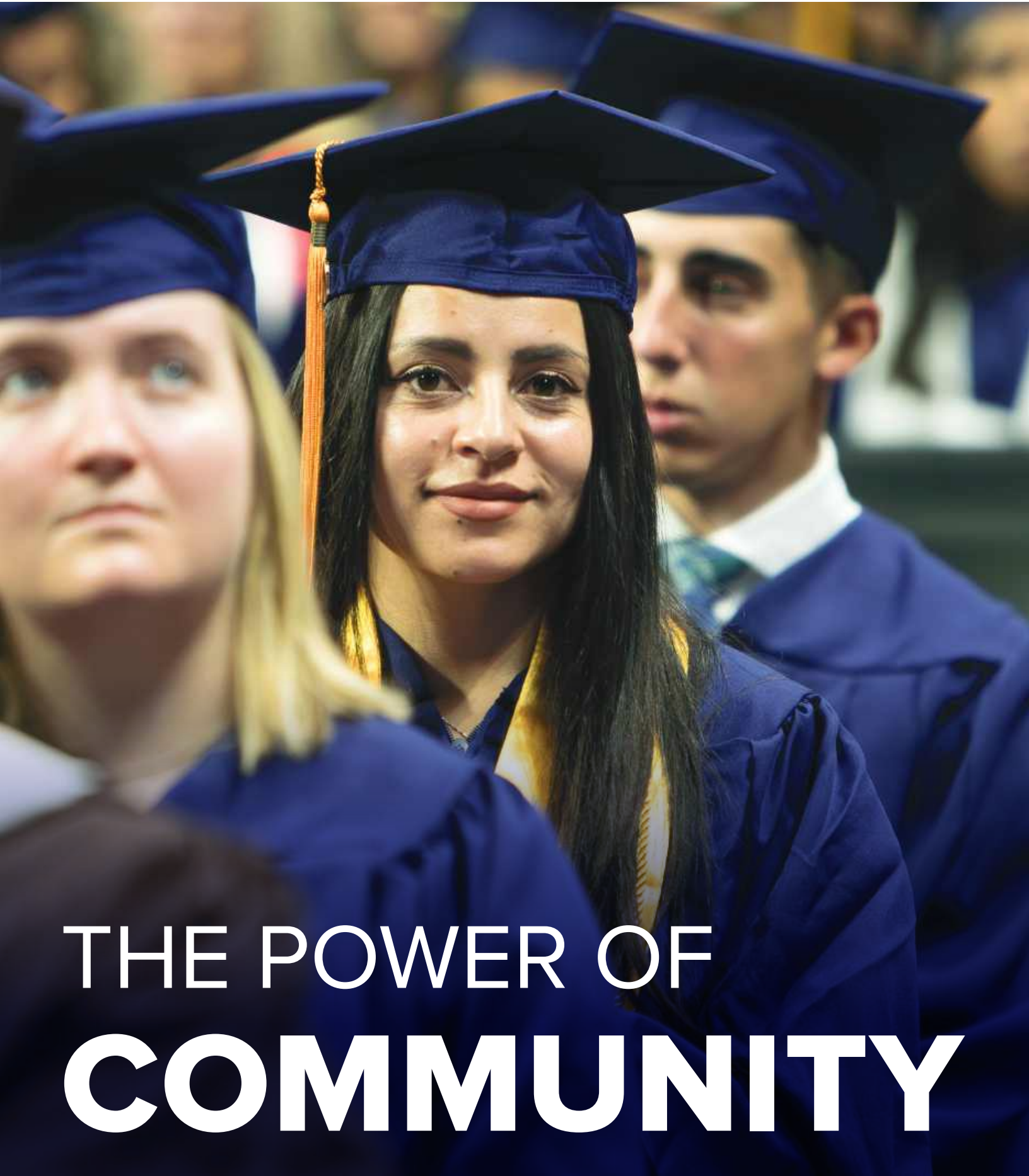




MIDDLESEX
COLLEGE

ANNUAL REPORT ■ 2023-2024



THE POWER OF
COMMUNITY





A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

While climbing the ladder of success is something that speaks to individual effort, the students who graduate from Middlesex College understand the importance of holding the ladder for those coming up behind them. They fully appreciate the guidance and counsel they received from the College community in staying encouraged and making informed decisions that determine their futures.

