haverford
School District



Edward Harris
Interboro
School District



Barbara Harvey
Marple Newtown
School District



Dr. Melissa Huber
Penn-Delco
School District



Dr. Andrew Babson
Radnor
School District



Christine McMenamini
Ridley
School District



Hillary Fletcher
Rose Tree Media
School District



Sheree Monroe Whitsett
Southeast Delco
School District



Bob Hornberger
Springfield
School District



Debra Williams
Upper Darby
School District



Rachel Holbert
Wallingford-Swarthmore
School District



Joana (Joi) Hopkins
William Penn
School District

Mission, Vision & Beliefs



Mission

The mission of Delaware County Intermediate Unit, a regional service agency, is to provide leadership in the development and delivery of quality, cost-effective programs, and services to school communities.



Vision

DCIU empowers partnerships that drive, create, inspire, and understand excellence in education. DCIU:

- **Drives** strategic forward movement
- **Creates** dynamic innovative solutions
- **Inspires** limitless possibilities
- **Understands** challenges and aspirations



Beliefs

We believe in our commitment to provide diverse and flexible educational programs and services within a safe environment by fostering the development of learning communities of integrity and excellence.

We believe in promoting forward thinking, creativity, and partnerships and in encouraging positive change.

We believe in maintaining an entrepreneurial spirit while developing meaningful goals and actions that indicate the success of our mission.



Strategic Goals



Strategic Goals

Financial Stewardship

DCIU delivers exceptional bottom-line values to its districts to address the financial pressures they face. Our budgeting and financial practices are based on program and service needs, accounting integrity, and transparency within and outside of DCIU.

Student-Centered Learning

DCIU provides student-centered learning for students of all ages. Our organization models seamless, student-centered educational experiences from birth through adulthood in its niche areas of education, including career and technical, early childhood, ESL, and special education. We offer innovative, research-based professional development, including continuous professional education and university-based coursework.

Market-Based Business Model

DCIU is attuned to the current and future needs of districts and other customers. We operate using an enterprise, market-driven business model to achieve purposeful social and educational outcomes. Through the creation of an Innovation Fund, DCIU creatively functions as an educational engine for Delaware County. We provide excellence in service at competitive pricing.

Excellence in Service

Everything we do is dedicated to exceeding expectations and building long-lasting, collaborative, and trusting relationships.



2023-2024 Educational Services

Student and Adult Programs and Services

The OPTIONS Transition program served over 160 student participants and 200 adult participants to support their independence within living environments, employment experiences, and traveling within their communities. Our young adult participants have completed over 500 hours in travel instruction, over 5,000 hours with independent living instructional activities, and over 10,000 hours in work experience. Our OPTIONS adult participants have also benefited from over 48,000 hours of supportive employment services.

OPTIONS continued its work in creating learning experiences for our young adults to support their social skills and workplace interactions through the use of the *Healthy Relationships* curriculum. We hosted a visit from the curriculum developers' team, and this supported a first-hand look at how their *Healthy Relationships* can further incorporate lessons built on workplace independence and success.

The OPTIONS Adult Services team hosted the first of a series of events to promote workplace experiences with our adult participants. The first one held in the spring was a workshop-style event, focusing on "Positive Relationships in the Workplace," and how our adult participants can foster friendships in their work environments. Christy Thomas served as the guest speaker and ambassador from her service as Miss PA Wheelchair. Thomas spoke about the importance of building friendships at work and maintaining a focus on positive workplace interactions. About 25 of our adult clients participated in this workshop, many commenting on how much they enjoyed learning about ways they can connect with co-workers in their employment sites.

Emotional Support Programs Continue to Expand

The Emotional Support Programs at the Aston Education Center and The County Alternative High School (TCA) opened diagnostic classrooms this year, which helped welcome students into the program and gather needed data upon their arrival. At the Aston Education Center, two diagnostic classrooms, one for the elementary school and one for the middle school, were implemented. Behavioral health technicians were also used for certain classrooms throughout the building. The program worked with the Teaching and Learning (T&L) Department to implement new math and English Language Arts curriculum units and lesson plans. At TCA, when students enter the program, they are placed in the diagnostic classroom where their benchmark testing, preference surveys, psychiatric evaluation, and psychoeducational and functional behavioral assessments are completed. Behavioral health technicians were an essential part of the program model.

Low-Incidence Students Continue to Develop Independence With Exposure to Valuable Real-World Experience

To continue to grow and develop our secondary-age students' prevocational skills in the Low Incidence program, particularly in the areas of community living and independence, the students participated in community-based



OPTIONS students in independent living environments.

"We have built an amazing relationship with the team at the Marple Education Center. When our children enroll, we know they receive amazing support from the entire team. Our most complex students thrive in the program."

– Regina McClure, Penn Delco LEA



Workplace experiences for OPTIONS students.

2023-2024 Educational Services (Cont'd.)

instruction trips, which provided real-world experiences that were both practical and educational. During trips to ACME, students were actively involved in the process of shopping for ingredients, which enhanced their functional academic skills such as reading labels, budgeting, and following a shopping list. After returning from ACME, students worked collaboratively to prepare a meal as a class. This activity not only reinforced their learning from the trip but also promoted teamwork, communication, and social skills. By participating in meal preparation, students practiced following instructions, measuring ingredients, and managing time, all of which are essential skills for independent living. In addition to the trips to ACME, our high school and transition-age students went on several trips to local restaurants. These outings offered another valuable opportunity for students to practice ordering food, handling money, and interacting with service staff. These experiences were designed to build their social and communication skills in a variety of community environments. Community-based instruction trips helped expand our students' independence, enhance their social and communication abilities, and strengthen their functional academic skills. Through these real-world experiences, our students are better prepared for the challenges of community and independent living, setting them up for greater success in their future endeavors.

Early Intervention Program Adjusts Method for Conducting Diagnostic Evaluations

The Early Intervention (EI) program made large-scale changes to the way diagnostic evaluations are conducted in the program this year. Evaluation teams will now provide assessments in community preschool locations. EI also registered more parents in the STaR parent portal, increasing parent access to service documentation. In addition, the program held its annual EI transition webinar to provide parents with the information they need for transitioning a child to kindergarten. School districts also attended the webinar and shared information on the transition process and what to expect. As a result of this informative event, the number of parents attending transition meetings increased as well as the number of preschoolers transitioning to kindergarten.



Collaboration Educates and Supports Families

The DCIU Head Start (HS) program collaborated with Dr. Onaje Muid of the Foundation for Delaware County and Policy Council Community Representatives, on Head Start Male Engagement activities. In February Dr. Muid trained Head Start families on the importance of positive role models in a child's life. Training was shared with local males actively engaged with our families. The HS Family Services Coordinator attends the monthly Father Engagement committee meetings with the Foundation and community partners to bring back resources for our families.

NOCTI Assessment Results Surpass State Average

Delaware County Technical School (DCTS) students achieved a significant increase in the percentage of students at the competent or advanced level on the National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI) assessment for the 2023-2024 end-of-program testing cycle. Both DCTS high school campuses had the percentage of students at the competent or advanced level at 90%. This included the over 40% of students who received special population support services and the over 50% of students who met the Pennsylvania Department of Education definition of economically disadvantaged at DCTS. These NOCTI assessment results were significantly above the state average and were an increase from previous years.

Students Thrive, Complete Industry Recognized Credentials

One of the benefits of Career and Technical Education (CTE) is Industry Recognized Credentials. Industry-recognized credentials measure competence in core content knowledge and task performance related to a specific industry or trade. CTE students earned free industry certifications or credentials by taking an industry assessment or licensure examination that measured occupational competency, validated knowledge base, and evaluated level of mastery in a particular industry. The training necessary to pass the examination was provided through DCTS programs, and in most cases, DCTS covered the cost of the exam for enrolled students.

