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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 34 best and brightest community college students and their families at its 15th annual Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) Day celebration on Monday, May 11, 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, PTK International and the Coca-Cola Foundation have awarded scholarships to six outstanding New Jersey students as part of the All-USA

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Academic Team competition. Bergen Community College student Rafael Juliano of Hackensack received a \$1,500 scholarship for being named a gold medalist scholar and Raritan Valley Community College student Carly Aulicky of Gillette received a \$1,000 scholarship for being named a bronze medalist scholar. Essex County College student Sebastian Medina of Bayonne, Gloucester County College student Sade van Wijk of Sewell, Mercer County Community College student David Hoyt of Princeton, and Salem Community College student Anastasia Mikhaylova of Easton, Md. each received \$1,000 scholarships for being named medalist finalists.

Juliano 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, in Phoenix, Ariz., from April 4 to 7. 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 2009 New Jersey All-State Academic Team members are:

- 1 Atlantic Cape Community College students Sheyla Ayala-Mantilla of Marmora and Nicole Schoenstein of Galloway;
- 1 Bergen Community College student Rafael Juliano of Hackensack;
- 1 Brookdale Community College student Jesse Beutell of Wall;
- 1 Burlington County College students Sean Parsons and Jamie Surette, both of Marlton;
- 1 Camden County College student Kathleen Lakjer of Pennsauken;

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- 1 Cumberland County College students Rebekah Fuller of Bridgeton and Patricia McKeon of Vineland;
- 1 Essex County College students Bao Duong of Belleville and Sebastian Medina of Bayonne;
- 1 Gloucester County College students Dianna Mathews of Paulsboro and Sade van Wijk of Sewell;
- 1 Hudson County Community College students Patricia Correa of Harrison and Kreetika Gupta of Jersey City;
- 1 Mercer County Community College students David Hoyt of Princeton and Ronald Russell, III of Mercerville;
- 1 Middlesex County College students Julianna Lopez of Monroe and Federico Zanatta-Perdomo of Edison
- 1 County College of Morris students Daniela Viera Petofi of Parsippany and Jesse Steberger of Succasunna;
- 1 Ocean County College students Jilian McLeer and Kathryn Napolitano, both of Toms River;
- 1 Passaic County Community College students Janet Ippolitto of Clifton and Gayatri Nehrusingh of Passaic;
- 1 Raritan Valley Community College students Carly Aulicky of Gillette and Maria Palar of Somerset;

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- 1 Salem Community College students Stacy Holloway of Woolwich and Anastasia Mikhaylova of Easton, Md.;
- 1 Sussex County Community College student Damian Meza of Sussex;
- 1 Union County College students Zahra Bedar of Roselle and Maria Conneran of Rahway;
and
- 1 Warren County Community College students Caitlin Duffy of Washington and Kathryn Foresta of Alpha.

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 91 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.