The Middlesex College ethos of paving the way and giving students a hand-up can be seen in multiple ways – faculty who go to great lengths to act as mentors and identify meaningful opportunities for their students, staff who step up to assist students through myriad challenges, and alumni who provide critical scholarships.

When there is support for students from all members of the College community, the outcomes are impressive. For example, during the 2023-2024 academic year, 100% of the graduates of our Nursing, Dental Hygiene, and Radiography programs who sat for their respective national credentialing exam passed on their first attempt.

Another example is the experience of Nima Sedghi, this year's Jack Kent Cooke scholarship winner. Having immigrated to the United States just three years ago, the Iranian-born graduate relied on faculty, staff, and alumni to help him navigate the American higher education system and apply for a transformative scholarship. Sedghi transferred to Columbia University this fall.

It does indeed take a village to prepare the next generation of future leaders, and 2023-2024 encapsulates how the Middlesex College community comes together to create pathways for upward mobility for our students and a better quality of life for residents of our County. And when students graduate from here, they become part of a large and powerful network of change agents.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several fluid, connected strokes.

Mark McCormick
President, Middlesex College

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Middlesex College is to provide access to a quality, affordable education for a diverse population, to support student success for lifelong learning, and to strengthen the economic, social and cultural life of the community.

NIMA SEDGHI

“I will always help anyone at Middlesex who needs my help because the entire community is built on connections and helping one another. It’s what makes Middlesex such an amazing school.”

Class of 2024 salutatorian and aspiring doctor Nima Sedghi received life-changing news when he learned that he was one of just 60 community college students nationwide to receive the coveted Jack Kent Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship this year.

The prestigious scholarship, which provides recipients up to \$55,000 a year to complete their bachelor’s degrees at four-year colleges or universities, has made it possible for Sedghi to now attend Columbia University.

A lot has happened since Sedghi moved to the United States from his native Iran in 2021, in the middle of a global pandemic.

Luckily, he had his older sister to help him adjust to his new American life. He credits his sister for helping pave the way for his success.

“When she came here 10 years ago, she was all alone with no one to support her. She got her master’s degree and started working,” Sedghi said. “I saw from her accomplishments that in the U.S., if you really try, have persistence and perseverance, you will be successful.”

Sedghi also found support at Middlesex College in navigating the American higher education landscape.

“Everything was new to me. I was completely unaware of how the education system here

worked,” Sedghi said.

Sedghi needed to complete ESL courses before he could even start taking classes toward his major. In his second semester, he developed relationships with faculty in the natural sciences department who served as critical mentors for him as he planned where to transfer for a bachelor’s degree.

“Professor Donna Gardner-Beadling and Professor Brian Lavey guided me through the entire process of what you need to do, what you need to have, where you can apply,” said Sedghi. “I could not be more grateful to them.”

It was also thanks to Gardner-Beadling that Sedghi first learned of the Cooke scholarship opportunity. Sedghi also received help from an alumnus who had received the award.

Earlier this year, Sedghi and other applicants had the opportunity to meet with past Cooke Scholars, including 2022 winner Thomas Emens who offered Sedghi strategic advice throughout the Cooke scholarship application process.

“With his feedback, I created the application and submitted it,” Sedghi said. “He’s an amazing person.”

Sedghi says he hopes to provide the same support for future Middlesex College students who might find themselves in a similar position.



EMILY FOX

“Middlesex has been the source of so much inspiration, validation, and pride in my life these past two years. I will never not be proud to be a Middlesex College alumna.”

After seven years in the beauty industry, Emily Fox made the decision to start college at 25 years old in search of a new career.

The South River native never thought of herself as a scholar, barely getting by in high school and then attending beauty school where academics was not the focus.