Ninety-nine percent of 12th-grade students at DCTS completed an Industry Recognized Credential prior to the end of April 2024. Industry Recognized Credentials Included:

Bloodborne Pathogens Infection Control Heartsaver CPR

Nurse Aide Certification OSHA-Healthcare First Aid

First Responder Program NIMS 100-800 Emergency Response

Advanced Cardiac Life Support ServSafe Food Handler NCCER Credentials

Forklift Operator OSHA 10 Construction OSHA 30 Construction

Automotive Service Excellence I-CAR Various Certificate

Career and Technical Education Month

DCIU celebrated Career and Technical Education Month in February with an event recognizing and promoting the importance of career and technical education in meeting the needs of the workforce and preparing students for successful careers. The event included tours and a presentation at DCTS' Aston Campus.

The theme, *Empowering Futures: Celebrating Career and Technical Education Month*, underscored the critical role of career and technical education programs in fostering innovation, skill development, and career readiness among students.

The program also included a video featuring several CTE students, illuminating their transformative journeys through career and technical education. The students shared their experiences and achievements and how CTE paved the way for their future careers.

The program kicked off with a tour highlighting the DCTS Early Childhood Education and Teacher Preparation Academy programs to demonstrate how students are putting what they learned into practice in DCIU's Head Start and Early Intervention programs.

The DCTS Early Childhood Education program students rotated through the DCIU Head Start and Early Intervention classrooms, gaining valuable exposure and experience in education. The new Teacher Preparation Academy is helping to address the critical teacher shortage affecting schools nationwide.

2023-2024 Educational Services (Cont'd.)

By offering a hands-on, immersive experience, the Academy introduced students to the teaching profession, providing them with a realistic understanding of what it means to be a teacher. DCIU's Executive Director, Dr. Maria Edelberg, talked about the profound impact that CTE has had on the lives of countless individuals in Delaware County and Pennsylvania.

"Through Career and Technical Education, we have not only provided our students with invaluable hands-on experience but also instilled in them a sense of purpose and direction for their future endeavors," Dr. Elderberg stated.

Highlights of the event included student speakers who shared their experiences and a video featuring students who talked about their "why" for career and technical education and how it is paving the way for their future careers.

The program featured remarks from partners and supporters of CTE, including U.S. Congresswoman Mary Gay Scanlon and state Sen. John Kane, who, as a plumber and local labor leader, understands first-hand the importance of career and technical education. As the event concluded, DCIU Board President Tracy Karwoski expressed gratitude to all participants, students, educators, industry partners, supporters and advocates who make career and technical education in Delaware County work.

"Your efforts today are shaping the workforce of tomorrow. Let's keep the momentum going, fostering a culture of continuous learning and improvement that will drive our communities and our country forward," said Karwoski.



"I wanted to speak on the experience with TCA that me and my daughter had. The program helped her tremendously with her mental health and staying on track with her grades. Her grades and behavior really improved, and she has made great connections with staff that she will never forget. I'm very grateful and want to thank Mr. White and everyone at TCA for their contributing efforts in helping my daughter succeed and help her graduate on time."

– Parent

Delivering Opportunity

Trauma-Informed Practices for Educators

To continue providing a welcoming, conducive learning environment where all students can thrive, Early Intervention and Head Start joined together to provide professional development on trauma-informed practices.

Practice-Based Coaching

Early Intervention continued to train itinerant teachers and related service providers in practice-based coaching, marking the sixth year providing coaching services to community preschools and families. This year, staff was trained in *Embedded Instruction*, a new service delivery directive by the Office of Child Development and Early Learning.

Early Intervention Staff Training

Every Early Intervention staff member completed Act 155 training, and all certified staff completed structured literacy training. Thirteen staff and supervisors also participated in vision training, conducted in May and June.

National Speakers Promote Professional Development

DCIU's Teaching & Learning (T&L) Department hosted professional development with six national speakers at no cost for educators from Delaware County schools as a result of funding from the American Rescue Plan (ARP):

Shelley Moore

Dr. Moore is a highly sought-after teacher, researcher, consultant, and storyteller. She has worked with school districts and community organizations throughout the United States. Her research and work have been featured at national and international conferences and are constructed based on theory and effective practices of inclusion, special education, curriculum, and teacher professional development. Dr. Moore spent an afternoon on March 14 with the full T&L Department team on inclusive curriculum and assessment design. Delaware County educators attended a full-day session on March 15 about the evolution of inclusion and models for inclusive classrooms.



Dr. Shelley Moore

Delivering Opportunity (Cont'd.)

Ruby Payne

DCIU hosted nationally renowned author and presenter Ruby Payne at DCIU on October 26 for a full-day workshop on Emotional Poverty. During the workshop, attendees learned strategies to reduce episodes of emotional explosions, anxiety, anger, and violence in their classrooms, ultimately creating a safer campus by emotionally supporting their students. Payne's insightful workshop was designed to impact local educators by empowering them to create emotionally supportive and enriching classroom experiences for all students.

Dr. Erika McDowell

DCIU hosted Dr. Erika McDowell, a former NJ governor's award recipient and honors graduate of Howard University and New York University. For two days in September, Dr. McDowell worked with teams on engagement for adult learners. The team learned about how to achieve inclusive, meaningful professional learning experiences for the professionals with whom we work. On day two, participants unpacked and applied evidence-based strategies available to them to enhance equitable implementation for districts, school leaders, and teachers surrounding Tier 2 and 3 behavior support.

Jim Knight Instructional Coaching Group

The *Instructional Coaching Group*, founded by Jim Knight, provided an intensive two-day coaching series for the entire Teaching and Learning Department in early summer. The demand for coaching and instructional support, for both teachers and administrators alike, has significantly increased after the pandemic. Jim Knight's framework and interventions have been key components of the T&L's coaching model. The *Instructional Coaching Group* returned in August to host a collaborative learning session for Delaware County curriculum directors and building principals. The session, "What Administrators Need to Know about Coaching," provided administrators with an opportunity to see how instructional coaching can impact student achievement, learn how to prioritize coaches' time, discuss, and create an instructional playbook that summarizes high-impact strategies.

Janet Sturm

DCIU was fortunate to bring Janet Sturm to Delaware County and provide two days of training. Sturm's curriculum, *First Author*, is a writing program specifically designed to teach written expression skills to students with complex needs. Each district that sent an educator to the training was given a copy of the curriculum to implement in their setting. Classes in Haverford, Marple Newtown and Children and Adult Disability and Educational Services (CADES) took advantage of this training and jumped in with implementation. Professional development specialists provided support to these teams in various ways throughout the year as needed. At the end of the year, DCIU staff attended *First Author* end-of-the year celebrations at Culbertson and CADES. The students' skills in all areas of the curriculum improved dramatically.

Boardmaker Day

The T&L Department hosted a "Boardmaker Day" for special education teachers, speech-language therapists, and other educators who work with students with complex learning needs on September 20th. *Boardmaker* is a special education platform provided by Tobii Dynavox that provides a variety of tools to support the communication, access, and social-emotional needs of students. During *Boardmaker Day*, representatives from Tobii Dynavox were present to help participants learn to navigate the platform effectively. Participants then had the opportunity to work with Teaching & Learning Assistive Technology (AT) consultants to "make and take" resources by creating and customizing symbols, designing visual schedules and communication boards, and developing any other resource to address the unique needs of the students they work with. Participants from nine school districts, one nonpublic school, and DCIU programs attended.

Environmental Educational Workshop

Teaching & Learning Specialists facilitated multiple outdoor workshops to engage teachers and principals in environmental literacy learning. This included a full-day workshop at the John Heinze Wildlife Refuge, where teachers learned hands-on activities that align directly with the new STEELS standards and its environmental components. As part of the training, participants were eligible to become Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience (MWEE) ambassadors and use the MWEE kits in their schools. These kits are available to borrow as part of the DCIU STEM Lending Library.

In-Service Day

More than 300 educators participated in workshops held at the DCIU Morton Campus during the November 7 County-wide InService Day. There were workshops designed specifically for general education teachers, content-specific teachers, special education teachers, related service professionals, world language teachers, special areas/encore teachers, paraprofessionals, and more. The wide range of workshops featured titles such as "Making Sense of Phenomena in Science," "Complex Learner Institute," "Using Data to Advance Literacy Learning," "Innovative Assistive Technology: Bridging 3D Printing and Classroom Integration," "Unique Learning System: Deep Dive and Networking," "Strategies for Working with Students 1:1 or in Small Groups," "Conceptual Understanding of Priority Math Content," "Supporting Struggling Math Learners," and "Supporting Long-Term English Learners."

