

Lacey College Academy

Established 2016
Class of 2022 (Cohort 4)

LTHS - OCC College Academy

Class of 2019 (Cohort 1)



Amanda Andrews



Jacquelyn Asay



Francesca Biggs



Cameryn Cimirro



Amber Marion



Valerie Meehan



Marina Policastro



Thea Reilly



Elizabeth Fastow



Margaret Heckel



Kenneth Horn



Courtney Jerabek



Chloe Seneca



Rayna Sokolowski



Jordan Stracensky



Madison Troisi



Mackenzie Koelsch



Gabriella Lehto



Christopher Locha



Chelsea Wheeler



Erin Williams



Hanna Wilson

Class of 2019 (Cohort 1)

Ocean County College

Graduation May 24, 2019

Lacey Township High School

Graduation June 13, 2019

COMMENCEMENT FEATURE

Jump Starting the Future

In May, twenty-two students from Lacey Township received their associate degrees from OCC – one month before their high school graduation.

These young men and women comprise the first cohort of the College Academy, initiated at Lacey Township High School in 2017 to enable select students to earn a degree from OCC at a reduced cost, in addition to their high school diploma.

Dr. Henry A. Jackson, Executive Director of Academic Success at OCC, oversees College Readiness Now, which aims to improve the college readiness of graduating high school students. College Credit Now, a dual-enrollment program, and the College Academy. In 2016, OCC worked with twenty-five Lacey, Toms River, and Central High School students for College Credit Now; each student enrolled in six college credits. "The program offered high school students college classes for absolutely free," Jackson said the following year.

Meanwhile, as Lacey District Supervisor William Zylinski explained, for years he'd communicated with Elaine Schardin, Assistant Director of Academic Success at OCC, for Jump Start – through which high school students can get a "jump" on their college education by enrolling as part-time college students at OCC – and dual-enrollment.

Eventually, he and Lacey Principal Gregory Brands had a "meeting of the minds" with Jackson. As they sat and talked about creating more "pathways," Brands noted, "Everybody said, 'Let's go for it!'" and the College Academy was born.

"It really was groundbreaking," Zylinski remarked, adding "OCC has been great about helping us through the pitfalls. OCC has been a great partner."

As Zylinski said about the first cohort, "They're definitely a well-considered contingent of students. This is not for everyone; students have to be focused and able to plan."

Now, he pointed out, "They seem like typical college students," defined by college-level semi-adulthood and college-level stress.

"Good stress," qualified Brands, who said he's loved seeing the evolution of the program, and the students.

As the administrators noted, Lacey's Cohort 2 has fifteen students, and Cohort 3 has more than thirty. Just as with Cohort 1, the students are supported by Jackson and Schardin as well as the high school administration, and Margaret Riand, the College Academy-specific advisor at Lacey.

In addition, as student Elizabeth Fastow will in early May, when Cohort 1 gathered to speak about their experience. "All of our professors cared a lot about us. This was vital because she gave us a place where we could be our own people. We're still high schoolers." (Although as of now, the students are recent high school graduates with degrees from OCC.)

Fastow, who will enroll at the University of Virginia in the fall, said she and a number of the cohort students took an environmental science class with Professor Jamie Ruttoras. "She just cared so much, and she's probably one of my favorite people ever. She made me care a lot more about the earth and myself."

Jordan Stracensky soon-to-be a Charleston Southern University student, has fond memories of Professor David Lansing. "What a guy. He is very funny, and made history interesting" – and of Professor Dominic Scholard, her instructor for anatomy and physiology. "He didn't treat me like a high school student," she stated.

Although many of those in the initial cohort were intrigued when they first heard about the College Academy – Monmouth-bound Chloe Seneca, for example, "was immediately interested" when she attended the PowerPoint presentation in the school auditorium at the end of her sophomore year. There were, of course, some hiccups and challenges.

"In the beginning, it was chaotic because it was so new," said Valerie Meehan, who is also headed to Monmouth University, where she plans to pursue a degree in accounting.

"We were all just finding our way," Schardin concurred.

Plus, some students work, like Jacquelyn Asay, a lifeguard at the Marine-Dix/Lakehurst joint military base who also takes EMS classes and volunteers for the fire department. Others play sports, including Courtney Jerabek and Erin Williams, who cheered for the OCC Vikings. (Asay will be at Rowan University in the fall, while Jerabek and Williams are attending SUNY Delhi and The College of New Jersey, respectively.)

For a young student, high school coursework, extracurriculars, family, and other activities are already a lot to handle – then, add college courses. As Meehan noted though, Jackson and Schardin quickly helped them settle in right from the start and were there all along the way. "They're amazing," she remarked. She added, "It was cool to be in a college environment."

Christopher Locha said the program not only prepared him for college – he's enrolling at the University of Tampa to study criminology – but also will save him money in the long run.