But that all changed from the very first day of class in her first semester at Middlesex College in Fall 2022.

“I knew I made the right decision,” said Fox. “I felt so supported and seen by the outstanding advising faculty and professors. Each and every class was exciting, insightful, and inspirational. I made invaluable connections with my professors.”

One of those professors she bonded with was History of Women and Art History professor Denise Rompilla, who recommended Fox for the Transfer Scholars Initiative (TSI) at Princeton University.

TSI was nothing short of life-changing, according to Fox. The program renewed her purpose as a student and motivated her to reach new heights academically.

“I ended that program with two A’s on a Princeton University transcript,” Fox said. “That experience would not have been possible without Middlesex, and I am just extremely grateful.”

Fox found herself back at Princeton for an

English honors class project with Professor Celia Winchester to take on a daunting research project involving cellular immunology, something the history major knew nothing about.

“That project was so hard, but Professor Winchester listened to our concerns, provided us with support and resources, and wanted to see us succeed,” Fox said.

The greatest thrill about her Middlesex College experience, she says, was realizing her potential to be the best student she could be. Fox graduated with a 4.0 GPA.

“Hearing ‘Highest Honors’ following my name at Commencement was truly an experience like no other,” recalled Fox. “This absolutely would not have been possible without the support of [the College’s] amazing staff. I owe all of my success to them.”

Fox’s impressive academic credentials led to acceptances with full scholarships at Smith College, Wellesley College, and Drew University.

“These acceptances were the culmination of all of my hard work, and they serve as a testament to the absolutely stellar education and preparation Middlesex provides,” said Fox.

Fox is now at Smith College in Massachusetts as an Ada Comstock Scholar studying History and Women and Gender.



YOKASTI MATEO

“My principal inspiration has always been my daughter, but Zakiyia’s story helped me to believe what my situation could be.”

Yokasti Mateo never gave up on her dream of going to college. Born in Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic, she graduated from high school there in 2004. When she came to New Jersey to live with her family, she wanted to continue her education.

Two decades after graduating from high school, the Perth Amboy resident graduated as a member of the Middlesex College Class of 2024 with an associate degree in Psychology. Her stellar academics led to a coveted scholarship from the Coca-Cola Foundation, inclusion on the Dean’s List in 2022 and 2023, and ultimately, the Ivy League.

Mateo is now pursuing a bachelor’s degree at Columbia University with the goal of becoming a neuropsychologist.

Currently on a path to realize her academic and professional dreams, Mateo credits Middlesex College for making college possible, and for providing her with the tools and support to thrive once she enrolled.

“Middlesex College is a great institution with very caring, professional faculty, staff, and president,” Mateo said.

During her time at Middlesex College, she gave back to the community in numerous ways. She served as vice president of membership for Phi Theta Kappa, an honor society that emphasizes service as a core value, and volunteered with

the Mobile Family Success Center in Middlesex County, Toys for Tots, and the Letters to Foster Children program.

“I have given my time to pack and deliver food straight to people’s apartments, gift-wrapped presents for children, and wrote letters to children in foster care in a creative way, using drawings, varied colors, and personalized designs,” said Mateo.

When deciding where she would transfer to, she thought her accomplishments, along with a great personal story, would make her application to Columbia University stand out. But a seed of doubt held her back, that is until she watched Class of 2023 valedictorian Zakiyia Forbes’s commencement speech.

Like Mateo, Forbes was a nontraditional college student and a mother, and shared similar challenges. Listening to Forbes share her own personal story and how she was accepted to Columbia gave Mateo the push she needed to apply to that same university.

“When I saw her deliver the class welcome, I said, ‘OK, I’m going to apply to Columbia,’” Mateo said.

Understanding the impact of Forbes’s speech and the power of representation, Mateo hopes to inspire others.



IDALIZ HERRERA

“At Middlesex College I was able to interact with my professors and acquired a lot of knowledge, but I learned even more about myself and what works and what doesn’t work for me.”