Gifted 101

The Pennsylvania Association for Gifted Education (PAGE) and DCIU partnered to provide a Gifted 101 workshop for parents in December. Parents from seven districts attended an informational evening about gifted education in the state of Pennsylvania and how to best support their children. Parents expressed deep gratitude for the opportunity to meet and connect with other parents of gifted learners in addition to having gained essential information to advocate for and meet the unique needs of their children.

Wilson Level 1 Certification

The DCIU nonpublic remedial group continues to be a leader in the initiatives of *Structured Literacy* and the *Science of Reading*. Over a dozen teachers across the county were certified with Wilson Level I to support their students with their research-based literacy intervention.

Career and Professional Connections

The DCIU internship program in School Psychology has provided graduate-level training to future practitioners for more than 30 years. The internship program uses a developmental model of supervision to ensure that students receive real-world professional training in a supportive environment and fulfill the requirements for certification as a school psychologist. This year, the School Psychology Internship program hosted two outstanding interns, who recently graduated from their programs. This school year, DCIU Speech-Language Pathologists have supervised six students from Loyola University, LaSalle University, and Temple University.

Promoting Positive Communication

The OPTIONS team participated in a learning opportunity in support of positive workplace communication and relationships through restorative practices. This learning was valuable to the team in establishing a framework for peer-to-peer and educator-to-learner engagement. The team will move forward with implementing this framework with our school-aged participants, helping our young adults to learn to effectively manage conflict within relationships and how to best repair or restore those relationships to an effective level of interaction.

Delivering Opportunity (Cont'd.)

The OPTIONS team expanded its structure of leadership meetings to incorporate the perspective of support staff, our OPTIONS paraeducators, who work daily with our young adults. This bi-weekly opportunity to discuss common and unique challenges and solutions extends across both independent living and work-experience programming; therefore, we found it valuable to bring the perspectives of all the paraeducators forward by using a similar structure to the weekly school-aged leadership meetings. This structure was also helpful in streamlining procedures and addressing concerns in a timely and transparent fashion among our adult services leadership team.

Threat Assessment Training Provided to Districts

Nine school districts throughout the county received threat assessment and crisis response training to help facilitate staff growth and the formation of their own individual district teams.

Continuing Education Opportunities for Staff

The entire DCIU Early Childhood staff participated in professional development in February to strengthen their foundations for Trauma-Informed approaches in Early Childhood Education. The training focused on social and emotional support to help children learn to self-calm, regulate their emotions, and focus on learning. Dr. Colleen Lelli presented the training. Several staff members received a copy of Dr. Lelli's book, "Trauma-Sensitive Schools: The Importance of Instilling Grit, Determination, and Resilience." In addition, the County Alternative High School staff continued to train staff on Safety Cares during the 23-24 school year. TCA trainers opened their doors to DCIU staff across programs and trained DCIU employees from multiple programs.



Creating Connections

Community and Parent Connections

The OPTIONS School-Aged services team partnered with the T&L Transition Team to host a two-day Transition Event, uniquely presented to support parents and families attending the event during the evening and high school students to attend during the day with their school teams. This exceptional event saw the attendance of over 200 participants, direct service providers, and support agency representatives, all with the singular purpose of seeking out resources for services to support exceptional adults.

Fostering Career and Professional Connections

The DCIU Human Resources Department hosted a career fair in March 2024. All 15 School Districts in the county were represented, and approximately 100 job seekers attended the event! This was a tremendous turnout, and there was a good cross-section of attendees ranging from certificated administrators/teachers to bus drivers and part-time paraeducators.

OPTIONS continued its 24-year-long successful partnership with the Delaware County Office of Workforce Development in supporting in-school youth with paid work experiences. Additionally, the program was awarded a Workforce Innovation (WIOA) to support out-of-school youth in achieving employment with family-sustaining income.

Honing In on Physical Fitness and Health Literacy

The County Alternative High School (TCA) formed a community partnership with a local boxing gym. This was a great benefit to the TCA community. Students learned the basic fundamental skills of boxing and personal fitness.

"I want to make sure I have a chance to tell you how much I appreciate your work with Juliana. She is becoming so much more aware of her articulation and enjoys telling us about the things she is learning."

– Parent



Creating Connections (Cont'd.)

Practice-Based Coaching Training Proves to Be a Success

DCIU partnered with the Ridley YMCA to provide practice-based coaching and ongoing training for all staff. This coaching relationship has improved the inclusion experience for our early intervention students.

Providing Emotional and Behavioral Support Yields Success

DCIU partnered with Garrett's Way and Goddard of Newtown Square to provide preschool behavior consultation. Since the partnership, it is important to note that all students were able to benefit from inclusive practices.

The Emotional Support Program began a partnership with Delaware County Community College to allow our students tour the campus each school year, to expose them to post-secondary education opportunities.

Teaching & Learning Connections

DCIU has been actively engaged in several year-long or multi-year partnership projects to enhance educational practices and support student achievement. Our 2023-2024 partnerships included:

- Science, Technology & Engineering, Environmental Literacy & Sustainability (STEELS) professional learning pathways and implementation support in the Upper Darby School District to support the transition to new Pennsylvania science standards
- Supporting students and teachers involved in the regional *Chief Science Officers* program to inspire student leadership in STEM in the Penn Delco School District
- Building capacity for special education programs at the Haverford Middle School
- Supporting the competitive aerial drone club and development of a drone elective course at Chichester High School
- Engaging in mathematics curriculum development, and implementation coaching for the Southeast Delco School District
- Coaching six teachers in autistic support program development and coaching in the Marple Newtown School District
- Establishing and expanding MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Support) at Garnet Valley School District elementary schools with a focus on assessment systems and protocols
- Providing yearlong leadership development support and job-embedded coaching for district and building leaders at William Penn School District.

DCIU partnered with the Chester Charter Scholars Academy and Southwest Leadership Academy Charter to support English language program development and direct instruction for English learners.

DCIU continues to work with many nonpublic schools as part of the Emergency Assistance to Nonpublic Schools (EANS) grant to enhance educational programs. This includes esports programming at Cardinal O'Hara, providing multiple schools with training and support in using Acadience, STEELS training at Bonner Prendie, and support for an after-school STEELS club, field trips to DCIU's Innovation and Inclusion (I&I) Studio, and social emotional learning and equity work at Lansdowne Friends School. Additionally, over 200 people participated in the nonpublic in-service day about Executive Functioning in February.

New Location and Collaboration Provides New Opportunities for Student Growth

The OPTIONS program operates DCIU's *Thrift Store on the Avenue* in Lansdowne. The program is excited to engage with digital and online sales through the Delaware County Advocacy and Resource Organization (DCARO) collaboration. This leap into modern retail sales reflects the forward-thinking nature of the DCIU and also creates an opportunity to expand our presence in the community as a supportive work environment for young adults and adults with disabilities as well as develop more technology-based work skills for our young adult and adult participants who work at the *Thrift Store on the Avenue*.



Community Engagement and Outreach

DCIU Early Intervention staff participated in the 2023 Early Childhood Conference at Neumann University. Six Early Intervention staff members, including speech therapists, itinerant teachers, and supervisors, presented at the conference.

Within the OPTIONS program development of the WIOA grant, and the implementation of Project WIN (Workforce Innovation Network), DCIU has partnered with MontCo Works, Careers Through Culinary Arts Program (CCAP), and other workforce-centered organizations within the county in developing the programming needed to support out-of-school youth in gaining meaningful employment.

DCIU helped plan the annual Veterans Day Parade in Media, a long-standing tradition in Delaware County for many decades. An integral part of the parade is the essay contest for middle school students conducted by DCIU. The goals of the contest are to encourage Delaware County students to learn more about US war history, veterans, and how veterans help preserve our freedom; to demonstrate to our veterans that our students are indeed grateful for their service; and to provide our youth with a way to say thank you to our veterans for dedicating their lives to protect our country. We also believe it is important that our students have an opportunity to learn more about the political, economic, and social circumstances that led to wars throughout our history. The first-, second- and third-place winners are invited to the parade in November to read their winning essays during the ceremony portion of this wonderful event. This event brings together veterans, county, and municipal officials for the planning of this wonderful event.