When Chelsea Wheeler first learned about the College Academy, she stated, "I wasn't sure it was right for me... but then I realized the opportunity." Wheeler wasn't sure what she might want to study in college, but then she took business and hospitality courses at OCC and something clicked. Now she plans to study hospitality at Stockton University.

"I think the transition (to a four-year school) is going to be much easier," said Meehan, who is also excited about one of the best parts of college: waking up later.

College Academy OCC Graduates + Their College Destinations:

- Courtney Jerabek.....SUNY Delhi
- Elizabeth Fastow.....University of Virginia
- Marina Policastro.....Stockton University
- Valerie Meehan.....Monmouth University
- Francesca Biggs.....The College of New Jersey
- Jordan Stracensky.....Charleston Southern University
- Chloe Seneca.....Monmouth University
- Amber Marion.....Widener University
- Gabriella Lehto.....Rider University
- Christopher Locha.....University of Tampa
- Cameryn Cimirro.....Georgian Court University
- Chelsea Wheeler.....Stockton University
- Amanda Andrews.....Stockton University
- Kenny Horn.....Rutgers University
- Madison Troisi.....Georgian Court University
- Margaret Heckel.....Georgian Court University
- Mackensie Koelsch.....Stockton University
- Thea Reilly.....Stockton University
- Erin Williams.....The College of New Jersey
- Jacquelyn Asay.....Rowan University
- Rayna Sokolowski.....Undecided
- Hanna Wilson.....Stockton University

College Academy OCC Graduates – JKH + Their College Destinations:

- Courtney Jerabek.....SUNY Delhi
- Elizabeth Fastow.....University of Virginia
- Marina Policastro.....Stockton University
- Valerie Meehan.....Monmouth University
- Francesca Biggs.....The College of New Jersey
- Jordan Stracensky.....Charleston Southern University
- Chloe Seneca.....Monmouth University
- Amber Marion.....Widener University
- Gabriella Lehto.....Rider University
- Christopher Locha.....University of Tampa
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Lacey - OCC Degree offerings

Associate in Liberal Arts: Course Sequence

Designed for any student transferring to a four-year College or University. Example of a Junior Schedule

Associate in Science can be considered:

Designed for any student who would like select courses in a specific academic area. **Student will have to take some courses outside school scheduled times and go beyond the Course Sequence. Student would need to discuss options with Mrs. Schardien (OCC Representative)**

Business • Computer Science • Health & Physical Education • Humanities • Math • Science • Social Science



Lacey - OCC Scheduling Benefits

Eligibility for Option 2

These qualified students will be excused from the required enrollment in a physical education course, while still earning physical education credit. Students will qualify for Option II based on a specific criteria.

- Possibility of Early Dismissal Junior and Senior Year
- Winter Session reprieve
- Classes on OCC's campus during the school day
- Classes taken within the Liberal Arts degree are scheduled during the LTHS school day



Lacey - OCC Academy Support

College Academy High School Advisor:

- Counselor to assist and support students
- Future Planning & Career Exploration “Naviance”
- Advocate for high school students transitioning into college
- Assist in scheduling and class communication

Lead Teachers:

- Organizational & Study Skills
- Time and Stress Management
- Motivation, Leadership, and Teams
- Canvas & Learning Technology
- Presentation Skills
- Email & Electronic Etiquette
- Dressing for Success
- Accountability



Registration & Advising with OCC

Mr. Joshua Ginder - Mrs. Schardien - Dr. Jackson

1. Individual Advising Sessions Each Semester
2. Student Planning
3. Graduation Audit
4. Collegiate supportive semester workshops:
Stress Management, Technology, Transfer, Social, etc.
5. Available at OCC campus or LTHS

Student Debt Crisis

Taking care of Our Future Selves

CNBC News

With approximately \$1.4 trillion of outstanding debt, student loans are now the second-largest category of household debt in the U.S., trailing only home loans.

Over the past 20 years, college costs have grown at over three times the rate of inflation. The result: 70% of college graduates have student debt, with the average borrower owing more than \$37,000 at graduation.



Financial Benefit

School	School Type	Full Time Tuition for 2 Years
LTHS - OCC Academy	Community	\$5,970 (Discounted Tuition)
Ocean County College (Post HS Graduation)	Community	\$9,120*
Rowan University	State	\$20,152*
Rutgers University	State	\$24,460*
Monmouth University	Private	\$77,760*

*Tuition amounts were calculated off the internet and may not be exact amounts. 11/11/19

Cohort 1 Student Testimonials

“The teachers of both of these classes are supportive and make the topic you’re studying enjoyable and interesting. They are easy to get help from and compare what you are learning to real life experiences.”

“I get a rare opportunity, learn more as a student, and feel as though I have more of a purpose than just being in high school.”

“Getting close with your classmates and getting ahead of everyone else.”

“Professor Rottura taught Environmental Science in a way that opened my eyes completely to the world around me. It contains knowledge that every individual should know whether you want to go into a science field or not.”



