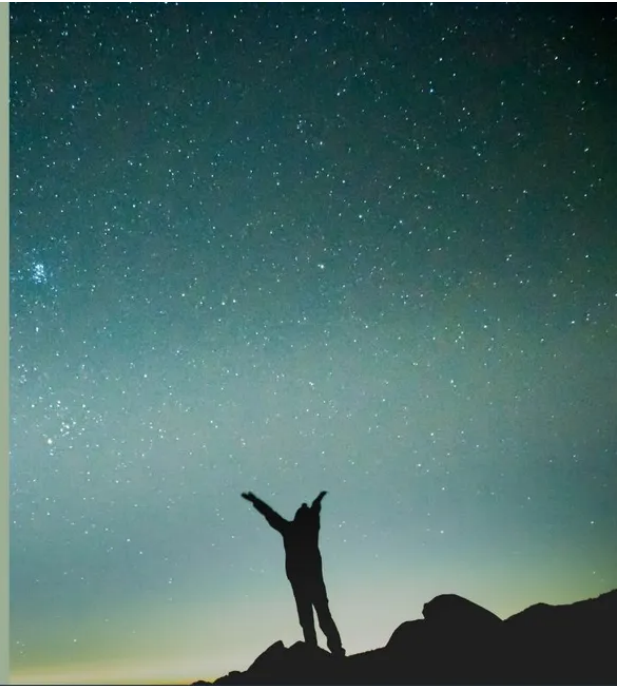


DACC Notebook: Dreams, courage fostered at Delaware Area Career Center

“Reach high for the stars that lie hidden in your soul. Dream deep, for every dream precedes the goal.”

-- Langston Hughes



DACC

Empower. Prepare. Inspire. Connect.

At the Delaware Area Career Center, we talk a lot about courage and having courageous conversations. It might seem strange to put so much emphasis on bravery when education is our primary deliverable.

Still, students make courageous decisions every day as they pursue their dreams, and students are our primary focus.

I sat down recently with four DACC students. What struck me about each is that while their stories are unique, each had to make a courageous decision to attend DACC. They are making courageous decisions to put themselves out there in front of their peers and business partners, and they are making

courageous decisions as they plan for what's next after graduation.

Gabby, a senior in the Digital Design program, was nervous coming to DACC as a junior. She felt this way because, at the time, she did not have experience with the photography, videography and music-editing technology that she assumed her peers had. She did not know students come to DACC with varying levels of experience.

When students are brave enough to display their strengths and weaknesses to their classmates, everyone can learn from each other. Gabby's classmates encouraged her to try new things. With the confidence she gained in the classroom, she is a leader in the program, helping her peers while she reaches out to professionals in the music industry to learn from them. This has given her the confidence and clarity to plan a college and career pathway in music technology.



Callum also attends the Digital Design program but came here to enroll in engineering. It was a visit to DACC's campus where he stepped into the Digital Design lab and instinctively knew that was the career for him. His courageous choice to shift into a new career pathway has led him to discover more career opportunities than he had realized were possible.

DACC Notebook: [Digital Design program built on growth-mindset philosophy](#)

We know that students must have their essential physiological needs met before we can expect them to be active participants in school. At DACC, our staff strives to be a learning organization where our students are not only participating in school but also are truly engaged in the learning process.

Lauren, a senior in the Health Technology program, shared with me that at DACC, she found her voice. She feels heard and is not afraid to provide feedback to staff and let her teachers know when she needs additional help or information to meet her learning style. When we ask students for feedback, it is up to them to make the courageous decision to find their voice. When they do, our staff, students and community benefit.

The courage we strive to develop with our students does not stop inside our walls.

Ben, a student in Power Sports and Diesel, is taking the career technical and durable skills he has developed at DACC to begin finding a college that is a good fit for him. Ben aspires to be a mechanical engineer and is enrolled at DACC to understand user experience and how he can improve upon it as an engineer.

More DACC news: [Delaware Area Career Center students enthusiastic for new after-school program](#)

During his senior year, Ben is visiting colleges across the country to plan the next chapter of his life. He explains that the technical and durable skills he has developed at DACC will help him as a future college student, engineer and human being.

Our goal at DACC is to help students better understand themselves as learners – how they learn and the skills they need for life in the context of career goals. In the time I spent with these four talented and passionate

students, I see that we are achieving this goal and our mission of empowering, preparing, inspiring and connecting opportunities for students.

Jay Poroda is superintendent of the Delaware Area Career Center.