Family and Community Support Programs

Project ELECT is a 12-month program providing comprehensive support services to school-age pregnant and parenting students throughout Delaware County. The program offers services to help students stay in school, graduate or get a GED, secure post-graduation employment/education/

Creating Connections (Cont'd.)

training, and learn about positive parenting behaviors and child development. Programs for families and communities this year included:

- **Adopt a Teen:** Matched 45 pregnant and parenting students in the ELECT program with sponsors this holiday season.
- **Summer Playdates:** The Family Center hosted our annual playdates for six weeks in July and August. The theme was World Wildlife Exploration and covered animals of the Land, Air, and Sea. The program ended with a visit from the Elmwood Park "Zoo on Wheels." The Zoo's community educator brought three different animals and provided a fun, interactive lesson for our children and families.
- **Operation Warm and Giving Tree Partnership:** This year the Family Center strengthened its partnership with the Rocky Run YMCA. We again partnered with Operation Warm and distributed 165 coats to the Delaware County community. The coats were all distributed within two weeks of receipt- the quickest we have ever given out all coats. In addition, the Rocky Run YMCA sponsored 25 children in our Parents as Teachers Home Visiting Program through their Giving Tree for the Holiday Season. These children were provided with gifts for the holiday season.

Delaware County Family Center

The mission of DCIU's Delaware County Family Center is to help families become strong, self-sufficient members of the community through comprehensive, prevention-focused services for families in Delaware County. All services are free and open to all Delaware County families.

This year, the Family Center served 23 families through the Parents as Teachers Home Visiting Program, and 106 adults and 126 children attended at least one Family Center event. Eighteen adults earned a Parenting Class Certificate of Completion. Finally, the Family Center held 18 *Group Connections*.



Program/Staff Accomplishments

Panel Discussion on Collaborative Models

DCIU occupational therapist (Chuck Gallagher), speech-language pathologist (Jaime Mazza), and early intervention staff (Vicky Lewis) participated in a panel discussion on interdisciplinary collaboration models, challenges, and solutions with doctoral students attending the University of Delaware.

School Counselors Come Through for Students

DCIU School Counselors provided individual and group counseling sessions, as well as classroom-based lessons to well over 500 students in Delaware County non-public schools this school year. Topics ranged from building friendships and social skills to organizational strategies and building self-esteem.

Restorative Practice Training

Ten individuals in DCIU T&L were trained as Restorative Practices trainers through the International Institute of Restorative Practices (IIRP). This allows these individuals to lead Restorative Practices training for educators and supports work related to the DCIU STOP Grant.

Vision Staff Present at Conference

Two Vision department staff attended and presented at the Pennsylvania-Delaware (Penn-Del) Chapter of The Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired conference.



Hearing Staff Appointed to State Advisory Boards

Christy Hiergeist, Hearing, Language, and Vision Supervisor, was appointed to a state advisory board for PDE Educational Resources for Children with Hearing Loss (ERCHL) and Theresa Fay was appointed to an advisory board for the Council for Exceptional Children.

RESNA Leadership Retreat

School-age Physical Therapist, Allison P. Sevillano currently serves on the Board of Directors for Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Association of North America (RESNA) and attended a weekend leadership retreat in Washington D.C. Allison is also leading a RESNA Position Paper on Adaptive Cycling and participated in the collaborative writing of another research-based report through the American Academy of Pediatrics relating to Dosage of School-Based Physical Therapy services.

Program/Staff Accomplishments (Cont'd.)

Teaching & Learning Executive Utilizes Expert Insight

Dr. Joyce Mundy, Assistant to the Executive Director for Teaching & Learning, wrote a chapter in a book, "Leadership in a VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous) World," which was published in the fall of 2023. Her chapter is entitled "Leading Restorative, Connected Communities in VUCA Times."

Teaching & Learning Staff Provide Insight on Assistive Technology for Visually Impaired Students at Conference

Jason Gonzalez presented at the Penn-Del Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired Conference on assistive technology for blind and visually impaired students. Dr. Bria Hoey presented at the PA PBIS Conference on inclusive practices for emotional support students. And, as a result of the high-quality action-research projects completed by Delaware County students who participated in the DCIU Student Coalition for Equity and Voice, a group of students alongside the T&L program facilitators Natalie Bowen and Jamie Pitcavage, presented at the Pennsylvania Educator Diversity Consortium (PEDC) 5th Annual Educator Diversity Virtual Summit. Their presentation focused on effective models to engage students in communities of practices that lead to actionable change to increase belonging in schools. Finally, Natalie Bowen presented at the Delaware County School Counselors Association Annual Countywide Professional Development Day at Widener University in November. Natalie was invited to present her expertise in school counseling and her digital counseling toolkit.

Pupil Services Staff Provide Resources and Training on Trauma-Informed Counseling

Nonpublic Pupil Services staff Joanna McGowan and Christine Adamo-Newell compiled best practices and resources in trauma-informed counseling techniques highlighting mindfulness and movement therapies, and Shameka Knight and Shradha Gera compiled a book of resources on culturally responsive practices for school psychologists.



Student Awards, Special Events and Activities

Clubs for Students to Explore Interests

Every Friday afternoon, the Low Incidence students at MEC had the enriching opportunity to participate in various clubs aligned to their interests. This program allowed students to select a club from a diverse list of choices, ensuring they engage in activities they were genuinely passionate about. The club experience was designed to provide multiple developmental benefits including social skills and interactions, communication skills, and leisure skills. By interacting with peers in a relaxed and enjoyable setting, students practiced essential social skills, learning how to initiate conversations, respond to others, and navigate social dynamics, fostering a sense of belonging and friendship. Participation in club activities encouraged students to express themselves more effectively. Whether through verbal communication, using assistive technology, or non-verbal cues, students enhanced their ability to convey thoughts and feelings, improving overall communication competence. Clubs also introduced students to a variety of hobbies and interests, expanding their repertoire of leisure activities. This exposure helped students discover new passions and skills they can enjoy both inside and outside of school, promoting a balanced and fulfilling lifestyle. Overall, our Friday afternoon clubs provided a supportive environment where students could grow socially, communicate more confidently, and develop meaningful leisure pursuits.

"The staff at MEC really care about the kids and do all they can to help them succeed every day. The trips to restaurants and grocery stores are also a great addition. Our children need all the experiences they can get in the real world. All the teachers and therapists from Music, Gym, and Art to OT, PT, and Speech are incredible. Thank you for all you have done. Can't wait to see what next year will bring."

– Parent

Emotional Support Students Thrive

At the Emotional Support Program at Aston four students were accepted to the Delaware County Technical School; two students were accepted to Delaware County Community College; seven students are returning to their school districts for either the Extended School Year program or the beginning of the school year and three students graduated from the program (two from the Forward Bound Program and one from the Delaware County Academy program).

Hearing Program Students Recognized

The Strath Haven High School Homecoming King was a student from DCIU's Hearing Program, and a Special Olympian from Strath Haven Middle School was also a student in that program. In addition, the Hearing Program hosted its annual Recognition Night; 18 students from all of Delaware County were recognized. Five of them spoke at the ceremony held at the DCIU Education Center. Further, Hearing Program students participated in the DCIU Art Show, Invention Convention, and DCIU eSports.

TCA Students Gain Real-World Experience

Seven students in The County Alternative program completed OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) certification training during the 23-24 school year. One student from Upper Darby and one student from Chester Upland participated in the DCIU OPTIONS program to work in the culinary arts classroom and assist with catering events across the county. One student from the Interboro School District Class of 2024 received the DCIU Education Association award for the student making the most progress over the school year. Finally, the Emotional Support Program at TCA celebrated the graduation of seven seniors.

Student Awards, Special Events and Activities (Cont'd.)

