



Press Clippings
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Web

Title: University of Maryland University College makes big push into Philadelphia market

Author: Michelle Caffrey

Link: <https://www.bizjournals.com/philadelphia/news/2018/06/07/university-maryland-umuc-online-degree-peirce.html>

Date: June 7, 2018

Expect to see advertisements from University of Maryland University College pop up throughout Greater Philadelphia as the college — which offers online undergraduate and graduate programs to adult learners — kicked off a major marketing push in the region this week.

Signs and billboards at SEPTA stations and bus stops across the city now tout UMUC's focus on flexibility, experienced-based credit options and its clout as a respected state university, with TV commercials on the way. The expansion into the Philadelphia area comes as UMUC maxed out advertising options in the Delmarva region and decided to look north to continue growing.

An initial market research study put Greater Philadelphia in the top five options for its expansion, said Erika Orris, UMUC chief enrollment and marketing officer, and the proximity means students could take a hybrid online-in-person course by heading to its campus once or twice a month.

Moving into Philadelphia gives UMUC access to adult students outside its core population of Maryland residents and veterans, Orris said, as those markets have topped out.

"The Philly market is a very strong one of working adults who are pursuing their degrees in either undergraduate or graduate programs," she said.

The research also showed that while the University of Maryland brand was recognizable in the Philadelphia region, it wasn't to the level of its biggest competitors like Arizona State University or Southern New Hampshire University, spurring the need for a media blitz.

Just about 800 students from Greater Philadelphia are currently enrolled in a UMUC program, with 550 alumni in the region. The university doesn't have a set enrollment goal yet beyond growing its presence in the region, Orris said.

It's not shocking UMUC hit record growth numbers last year and is moving to expand, as the adult learner market is increasing at a faster rate than high school graduate enrollments. Data from the National Center for Education Statistics showed that post-secondary enrollment is projected to increase about 12 percent between 2016 and

2026 for all students, but that growth is expected to reach about 17 percent for students 25 and older over the same time period.

Orris said UMUC stands out because it's been focusing on the over 25 demographic, particularly veterans, for more than 70 years.

"I think everyone is trying to capture that market," she said. "The good news for us is that's what we've been doing anyway, that's our specialty, that's our niche."

Greater Philadelphia is already home to scores of academic institutions that have either programs or a singular focus on non-traditional students, like Peirce College.* The 153-year-old institution was founded as a business college to train ex-soldiers after the Civil War ended, and also has entirely online and hybrid classes. Like UMUC, Peirce's undergrad programs award credits based on experience in the workforce or military and are open-enrollment..

Comparing schools like Peirce, or even the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education's **shifting focus toward adult students** in Philadelphia, to UMUC is tricky.

For one, they operate different business models at far different scales, with UMUC running more than 90 programs and serving more than 90,000 students. Both also have different price points and specific services for students.

All of UMUC's undergraduate programs can be completed for less than \$60,000 in total, and graduate degrees, such as an MBA or masters in cybersecurity, add up to less than \$25,000. Its credits cost \$499 an hour out-of-state. Peirce, which has about 2,200 students enrolled, is charging \$600 per credit hour for undergraduate courses and \$772 for graduate courses this fall.

Even though price points are higher, Peirce's director of marketing said she expects the reputation and network the university has built over more than a century will continue to separate it from the newcomer to the market.

"The entrance of University of Maryland University College into the Philadelphia market definitely shows a strong demand for programs geared toward working adults. As Peirce has known for more than 150 years, this is a student population that requires flexibility and carefully crafted academic programs that teach the precise skills and knowledge most in demand in the local workforce," Peirce's Amanda Hill said. "One of the challenges faced by out-of-town institutions is the ability to build strong connections with Philadelphia's employers and create employment pipelines for its students - something Peirce has been doing in Philadelphia since 1865."

As of two years ago, UMUC didn't rely on publisher textbooks, with most courses centered around open educational resources material curated by the faculty and embedded in the online course.

“No one on our scale had done that before,” said Bob Ludwig, assistant vice president of media relations at UMUC.

Most of its roughly 4,000 adjunct faculty members are working in the fields they teach in, he said, and are located around the world.

Interestingly, a sizable chunk of its professors — about 350 — are based in Philadelphia.