Idaliz Herrera’s first contact with Middlesex College came after her junior year at Perth Amboy High School. The summer before she became a senior there, she signed up for the College’s pre-college program Success Bound.

For Herrera, Success Bound was the perfect antidote for easing her anxieties about the transition from high school to college, providing her with a “sneak peek” of what college would be like.

“I was always worried about, ‘Oh my God, what if it’s too overwhelming if we have a lot of homework?’” Herrera said. “But, when I did go to Middlesex College [as a college student], it was easier for me to navigate through it since I had already taken college-level classes through Success Bound.”

Herrera’s time at Middlesex College was nothing short of an outstanding success. The biology major graduated with “Highest Honors” and her academic achievements led her to become a semi-finalist for the highly competitive Jack Kent Cooke scholarship.

Herrera is now at Rutgers University, pursuing a bachelor’s degree at the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences. She wants to work in a laboratory setting one day.

Her love of research was encouraged at Middlesex College, where she worked on hands-

on projects, including one that helped her to discover a passion for studying the effects of climate change.

“I was lucky enough to do a research project at Middlesex where I would go to Sandy Hook Beach to see how, since 2016, climate change has affected the ocean in its pH, salt, and oxygen levels, and things like that,” Herrera said.

No matter what she chooses to do career-wise, Herrera looks back at her time at Middlesex College as a period of building confidence and knowing that she is prepared for what’s next.

“I worked very hard to get to where I am, getting the GPA that I got, and graduating with highest honors from Middlesex, which was very difficult as the journey went on,” said Herrera. “At the end of the day, I have a lot of people around who encourage me and see what I am capable of, even when I don’t see it in myself in the moment.”



STUDENT BODY

1,478

Students Graduated
in 2023-2024

11,481

Enrolled in Fall 2023 Credit Courses

1,554

Workforce Development and
Lifelong Learning Registrations

5,300

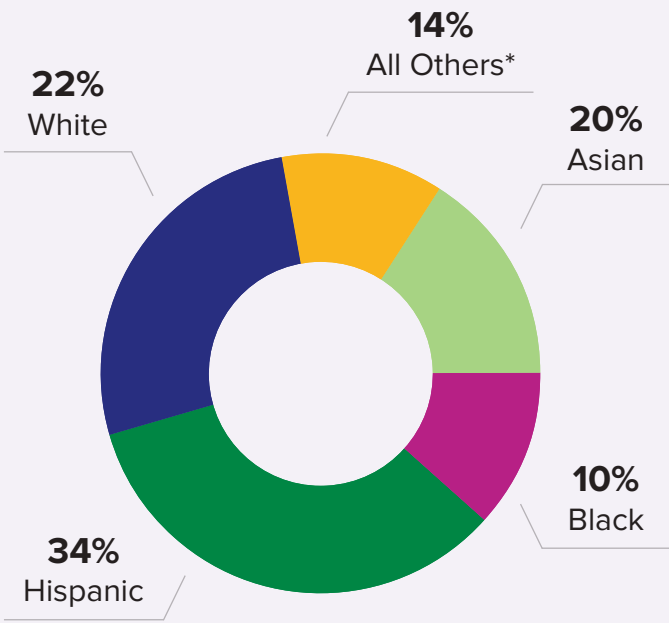
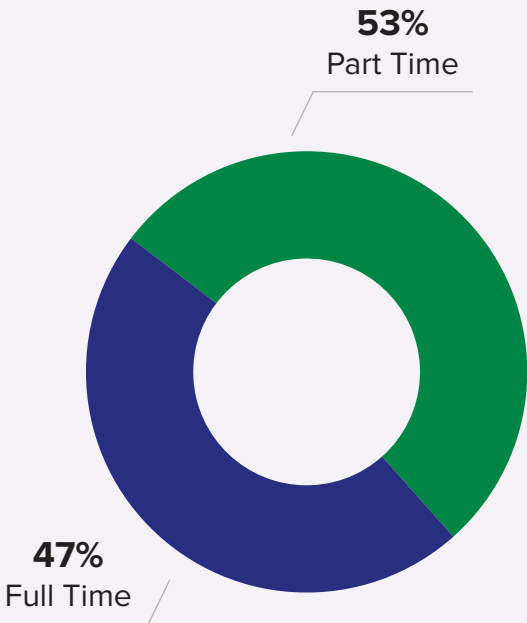
High School Students
Taking College-Level Courses