Annual Prom Held For Secondary-Age Students

The Low Incidence Program at Marple Education Center held its annual prom for its secondary students. It was a resounding success, providing an unforgettable evening of fun and celebration for all attendees. Held under the theme "Under the Big Top," the event transformed the cafeteria into a vibrant carnival scene, complete with colorful decorations, playful carnival games, and a lively atmosphere.

A highlight of the evening was the photo booth, which featured a variety of fun props and backdrops. This allowed students and their families to capture joyous moments and create lasting memories. The booth was a popular spot, with many participants enjoying the chance to pose with friends and family in a relaxed and festive setting.

Music played a central role in the festivities, with a DJ playing a mix of popular tunes that kept the dance floor bustling throughout the event. Students, families, and staff alike enjoyed dancing to their favorite songs, creating an inclusive and energetic environment that truly embodied the spirit of celebration.

The event also featured an array of delicious food, ensuring that everyone could indulge and enjoy a meal or snack while socializing and reveling in the carnival atmosphere.

The prom was well attended by students, their families, and dedicated staff members, all of whom contributed to the evening's success. The strong turnout highlighted the importance of community and support, as everyone came together to celebrate the achievements and milestones of the students joyfully and inclusively. Prom provided a memorable and delightful experience for secondary students and their families.



DCIU Hosts Annual Making a Difference Awards Ceremony

In collaboration with The Right to Education Local Task Force for Delaware County, DCIU hosted the *12th Annual Making a Difference Awards Ceremony* on April 30, at Springfield High School. For months, a committee comprised of Local Chair members, special education directors, and DCIU representatives accepted and reviewed 178 nominations that highlighted students and faculty from around Delaware County for their impact on developing and supporting inclusive learning environments. In total, 29 students, 14 adults, one entire boys' basketball team, two student classes, and one group of 12 Speech Language Pathologists were recognized at this celebratory event.

Practical Nursing Students Celebrate Graduation and Receive Awards

The Practical Nursing Program celebrated the graduation of Cohort 62. Commencement speaker Cliff Konah offered words of advice and well wishes to the graduating class. Theresa Boakye-Yiadom, Patricia Robinson, Unique Meyers, Ajibade Oniyelu, and Te'Naja Graham were inducted into the National Adult Education Honor Society for their hard work and academic excellence throughout the program. Each year, the program recognizes students for their efforts within the classroom and the clinical setting. Simajja Brown was awarded the Clinical Excellence Award, and Danielle Ercole was given the Leadership Award.



Delaware County Technical School Students Compete in Career Organization Competitions

HOSA: HOSA Future Health Professionals is a global student-led organization whose mission is to promote career opportunities in the health industry and to enhance the delivery of quality health care to all people. This year, 344 DCTS students participated in local HOSA sponsored activities and competitions. DCTS had 96 students compete at states and seven students received medals at the HOSA State Competition. Seven DCTS students participated in the HOSA International Competition held in Houston, TX. This was the third trip for Victoria Hanright, who attended the DCTS Health Sciences program and placed at the State competition all three years in which she participated. This year, Victoria, a recent graduate of Chichester High School, achieved a second-place finish in the Personal Care competition.

SkillsUSA: SkillsUSA provides educational programs, events and competitions that support career and technical education in the nation's classrooms. In February, students in various programs at DCTS participated in SkillsUSA District 2 Regional Competitions. In total, DCTS had four first-place winners, ten second-place winners, and eight third-place winners.

Tech Comp: The Greater Philadelphia Auto Technology Competition (Tech Comp) builds awareness of the important role of auto technicians in today's workforce and spotlights their specialized skills and professionalism. The role of auto technicians has changed with technology, and so has Tech Comp since it started in 1993. The DCTS winners for this year's competition are Tyler Lurwick, Springfield High School, and Benjamin Miller, Garnet Valley High School. This was the first time that a team from DCTS won first place in this regional competition, and the students were awarded full scholarships to several different automotive training schools and prizes, amounting to over \$150,000 each.

C-CAP Prepares Students for Job Field

In the Philadelphia region, the Careers Through Culinary Arts Program (C-CAP) prepares high school students from 22 schools for college and career opportunities in the restaurant and hospitality industry. C-CAP provides the following services to our students: job training and internships, curriculum enrichment for our culinary classrooms, career exploration and advising opportunities, scholarships through cooking competitions, college advising, teacher professional development, and product donations for our classrooms.

DCTS students received over \$450,000 in scholarships from C-CAP at its award program at the end of April. We look forward to the bright futures ahead for these hard-working students in the culinary field.

Neumann University Collaboration Presents Unique Opportunity

The Teaching & Learning department collaborated with Neumann University to deliver the exciting opportunity to delve into its Esports Management Program, offered through the university's School of Business. The University welcomed 48 students from six Delaware County districts for a campus tour and engagement in an esports tournament held at their state-of-the-art gaming lab.

Secondary Transition Fair

DCIU hosted a county-wide Secondary Transition Fair on the evening of April 9th and during the school day on April 10th. Over 150 parents and other guests attended during the evening, and well over 200 teachers and students came as part of their school day on April 10. Over 45 community partners participated by setting up a table to highlight their organizations and services with Delaware County families and students.

Girls Who Code Club

DCIU hosted fall and winter cohorts of the *Girls Who Code* club at the new Innovation & Inclusion (I&I) Studio. This initiative aims to inspire and empower female students through coding and technology to become the next generation of leaders and innovators in STEM.

Youth Career Conference

Over 450 students across the county attended DCIU's third annual Youth Career Conference in February. The theme of this year's event was "From Interest to Employment." This annual event is designed to provide transition-aged students, particularly in high school, with a supportive and engaging environment to learn about skills needed to successfully attain and maintain employment, focusing on five areas: self-advocacy, empowerment, gaming, arts, and sports. Several accomplished speakers, including students who recently graduated from Delaware County school districts, shared their own stories and helped students understand how to convert their existing talents and interests into skills needed for employment.

Annual Adapted Art Showcase

DCIU held its second annual Adapted Art Showcase in November at our Morton location. The event provides students with disabilities the opportunity to shine by displaying their artwork for all around the county to see. This event was a huge success, with over 350 students, families, teachers, and administrators from 14 school districts, DCIU programs, and three additional private schools in Delaware County visiting to see more than 550 pieces of artwork created by students. The event was featured on NBC 10 evening news that night and then again the following morning.



Mock Interviews

To help increase employability for secondary students with special needs, DCIU's Secondary Transition Team conducted mock interviews. Approximately 200 students from 11 Delaware County public schools, two nonpublic schools, and three DCIU programs participated.

Student Forum and Future Educators Academy

As part of the Coalition for Agency and Student Voice, the Student Forum and Future Educators Academy convened students from across Delaware County each month throughout the school year. The Student Forum students worked on crafting the "Playbook for Dignity and Belonging in Delaware County Schools." Students learned about programs and practices that contribute to a positive, culturally responsive school climate, such as restorative practices, gratitude, social emotional wellness, and being trauma-informed. The Future Educators Academy worked on developing its philosophy of education. Over the course of the meetings, students listened to professionals in the field and learned about the topics they find important. Both groups of students presented their collective work at a Student Symposium conference event in April.

STEM Summer Camp

DCIU STEM Specialists offered a two-week summer camp for students in first through fourth grade, with students from several districts attending the camp at the Morton location. The first week focused on Coding and Robotics. First and second grade students participated in coding skills with a focus on sequencing, looping, and *if/then* activities. Students were exposed to *Bee Bots*, *Kibos*, and *Dash & Dot* robots from our STEM Lending Library. The online programs *Scratch Jr.* and *Kodable* were explored as well. Third and fourth grade students learned about computer science and coding through a variety of activities such as exploring circuits, creating light up superhero beacons, constructing and flying drones, and making music using *Makey Makey* circuits. Students experienced the world of AR/VR using *Merge Cubes* and *CoSpaces* to create their own virtual worlds. At the end of the week, students worked together to design and build an obstacle racing course for their *Sphero*, *Ozobot*, and *Dash* robots. The second week focused on Science and Engineering. Students became engineers, learning about and working their way through the engineering design process. Each design challenge was inspired with literacy in mind. Students designed, created, tested, and improved copters for *Rosie Revere, Engineer*. Using inspiration from the book *If I Built a Car*, students constructed and tested different types of vehicles powered by a single balloon. They also worked to save Mr. Magee by engineering and testing different parachute designs. Students had a great week of investigating, building, problem-solving, and working together.