**In an earlier version of this story, we incorrectly referred to Peirce University. We regret the error.*

Title: Nonprofit supports adults who come back to college

Author: Peak Johnson

Link: <http://thenotebook.org/articles/2018/06/09/nonprofit-supports-adults-who-come-back-to-college/>

Date: June 9, 2018

Wendy Johnson had an idea of what she had wanted to major in while she was enrolled at the University of Phoenix's Philadelphia campus – human services. But that would change over the course of her journey through college, mainly because she was unsure about how to navigate her educational path.

Johnson had been out of school for years before starting college. She struggled at first and thought that maybe attending college was not for her. For one thing, fears were bubbling up inside of her. She was an older student working among younger peers, and holding down a full-time job added an extra challenge.

Ultimately, Johnson stopped her educational career for a time while she decided what she wanted to do next.

“That particular school, it was like 60 percent teamwork and 5 percent your own work, so I had to rely on other people to get the work done. Then a lot of times, I had to take the lead because my grade was dependent on other people and I didn't like that.”

Johnson, a senior administrative assistant at Independence Blue Cross, never saw herself earning her associate's or bachelor's degree from a major university. She wanted her degrees, but wanted something more suited to her needs.

After attending a few seminars and presentations, Johnson was able to connect with Graduate Philadelphia, a nonprofit that assists adults returning to college. The organization became Johnson's personal GPS, helping her navigate through the various barriers she was encountering and offering support and guidance overall.

“They kind of navigated me through the roadblocks, because I had no idea what I was doing,” Johnson said. “I didn't know you had to pay financial aid back. I didn't know what classes to pick or what school to go to.”

Johnson eventually settled on attending Peirce College, thanks to Graduate Philadelphia. Though she took an intensive course load, it was the type of setting that Johnson was looking for.

She was able to graduate last spring with degrees in business and with full honors, something she never pictured herself accomplishing.

Working with 'comebackers'

Barbara Mattleman, executive director of Graduate Philadelphia, has worked with many returning adult learners — sometimes called “come-backers” — who have stories like Johnson’s.

“It is hard to go back to college as an adult,” Mattleman said. “You might have been out of school for one year; you might have been out of school for 30 years. So what we really need to do is be a resource, be a cheerleader, and nudge them a little bit and say that you can do it.”

People end their college careers early for various reasons, including financial costs.

The largest group of people that Mattleman’s organization works with attends the Community College of Philadelphia because it’s cost-effective.

“When you’re a student in high school, there is a lot of support around you. You have people saying to you, ‘Here’s how to fill out this paper,’ ‘Here’s how to do this,’” Mattleman said. “When you’re an adult, though, many times you’re on your own. You still have to do all of that stuff. We are here to say to them: If you need our help, we are here to help you. If you need help filling out the financial aid forms, if you need support, come on in.”

Mattleman said many adults who come to Graduate Philadelphia are ready to return to school, but once they begin to research what they might want to study, it may take them a little longer.

It also depends, Mattleman said, on what a person’s goals are — why they might want to go back to school.

“Every year, we have a couple of thousand people in the pipeline,” Mattleman said. “It doesn’t mean they went back to school; it does mean that they are interested.”

Johnson hinted at the possibility of returning to school to earn a master’s degree, though she’s not committed to the idea just yet. Even though she graduated from Peirce, she said, Graduate Philadelphia continues to keep in contact with her.

She would like to work in the nonprofit sector and do advocacy work, becoming a voice for people who feel as if they don’t have one.

“Every day you wake up and breathe, you can go to school, and I think fear stops a lot of people,” Johnson said. “Especially comebackers, because they don’t think they can fit in with the younger group, and we both can learn from one another.”

Title: Lifelong Learning Journeys for Non-Traditional Students Reach Pinnacle Moments at Peirce College Graduation

Author: citybizlist

Link: <http://citybizlist.com/article/485065/lifelong-learning-journeys-for-non-traditional-students-reach-pinnacle-moments-at-peirce-college-graduation>

Date: June 11, 2018

The Peirce College Class of 2018 truly showcases the ideals of lifelong learning.

For many of the 285 graduates graduating on June 11 from Peirce, a Center City institution specializing in the education of working adults for more than 153 years, earning a college degree was part of their continued quest for career advancement. For others, their goal was self-improvement and personal fulfillment. For graduates like William Blackman, the motivation was inspiration itself.