389

International Students
Representing 58 Countries

21

Average Age



*Includes: International, American Indian, Native Hawaiian, Unknown, and 2 or more races.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

65,916

Total Alumni / Students Graduated Since 1968

42,280

Alumni in New Jersey

25,154

Alumni in Middlesex County

2,679

Hours of Community Service by Students

52%

Students Receive Financial Aid
(federal, state, institutional, 3rd party, and/or loans)

\$31.7 million

Total Financial Aid Received by Students
(federal, state, institutional, 3rd party, and/or loans)

850

Transferred to a Four-Year Institution



TOP ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Business Administration
Allied Health Pre-Professional
General Studies
Computer Science
Psychology
Biology
Criminal Justice
Education
Engineering Science

TOP TRANSFER PARTNERS

Rutgers University – New Brunswick
Kean University
Rutgers University – Newark
New Jersey Institute of Technology
Montclair State University
New Jersey City University
Felician University
Rider University
Chamberlain University
The College of New Jersey

HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

AWARDS/RECOGNITION



The Middlesex College team took first place at the annual **New Jersey County College Case Competition**, hosted by Rutgers Business School–Newark, for analyzing a business case study and presenting solutions to address the challenges the company in the scenario faced. The Middlesex College team, with each member receiving a \$1,000 Rutgers Business School–Newark scholarship, competed against teams from Brookdale Community College, Hudson County Community College, Mercer County Community College, and Ocean County College. Professors Lakshmi Nagarajan-Iyer, Joe Nesi, Charles O’Gorman, Shannon Pullaro, and Sheri-Rose Rubin served as faculty advisors for the Middlesex College team.



The Center for Justice-Impacted Students was awarded a \$50,000 grant from the **Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation** to support the College’s Justice Scholars Program as well as for programming to support currently incarcerated students by bringing in supplemental educational programming within partner facilities.



The Dental Hygiene Program was honored with the **2023 Teledentistry Innovation Award**, accepted at an event by Dental Hygiene Department Chair Michelle Roman and Professor Nadine Thompson, for its integration of teledentistry into its curriculum and services by MouthWatch, a leader in the field of teledentistry. Faculty and students are able to collaborate synchronously or asynchronously with an off-site consulting dentist using teledentistry, enabling the dentist to view charts from anywhere and seamlessly communicate with on-site students and faculty.

Middlesex College was awarded a \$3 million **Title V Grant** to bolster services for Hispanic students. The five-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education will broaden the array of services the College provides for students, heighten the College’s ability to attract and retain Hispanic and low-income students, and allow the College to deploy a new student success platform that will identify students in need of support and guidance.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT/COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge, the nonpartisan competition that honors campuses for excellence in student voter engagement, gave Middlesex College a 34 out of 36 score and the “Highly Established Action Plan” ribbon for online materials, making it one of 123 institutions across the country to receive this recognition.



Middlesex College and the **Middlesex County Division of History and Historic Preservation** launched a pilot program in Fall 2023 to take advantage of the County’s unique historic sites in providing students a glimpse into life, culture, and ideas during the 1700s.



Middlesex College launched a free journalism certificate program, a two-year pilot program, to train students to become active contributors to local news in Middlesex County thanks to a \$40,000 grant from the **New Jersey Council for the Humanities and Journalism + Design at The New School**.



Middlesex College will play an integral role in a workforce partnership between Middlesex County and **RWJBarnabas Health**. As part of a \$25 million investment in the Jack & Sheryl Morris Cancer Center, the partnership aims to foster a talent pipeline for that Center by creating healthcare career pathways for students from the Middlesex County Magnet Schools to Middlesex Colleges to careers at RWJBarnabas.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS



Class of 2024 students Safia Ansari, Adriana Fung, Idaliz Herrera, Theodore Kozak, Crystal Paulino, and Nima Sedghi were selected as semifinalists for the **Jack Kent Cooke College Scholarship**. Nationally, 459 semifinalists were named.