Summer Camp for English Learners

In July 2023, the English Language Development program provided a three-week summer camp with the theme, "Science Explorers." Ninety students in grades K-12 from various districts attended the camp that was held at Manoa Elementary School and Northley Middle School. Students participated in STEM-focused activities that developed critical thinking and problem solving founded in scientific phenomena and developed the language to explain, compare, provide evidence, and persuade.

Student Competitions

The 24 Challenge

The 24 Challenge was held on May 29, for grades 4-5 and May 30, for grades 6-8. Over 150 students competed in a tournament-style competition, using addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division to develop solutions to problems that equal 24. The 4th/5th grade winner was from the Chichester School District and the 6th and 7th/8th grade winners came from the Ridley School District.

Reading Olympics

The Reading Olympics were held on April 29 & 30 and May 1 & 2. This event is a culmination of a lot of hard work that has occurred over the past year. Teachers have supported students in book groups since last June in reading from a list of 45 books for their grade level. There were lots of smiles and proud moments among teachers, students, and their families! This year, 14 Delaware County districts, 66 schools, 132 teams, 1500 students, and 70+ volunteers participated in 4 nights of fun. Wallingford-Swarthmore School District hosted the event.

Spelling Bee

The DCIU Spelling Bee took place in February. Thirty-three talented students from 21 public and nonpublic schools showcased their spelling abilities through 11 rounds of competition. An 8th-grade student from The Grayson School won the competition and represented Delaware County at the Scripps National Spelling Bee near Washington, D.C. during the week of Memorial Day. The second-place winner was a 5th-grade student from Garnet Valley Elementary School, and the third-place winner was an 8th-grade student from Northley Middle School. Approximately 150 family members, teachers, and friends came to cheer on the students for the competition. Dr. Mark Auitable, Supervisor of Teaching & Learning, served as the competition's pronouncer, with the challenging job of pronouncing each student's word as provided in the 2024 Scripps Regional Competition List - a list of 500 words selected from Merriam-Webster Dictionary. The event was supported by several volunteers who filled important Spelling Bee official roles, including judges, record keepers, emcees, and coordinators.



Student Competitions (Cont'd.)

K'NEX STEM Design Challenge

The K'NEX STEM Design Challenge was held on March 4 for 5th graders and March 5 for 6th-8th graders, highlighting months of student work to design innovative projects. The first place team from Glenwood Elementary, with the project "The Grain Grinder 2000" and the first place team from Springton Lake Middle School, with the project called "LAWNS" advanced to the state competition at the Farm Show Complex in Harrisburg, PA. Teaching & Learning Specialist, Rebecca Kelly, organized and facilitated the two-day event that featured over 70 elementary school teams and 35 middle school teams, and their inventive solutions in high-tech farming.



Delaware County Science & Engineering Fair

DCIU welcomed the Delaware Valley Science Fair on March 8 for a full day competition that included over 150 students across many schools and districts in Delaware County. The fair featured student research in topics ranging from computer science to engineering to biomedical technology to botany and many more areas. Students won awards in 15 categories. Award winners move on to compete at the Delaware Valley Science Fair. One Delaware County student - an 11th-grade student at Garnet Valley High School - moved on to win at the International Science and Engineering Fair for their research project, Computational Systems Biology and Machine Learning-Based Approach to Predict Cognitive Disorder in the Elderly.

Delco Clash of Champions

DCIU hosted its first esports tournament, the "Delco Clash of Champions." Bringing together 18 students from Wallingford Swarthmore, Garnet Valley, and Chichester School Districts, the event showcased intense competition as teams of three engaged in Rocket League matches. Beyond the gaming area, students had the unique opportunity to explore DCIU's cutting-edge technology initiatives, such as aerial drone competition practice. The event not only highlighted the growing interest in esports but also underscored DCIU's commitment to providing innovative and engaging experiences for students.

Innovation and Initiatives

MTSS Framework for Academic and Behavior Systems

DCIU Teaching & Learning and Student Services teams supported districts and schools in implementing the Delaware County Interconnected MTSS Framework for Academic and Behavior Systems. This guiding document, created by the Delaware County Chief School Administrators, provides leadership teams with an opportunity to examine their current organization's multi-tiered systems of support. This model encompasses opportunities for leadership teams at the district and building level to utilize the School Health Assessment and Performance (SHAPE) tool to analyze current supports and structures for students' well-being, mental health, and positive behavior. DCIU trainers have provided personalized learning and support for schools and districts in models for supporting behavior, well-being, and academic support for students based on the fidelity tool. Additionally, DCIU published two toolkits each month to increase mental health literacy throughout the county. The toolkits included two public service announcements that focused on educating schools and communities on how to recognize barriers to mental health and increase strategies for resilience. Themes aligned with mental health awareness campaigns through the National Institute of Health and the American Psychologist Association. The Interconnected MTSS Framework for Academic and Behavior Systems has helped district and school teams to deepen their understanding and strengthen practices to support students and provide strong interventions to increase student success.



Work-Experience Partnerships Continue to Grow

The recently established work-experience partners of DCTS, DCIU Facilities, and DCIU Early Intervention (EI) showed great success this past year. The DCIU Facilities relationship was expanded through the addition of several "Extra Thorough Cleaners" (ETC) positions, supporting adults with disabilities who are working towards the skills needed for competitive employment. Through the EI partners, our young adult participant continued to thrive in his work experience and the EI and OPTIONS partnership will grow in the coming year. The DCTS partnership has continued through the inclusion of several school-aged participants in our TANF Grant program, working side-by-side with culinary instructor Mike Cruice, a true friend to the OPTIONS program. This relationship will continue to expand with our new Project WIN program working with out-of-school youth.

Innovation and Initiatives (Cont'd.)

Teacher Preparation Academy

To address the severe teacher shortage in the state, DCTS developed the Teacher Preparation Academy, a program offered to 11th and 12th grade students interested in pursuing a teaching career. Participants learned the physical, intellectual, social, and emotional characteristics of children and teenagers, including knowledge and skills to guide learning and create a safe, healthy classroom environment. Students who enrolled in the Academy were equipped and ready to enter a teacher preparation program at a college or university.



Head Start
Program

Technology Integration in Education

DCIU launched the Innovation & Inclusion (I&I) Studio, thanks in part to a grant from Boeing. The I&I Studio functions as a flexible STEM space that fosters connection between STEM skills and inclusivity. Throughout the year, DCIU hosted many STEM events for both educators and students. This included a STEM night hosted for the DCIU Family Center, school STEM field trips, spring and fall sessions of the *Girls Who Code* club, DCIU's first Esports tournament, and a *Rocket League Esports* tournament with students from DCIU's TCA program, which was a rewards trip for students who consistently demonstrated positive behaviors. Additionally, the 3D printers and *GlowForge* laser engraver in the space support the Assistive Technology team in developing and printing innovative adaptive technology materials for students.

Who We Served



Early Childhood Education

3,930

Children served through early childhood education programs, including early Intervention, Head Start, Hearing and Language, and Speech and Language



School-aged Students

5,792

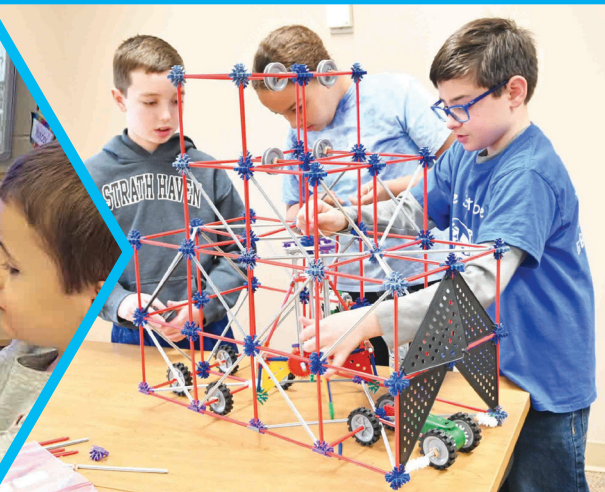
Students served through school-aged education programs, including Low Incidence, Emotional support, OPTIONS, Occupational/Physical Therapy, Hearing and Language, Speech and Language, ELECT, Nonpublic-Act 89, Delaware County Technical School, and student events and competitions.



