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News Release

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For Immediate Release

NJ Council of County Colleges to Honor the State's Top Community College Student Scholars

TRENTON, N.J.—The New Jersey Council of County Colleges will honor New Jersey's 33 best and brightest community college students and their families at its 14th annual Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) Day celebration on Thursday, May 1, at the Lafayette Yard Marriott Hotel, from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

“Each year, the New Jersey Council of County Colleges hosts this luncheon program to recognize the members of the New Jersey All-State Academic Team, sponsored by PTK, the international honor society for community colleges,” said NJCCC President Dr. Lawrence Nespoli. “These students are recognized for their outstanding academic achievement and exceptional service to their communities as members of PTK at their local community colleges.”

As part of the celebration, the All-State Academic Team members will visit the Statehouse to meet with legislative leaders and representatives from Governor Jon S. Corzine's administration.

In addition to statewide recognition, this year PTK International has named Essex County College student David Kariuki of Jersey City to its 20-member All-USA Community College

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Academic First Team. Kariuki received a \$2,500 stipend at the PTK International Convention held in Philadelphia from April 3 to 5.

Kariuki also received a \$2,000 New Century Scholarship from the Coca-Cola Foundation for being New Jersey's top community college student, awarded during the American Association of Community Colleges National Convention, also held in Philadelphia, from April 5 to 8. The Coca-Cola Foundation established the New Century Scholars Program in 2001 to provide additional scholarship and national recognition to the number one PTK student from each state.

The 2008 New Jersey All-State Academic Team members are:

- 1 Atlantic Cape Community College students Theresse Spencer and Lauryn Bianco, both from Vineland;
- 1 Bergen Community College students Angela Kelichner of Kearny and Jenny Lynn Serrano of New Milford;
- 1 Brookdale Community College students Destinie Brannigan of Howell and Stephanie Cottino of Old Bridge;
- 1 Burlington County College students Cheryl Hartman of Moorestown and Annise Hawkins of Eastampton;
- 1 Camden County College students Abigail Mawson of Voorhees and Nelson Rodriguez of Blackwood;
- 1 Cumberland County College students Zachariah Smith, Jr. and Brandy Vanes, both from Bridgeton;

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- 1 Essex County College students David Kariuki of Jersey City and Twinkle Tailor of Nutley;
- 1 Gloucester County College student Barbara White of Lindenwold;
- 1 Hudson County Community College students Francetta Hill of Orange and Simin Cen of Jersey City;
- 1 Mercer County Community College students Lynn Rowlands of Trenton and Onessa Freasier of Roebling;
- 1 Middlesex County College student Peter Knox of Edison;
- 1 County College of Morris student Janine Papio of Landing;
- 1 Ocean County College student Molly Rose of Toms River;
- 1 Passaic County Community College students Jessica Hoffman of Totowa and Ghadeer Mahmoud of Paterson;
- 1 Raritan Valley Community College students Elizabeth Christenson of Somerset and Samantha Rothlein of Stockton;
- 1 Salem Community College students Kelly Harrison of Penns Grove and Josh Melita of Pennsville;
- 1 Sussex County Community College students Douglas Oswin of Stanhope and Declan Thompson of Stroudsburg, PA;
- 1 Union County College student Odalis Sanchez of Colonia; and
- 1 Warren County Community College students Kathleen Duke of Alpha and Lauren Mulrooney of Phillipsburg.

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The New Jersey Phi Theta Kappa Day Celebration is sponsored by PSE&G. Also, 20 of New Jersey's four-year colleges and universities have offered over \$1 million in scholarships to Phi Theta Kappa students transferring to their institutions.

Phi Theta Kappa has recognized and encouraged scholarship among community college students for 90 years while promoting the academic integrity of the associate degree program. Students with grade point averages of 3.5 or higher are invited to join Phi Theta Kappa.

The New Jersey Council of County Colleges is the state association representing New Jersey's 19 community colleges. As an independent, trustee-headed organization that joins the leadership of trustees and presidents, the Council is the voice of the community college sector before the state legislature and other branches of government.