A retired Philadelphia police officer and military veteran, Blackman, 72, is graduating with a Master's degree in Organizational Leadership & Management. He is one of eight members of the class older than 60, one of Peirce's largest-ever contingents of graduates of that age.

After graduating from high school in 1964, Blackman joined the military and then the Philadelphia Police Department. He took a few college courses at that time, but realized that the timing wasn't quite right. After retiring from law enforcement, he rejoined the military and served for an additional 18 years.

Blackman first attended Peirce in 2012, completing his bachelor's degree in Business Administration in 2014.

"I enjoyed my undergraduate experience so much, I decided to continue my journey in the master's program," he said. "I joined the Peirce College community to accomplish my personal goal of obtaining my college degree and to inspire my grandson to value the importance of education."

More than 77 percent of this year's graduating class are students over the age of 28.

"Peirce College offers a supportive educational environment for adults with the tenacity and drive to complete their degrees," said President and CEO Dr. Mary Ellen Caro. "We work hard to ensure that we're providing the knowledge and skills most in demand from employers and that we empower students to achieve their goals. Commencement is the pinnacle moment for this work and we look forward to what our graduates do next."

Attending college as an adult is challenging, especially the balance of school with other work, family and community responsibilities. Still, Tara Broadie, 45, knew she would

have to face these challenges head-on if she wanted to advance in her career. She enjoyed a good job in the healthcare information management industry, but there was no room for promotion without a college degree. After earning her associate degree in healthcare information technology in 2016, Broadie secured a better position in her field. Upon completing her bachelor's degree in December, she advanced even further, landing a management job overseeing the coding department at Johns Hopkins University Hospital in Baltimore. She is continuing her lifelong pursuit of learning in the Executive Masters of Healthcare Administration program at George Washington University.

"When I started to pursue my education, I realized for the first time that I was in control of my destiny. I didn't have to worry anymore about someone telling me what I couldn't do because I didn't have a degree," she said.

Broadie's story reveals that completing college is an achievable goal for those who set their minds to it, but two other graduates say it's a little easier when your spouse is on the same journey.

Husband and wife team Anthony, 45, and Natasha Williams, 39, will each graduate with a master's degree in Organizational Leadership & Management this year, having gone through their Peirce associate and bachelor's programs together as well.

The Williamses encourage anyone who is contemplating going back to college later in life to do it and look to your loved ones for support along the way.

"It's been a challenge, but we have had each other to rely on," Anthony Williams said. "And if you can't attend school together, support one another when the time comes for one of you to go back to earn your degree."

In total, Peirce will confer 26 master's degrees, the largest class of graduate-level students since its inception. The College will also confer 162 bachelor's degrees, 91 associate degrees and six certificates. Philadelphia Director of Commerce Harold T. Epps will deliver the commencement address. The ceremony begins at 6:45 p.m. at the Kimmel Center for Performing Arts on Broad Street in Center City Philadelphia.

About Peirce College

Founded in 1865, Peirce College has been providing working adults with affordable education, flexible classes, and personalized support for more than 150 years. Peirce offers bachelor and associate degree programs in the areas of Business, Healthcare, Information Technology, and Legal Studies, and Master of Science degrees in Healthcare Administration and Organizational Leadership & Management, all designed to meet modern workforce demands. Located in the heart of Philadelphia, Peirce is a non-profit institution that specializes in serving the unique needs of working adults through both online and on campus education. In 2015, Peirce took life-friendly learning and degree attainment to the next level with the creation of Peirce Fit®, a

revolutionary learning format that allows students to choose each week whether to attend class in person or online. Through competency-based education in Peirce's IT program, students may also choose a faster, more affordable path to a degree. Peirce College is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 3624 Market St. Philadelphia, PA 19104 (267-284-5000). Additionally, select programs are accredited by The Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs, the American Bar Association and the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education.

For more information about Peirce College, call 888.467.3472, or visit www.Peirce.edu. Visit Peirce's blog, Peirce Connections, at <http://blog.Peirce.edu>. Become a fan of [Peirce College](#) on Facebook. Follow [@PeirceCollege](#) on Twitter. View the Peirce College [YouTube Channel](#).

Title: PHL 17 Peirce College Graduation Coverage

Author: PHL17

Date: June 2018



Title: 6abc Peirce College Graduation Coverage

Author: 6abc

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