Adult Education Programs

4,775

Adults served through adult education programs, including professional development, coaching and consultation, graduate and continuing professional education (CPE) courses, Practical Nursing, and online training

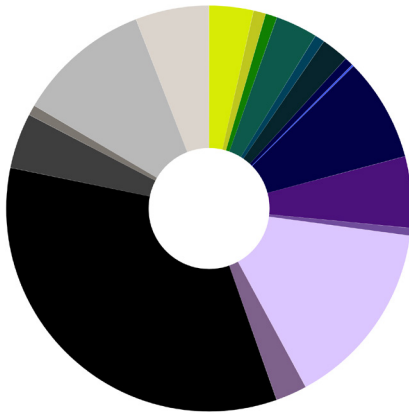


2023-2024 Financial Summary & Budget Highlights



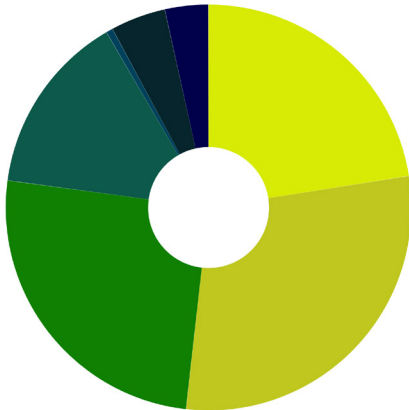
Total Expenditures and Revenues \$166,485,774

Expenditures

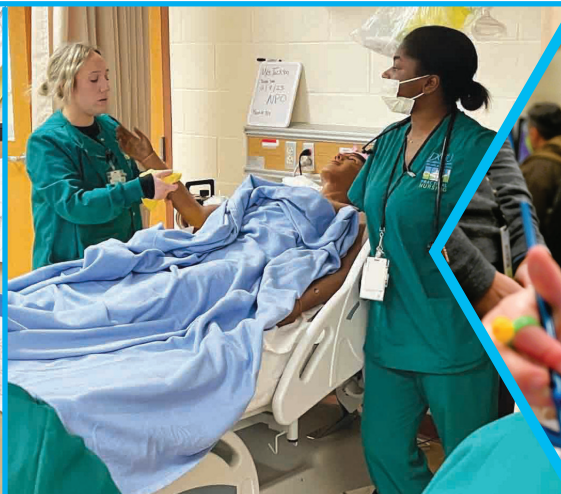


- ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES: \$5,871,929
- ADULT EDUCATION SERVICES: \$1,633,084
- ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION: \$1,550,874
- BUILDING SERVICES: \$5,600,263
- CAFETERIA SERVICES: \$1,310,346
- CAPITAL PROJECTS: \$3,625,099
- COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES: \$1,161,174
- ELL SERVICES: \$257,993
- HEAD START SERVICES: \$13,711,416
- NONPUBLIC SERVICES: \$9,475,830
- OTHER SERVICES: \$1,002,122
- PRESCHOOL SERVICE: \$24,911,390
- PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES: \$4,154,590
- SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES: \$55,979,092
- TECHNOLOGY RELATED SERVICES: \$7,363,451
- TRANSPORTATION SERVICES: \$1,358,406
- VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SERVICES: \$17,746,005
- COVID 19 SERVICES/PURCHASES: \$9,772,708

Revenues



- SERVICES PURCHASED BY DISTRICTS: \$37,475,795
- STATE: \$48,732,454
- FEDERAL: \$42,216,819
- OTHER LOCAL: \$24,089,299
- DISTRICT CONTRIBUTION: \$885,695
- TUITION FOR PROGRAMS: \$7,328,109
- COVID 19 FUNDING: \$5,757,602



Grants

STOP - \$993,276

The DCIU STOP Grant, awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance at the Department of Justice, allows DCIU to support 13 middle schools in Delaware County over a three-year period while implementing Restorative Practices. During the 2023-2024 school year, which was the first year of the grant, schools began to implement Restorative Practices focused on building leadership capacity amongst administrators and leadership teams. A team of trainers from DCIU Teaching & Learning received the IIRP Train-the-Trainer to become facilitators of restorative practices training. In addition, 67 school administrators received the two-day IIRP Restorative Practices training and worked with DCIU throughout the year in a Strategic Planning for Restorative Practices Implementation Act 45 course and individualized coaching for each school. Next year, schools will begin to implement restorative practices in the classroom with small teams of "early adopter" teachers before implementing school-wide in the 2025-2026 school year.

PCCD Competitive School Safety Grant - \$326,655

This grant, which will be implemented in the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 school years, supports the execution of and fidelity to an integrated school-based mental health service model for Tier 1 that increases access to and use of evidence-based programs and supports for school-aged students. These funds will be used for the following:

1. Expand DCIU's capacity to provide Delaware County schools professional development in evidence-based Tier 1 suicide prevention programs that will help increase school safety.
2. Develop a Tier 1 Behavior Cohort and a two-day Behavior Boot Camp training with learning pathways for administrators, seasoned professional teachers, and new or emergency certified teachers.
3. Support the fidelity and effectiveness of county-wide implementation of Tier 1 evidence-based behavior programs and support in Delaware County.
4. Connect SAP services county-wide.

Delaware County Department of Health Title V Grant - \$84,000

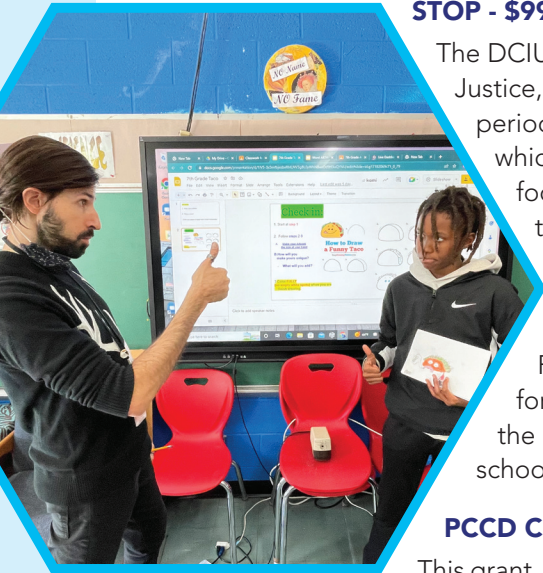
DCIU is a subgrantee for a Delaware County grant that enabled the purchase of additional assistive technology (AT) devices and supports the expansion of our AT Lending Library for students across Delaware County. We have purchased more AT devices for visually and blind impaired (eye gaze systems), a state of the art 3D printer for printing tactile maps and other braille devices, a braille copy machine, new AAC systems, adapted toys, adaptive gaming systems, talking calculators, and wheelchair mounts.

CCRES Grant - \$3,245

The DCIU Teaching & Learning Department received a grant from CCRES to purchase supplies for creating adaptive physical education equipment.

DCIU Education Foundation Grant - \$9,894

Teaching & Learning was the recipient of a DCIU Education Foundation Grant for \$9,894, which funded the purchase of six Cosmos cell systems, along with OtterBox cases and iPads, to support Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) in therapy with students. Cosmo is an award-winning, interactive therapy and inclusive training system that motivates learners to develop motor, cognitive, and communication skills through play and music.



Grants (Cont'd.)

STEM in PA - \$31,000

A STEM in PA grant provided funds for DCIU to support the instructional shifts required by the updated science standards and the PA Smart Initiative in two ways. The first focused on building Intermediate Unit capacity to support educators and school districts, and the second established a STEM teaching and learning leadership network across Pennsylvania. These efforts strengthened the statewide STEM education system, helped equip educators with the necessary skills for high quality STEM instruction, and supported the State System of Support STEM initiative.

