



# THE FOUNDATION FOCUS

**March 2025**

- 1 Heartfelt Thanks**
- 2 Nine Years and Counting**
- 3 Meet Mark Williams**
- 4 News 'N Notes**
- 5 Every Dollar Counts**

## Contents

---

## Foundation Contacts

**Teresa Nelson**  
Executive Director

### A Heartfelt Thank You & Exciting Opportunities Ahead

The Foundation of Brunswick Community College extends our deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed to the success of the **9th Annual Bella Italia Gala!** Thanks to our incredible sponsors, guests, donors, and volunteers, this year's event was our most successful yet—raising vital funds to support the important work we do each year for our students and community.

Speaking of our students, we're excited to announce that the **2025-2026 Foundation Scholarship application opens on April 1.**

The Foundation awards hundreds of scholarships each year, helping students realize their educational dreams. But we can't do it alone! In the coming weeks, we'll be seeking **volunteers to assist with scholarship-related tasks**, beginning with reviewing and scoring applications. If you'd like to lend a hand, please email me at



nelson@brunswickcc.edu

910-755-6530

## **Stephanie Creech**

Coordinator for Financial  
Operations & Donor Database  
Management  
creechs@brunswickcc.edu

nelson@brunswickcc.edu.

Thank you for your unwavering support. We look forward to welcoming spring and continuing to cheer on our students.

Warm regards,  
**Teresa Nelson**

---

## **Nine Years and Counting**

Grazie mille to everyone who joined us for an unforgettable evening at the 9th Annual Bella Italia Gala!

More than 240 guests gathered for an exquisite five-course Italian feast paired with fine wines—all in celebration of the incredible generosity that fuels student success at BCC. A heartfelt thank you to our Presenting Sponsors, Dinah E. Gore and Myong & Paul Jensen, and to our Platio and Oro Sponsors, whose unwavering support makes a lasting impact.

Finally, we are grateful to the Student Ambassadors who spoke that evening, as well as the scholarship recipients who shared their stories via the special video presentation below. You remind us why we come together -- to transform lives through education.



*The* FOUNDATION *of*  
BRUNSWICK COMMUNITY COLLEGE









## Student Spotlight: Meet Mark Williams



Brunswick Community College (BCC) Student Ambassador Mark Williams, Jr. knows firsthand the value of perseverance.

Now, in his second year as a computer science student, Mark is on track to earn his associate degree in December—a major milestone. For the first time in years, he, his wife Raquel (pictured above with Mark), and their two children feel they are exactly where they should be, working hard and embracing new opportunities.

Originally from Pittsburgh, PA, he graduated high school with plans to follow in his father's footsteps at Clarion University as a Division I wrestler. However, academic struggles put that on a temporary hold. Instead, he started at a local community college before transferring to Clarion—only to realize it wasn't the right fit. Looking for a fresh start, Mark enlisted in the United States Navy.

After the military, Mark cycled through various jobs, struggling to find his niche. Then, he and his wife took a leap of faith, relocating to Sunset Beach, NC—an area he had visited as a child. Mark explored real estate and law enforcement but switched gears when an opportunity in the Computer Science field arose. "I wanted a career that I genuinely enjoyed and was good at while also providing for my family," Mark shared. "That meant returning to school, and I knew it wouldn't be easy. But choosing BCC has made all the difference."



At age 35, Mark enrolled in BCC's Computer Science program and immediately felt at home. "From day one, everyone here was welcoming, always asking how they could help me succeed," he said. "That level of support was something I wasn't used to—and it has been life-changing."

Mark learned about BCC's Student Ambassador program during the admissions process and decided to apply. He was selected, and it has become one of the most rewarding experiences of his journey. "Being an ambassador is one of the best things I've ever done. I love representing this school, meeting incredible people, and staying motivated," he said. "It keeps me on track because I know people are rooting for me—and I won't let them down."

Education is now a family affair for the Williamses. Their children are thriving, and they even compare grades! Meanwhile, Raquel will begin at BCC this fall. "No other place could provide her with better opportunities," said Mark. "The instructors, leadership, and staff truly care about students—it doesn't get any better."

As he prepares for graduation, Mark is eager to enter the computer science field and wants to continue his education. His journey has had its share of twists and turns, but he hopes his story inspires others.

"No matter what, never give up," he said. "Get rid of the self-doubt, take the leap, figure out what makes you tick, and come to BCC. You are bound to succeed." Congratulations Mark!

---

## NEWS & NOTES

---

### Gentlemen, Start your Engines!

For the first time since 2019, the Men of Philanthropy & Leadership of Brunswick (MPLB) is back and better than ever. MPLB members, existing and new will gather for an evening of fun and fellowship. The event is set for May 23. We're keeping the details under wraps for now, but promise you a wonderful time as you reunite to help shape future graduates and community leaders.

Have we peaked your interest? Learn more and submit a membership form on the [Foundation website](#).

P.S. -- The Women in Philanthropy & Leadership of Brunswick is going strong! Follow the link above to learn more and join!

### Help Stem the Tide of Hunger

The need for food and personal items is greater than ever on campus. We now have two food pantries, one in Building A on the first floor and the KTJ Food Pantry located in the Brunswick Interagency Program building.

The Foundation works hard to keep the shelves stocked, but your help is needed and welcome.

Not sure what to purchase or how to get it to campus? No problem. We've established a Gift Registry on Amazon. Simply click on the items you'd like to purchase and submit payment. Amazon takes care of the rest. Thank you.

[Help Keep the Food Pantry Shelves Stocked](#)



# Every Dollar Counts



If you'd like to help further the mission of The Foundation of BCC in support of our students, please scan the QR code on the left and make a gift of any size. Every dollar counts and is greatly appreciated. Thank you for your support and generosity.

For information on mentor or volunteer opportunities, please reach out to Teresa Nelson at [nelsont@brunswickcc.edu](mailto:nelsont@brunswickcc.edu).

## Our Contact Information

\*{{Organization Name}}\*  
\*{{Organization Address}}\*  
\*{{Organization Phone}}\*  
\*{{Organization Website}}\*  
  
\*{{Unsubscribe}}\*



*The* FOUNDATION *of*  
BRUNSWICK COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The Brunswick Community College Foundation, organized in 1982, is a charitable organization 501(c)(3) instituted to enhance BCC's mission to a level of excellence and purpose for students and the community. The Foundation is a vital resource for the acceptance and solicitation of all gifts for the support of education and the continued growth and progress of BCC. Brunswick Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, age, political affiliation, genetic information, sexual orientation or disability.