Video Testimonials

Frequently Asked Questions:

Would I apply to colleges/universities as a Freshman or a Transfer?

You will apply as a Freshman to most colleges, even though you have 60 credits and an associates degree, you are eligible for scholarships and Financial Aid.

Is there a test to be considered for the LTHS-OCC College Academy?

Students transcripts are audited and a meeting with your counselor to determine the best and most appropriate pathway for you to pursue in your Junior year. There is no test to enter the Academy.

How does this affect the NJ Stars Program?

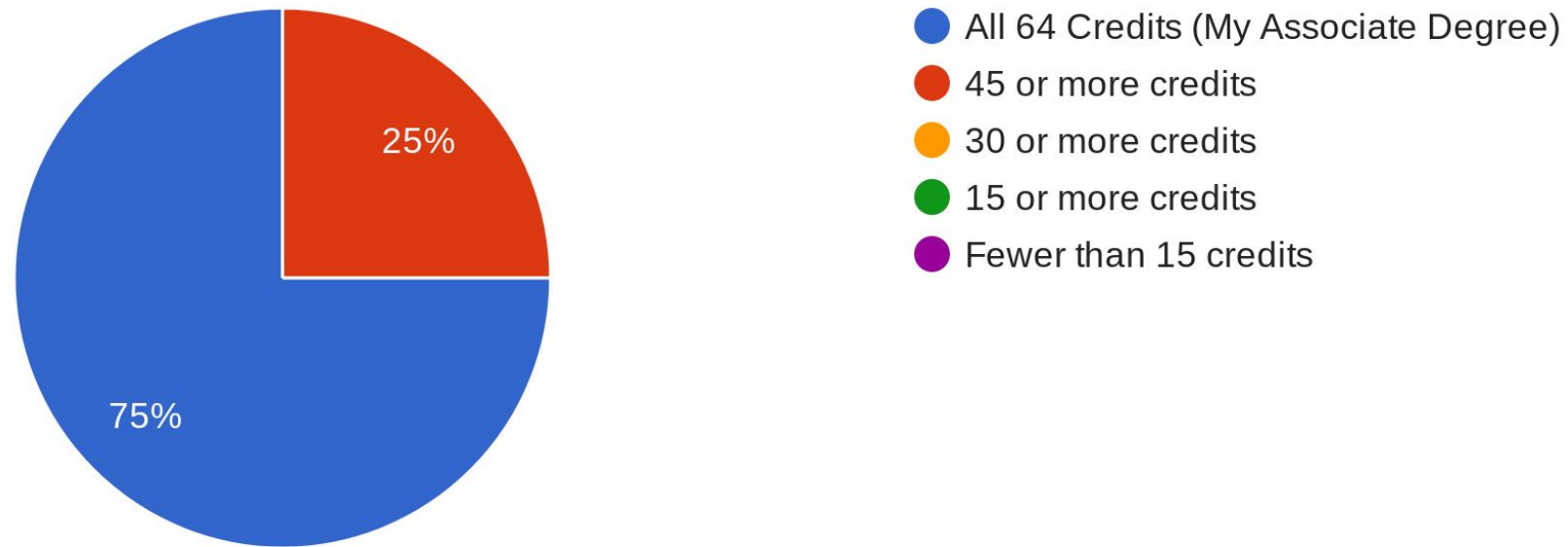
Students are eligible for Tier 2, but not Tier 1.



Will My Credits Transfer

How many credits will the college you attend accept from your LTHS - OCC Academy degree?

20 responses



*These statistics are self reported by former students.

New Jersey - Lampitt Law (Transfer Law)

New Jersey has a state-wide agreement to assist students with transfer from a community college to a 4-year public institution. Under the Lampitt Law, community college students who complete an AA or AS degree will receive half of the credits needed for graduation with a Bachelor's degree. Careful planning is essential for a smooth and efficient transfer experience.

- The law only covers students who graduate from AA or AS programs.
- The law does not guarantee acceptance to college. Students must still apply and be granted admission, which can be competitive and require specific coursework and/or GPA (e.g. business, teaching, and engineering, among other programs).

Ocean County College Resource Links

Payment Plan	Withdrawing & Refunds	Kean Ocean	NJIT & OCC Partnership	FDU-OCC Scholars Program
Transfer College Evaluation Form	Transfer College Checklist	Transfer Transcript Request	NJ Transfer <small>Assists with choosing courses carefully for your degree program. The "Transfer Programs" function is best suited for student planning.</small>	Career Coach

Next Steps

Presentation will be posted on the High School website

- For further questions or interest please contact:
[Mrs. Margaret Rand](#)
LTHS Guidance Counselor & College Academy Advisor
- Specific questions about Ocean County College please contact:
[Mrs. Schardien](#)
Assistant Director of Academic Success, Ocean County College

Thank you and we hope you and your child are able to take advantage of the College Academy or one of the many other pathways we have for our students to become model students and citizens in our ever growing society.