CSO - \$16,125

Teaching & Learning received a grant for the Chief Science Officer (CSO) Program to designate a CSO Cabinet Coordinator and operate a CSO cabinet. The CSO Program is an international program that aims to elevate student voice through leadership opportunities with a focus on STEM.

TANF Grant to OPTIONS - \$611,860

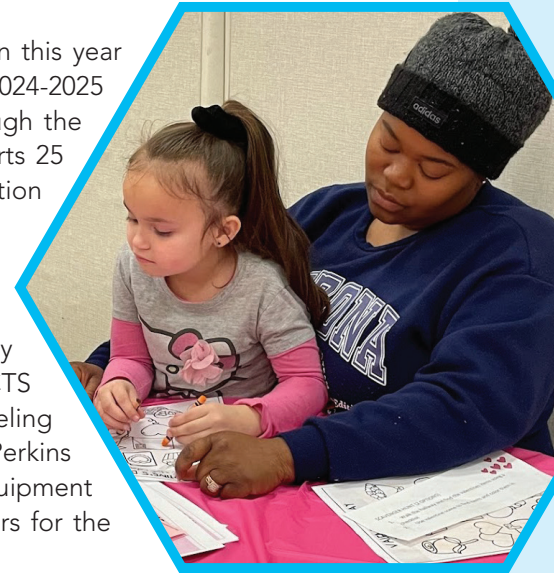
Awarded with four years of funding, our Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in-school-youth grant is entering its 24th year of providing 20 students per year with an opportunity for paid work experiences.

WIOA Grant to OPTIONS - \$1,416,357

The partnership with the Delaware County Workforce Development has grown this year to a new level of support with the creation and implementation during the 2024-2025 school year of the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) Grant through the work of OPTIONS Project WIN. This funding, awarded for three years, supports 25 out-of-school young adults with achieving employment in a high-priority occupation through additional training, education, and job exploration.

Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Grant - \$1,307,119

The Perkins Grant is awarded to schools to develop career and technical skills of students along with the necessary math/literacy skills needed to successfully complete rigorous technical programs. This year, the Perkins funding allowed DCTS to provide math/literacy support, special education support, and school counseling support to help our students gain the technical skills in their programs. The Perkins Grant partially or fully-funded 14 DCTS support staff positions. Several equipment items also have been purchased through this grant including Apple Computers for the Advertising Design Program.



Pennsylvania Competitive Equipment Grant - \$85,000

This equipment grant allowed DCTS to purchase a Hunter Automotive Alignment Machine and Lift for the Automotive Program and a DXTR Radiographic Imaging Trainer for the Dental Occupations Program.

Pennsylvania Supplemental Equipment Grant - \$261,000

This equipment grant allowed DCTS to purchase the following equipment:

- Pierce Enforcer Fire Engine Pumper/Trainer for the Emergency Protective Services Program
- Tenstar Forklift, Emergency Vehicle, Heavy Machinery, and Automotive Simulator for the Automotive, Emergency Protective Services, and Logistics Programs
- Makerbot 3D Printer for the Engineering Program
- Medit i700 Scanner/Dental Imaging Trainer for the Dental Occupations Program
- DXTR Radiographic Imaging Trainers for the Dental Occupations Program

Pennsylvania Health Services Workforce Supplemental Grant - \$342,074

This was the second year of funding under this grant. This grant allowed DCTS to provide additional school health services to our students through contracted service providers. These services provided additional practical nurses to assist with students at our Aston and Folcroft campuses during the 2023-2024 school year. This funding was part of the COVID-19 resources made available to career and technical schools to assist with programming and costs related to the pandemic.

Grants (Cont'd.)

ARP ESSER Grant - \$942,739

The American Rescue Plan (ARP) Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Grant was a two-year grant. The second year of this grant included funding for the employee retention program/hiring incentives and contracted DCIU services related to ongoing equity and climate work with students and staff in DCTS programs. The remaining funding under this grant was used for nursing services to better meet the additional health needs of students during the past two years. This funding addressed the needs of students impacted by COVID-19 related issues.

Delaware County Technical School Dual Credit Grant - \$39,750

DCTS was awarded this grant to assist students in enrolling in dual credit programs related to the technical programs that the students take at DCTS. This was the second year of this grant, in which the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) awarded 100 school entities throughout the state \$6.7 million in grant funding. The Dual Credit Grant provided supportive services and assisted students with the cost of credits through the various DCTS articulation/dual credit agreements. This grant funding helped students continue charting career pathways that provide a foundation for life-long learning in high-wage, high-demand careers.

Partnership Grants

National Center for Safe Supportive Schools (NCS3)

DCIU received a grant through the National Center for Safe and Supportive Schools (NCS3) to provide job-embedded training and support mental health and behavioral services at the Delaware County Technical High Schools- Folcroft and Aston. The administration, faculty, and staff have completed the SHAPE (School Health Assessment and Performance Evaluation) to assess the resources they have for the essential components of comprehensive mental health systems. The Teaching and Learning Department has attended extensive training in high-impact, research-based practices from NCS3 and the National Center for School Mental Health, and University of Maryland School of Medicine that has been extended to the DCTS faculty and staff through a professional learning community model.

Ramp to STEM

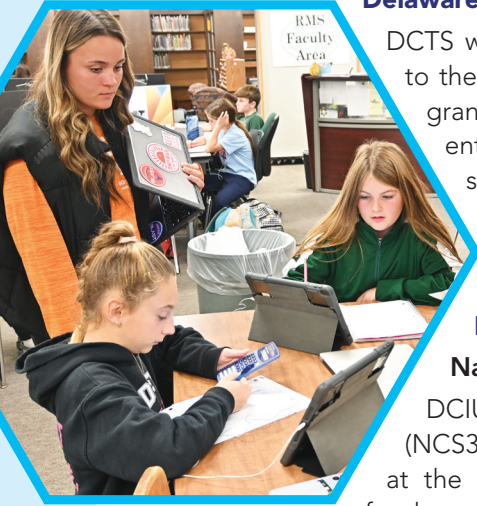
The DCIU has supported the Reimagining Access to Mathematical Pathways (RAMP) project funded by a \$500,000 PA SMART Advancing Grant, received by the STEM Equity Alliance. This partnership has contributed to the creation of a model for high school mathematics that (1) provides culturally relevant math instruction, (2) access to and completion of credit-bearing college math courses, and (3) Community of Practices for educators.

CHOP Tri-County Mental Health Consortium

DCIU Student Services and Teaching and Learning Divisions continued the partnership, launched in May 2023, with The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) Tri-County School Mental Health Consortium (SMHC), a collaboration between the Delaware, Chester, and Montgomery County IUs, along with the CHOP's PolicyLab. The goal of SMHC is to strengthen school and district capacity to implement, evaluate, and sustain Tier I and Tier II school mental health programs and practices. During this school year, surveys and interviews were conducted with district and school staff on priorities and needs for Tier I and Tier II mental health programs and practices. Aggregate findings will be communicated back to the tri-county community. Informed by this exploratory phase, DCIU and the CHOP TriCounty SMHC issued a call for applications for school teams to participate in one of two voluntary learning collaboratives for the 24-25 school year. These learning collaboratives will focus on:

- 1) data-based decision making regarding Tier I and Tier II mental health programs that are currently in place; and/or
- 2) supporting middle school teams in implementing Interpersonal Psychotherapy - Adolescent Skills Training, an evidence-based 8-week Tier II group prevention program focused on depression and anxiety.

Teams were selected based on fit and availability, with a priority to offer opportunities to a range of school districts across all three participating counties. The DCIU is excited to continue this work moving forward into next year as we have nine schools that will be participating in these learning collaboratives to improve the quality of mental health services in Delaware County Schools.





For over 50 years, the Delaware County Intermediate Unit stood as a steadfast voice in the community, to providing a wide range of educational support services to meet the unique needs of families and students of all ages and abilities.

We take pride in our longstanding commitment to educational excellence and will continue to remain deeply invested in empowering generations to thrive. Through dedicated efforts and tailored programs, we strive to empower every individual, ensuring they have access to the highest quality education and support. To find out more about how we are impacting our community in positive ways, follow us on social media at Delaware County Intermediate Unit.



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