Best Overall Hack – Middlesex College students Kyrollos Girgis, Christopher Hausheer, and Dhruv Sethi were part of the team that created an inflatable cylindrical-shaped robot, the “Expand-a-Conda,” which won first prize at **HackTCNJ 2024**.

A trifecta of 100% first-time pass rates on national credentialing exams:

- All 27 Dental Hygiene graduates from the Class of 2024 passed the ADEX Dental Examination on their first attempt.
- All 25 Radiography graduates from the Class of 2024 passed the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists national certification exam on their first attempt.
- All 46 of the nursing students from Middlesex College who took their National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-RN) passed on their first try, giving Middlesex College a 100% pass rate for 2023.

COMMUNITY, INNOVATION, AND OPPORTUNITY (CIO) PROGRESS

Middlesex County’s Community, Innovation, and Opportunity (CIO) Strategic Investment Plan, first announced in Fall 2022, marked several significant developments over this past academic year, including:

- The completion of design for Phase 1 of the CIO plan, including completed designs of the Multi-Purpose Community Venue, a new Student Center for Middlesex College, and the new Middlesex County Magnet School, marking a pivotal point where progress becomes tangible, with construction expected to begin sometime in the 2024-2025 academic year.
- As part of Middlesex County’s partnership with Rutgers University, it was announced that the future Multi-Purpose Community Venue will serve as a home field for Rutgers baseball, beginning with the 2026 season.



RECOGNIZING COLLEGE COMMUNITY MEMBERS

During her sabbatical, Professor of Natural Sciences **Claire Condie** found inspiration in the waters of Key Largo, where she was able to go scuba diving with marine biologists to help coral grow, and spent time working with ReClam The Bay, an organization that promotes the importance of New Jersey's Raritan Bay.



Joanie Coffaro, formerly the Executive Director of Workforce Development and Lifelong Learning, was appointed the New Vice President for External Affairs, Communication, and Advancement.

The College named three new assistant deans to lead various aspects of student services: **Alex Delgado**, Assistant Dean of Student Success; **Lisa Rodriguez-Gregory**, Assistant Dean for Enrollment Management; and **Odé Hoppie**, Assistant Dean for Student Engagement.



Kimberly Burnett began her new role as Executive Director of Marketing and Communications at Middlesex College.

The Board of Trustees welcomed two new members: **Iris Delgado** and **Shivi Madhukar**. Metuchen resident Iris Delgado is a political data and targeting expert who has worked to help elect public officials. Edison resident Shivi Madhukar is a public policy expert with more than two decades of domestic and international experience.



Nurdan S. Duzgoren-Aydin was named Dean of Business, STEM, and Health Professions.

ALUMNI NEWS



Gabriella Grande '23 was elected by her fellow classmates from the 2023 graduating class as graduating student representative to the Board of Trustees for academic year 2023-2024.



Claudio Mir '96, Senior Program Coordinator for Community Outreach, Office of Diversity and Inclusion at Rutgers University, was named 2024 Alumnus of the Year, and addressed the graduating class at the College's 57th Commencement Ceremony.



ATHLETIC HIGHLIGHTS

Former Middlesex College Wrestling and Tennis Head Coach **John Sacchi** and former Middlesex College Athletic Director **Robert Zifchak** were among the inaugural class of inductees into the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Region XIX Hall of Fame.

- Men's Basketball won the Garden State Athletic Conference Division II Regular Season Championship.
- Men's Basketball Head Coach Winston Smith was named the Garden State Athletic Conference Division II Coach of the Year.
- Women's Basketball Head Coach Michel Powell won her 400th career game.
- Kaylin Nepton became the first softball player to be named NJCAA 1st Team All American since 1998.
- Michael Wansaw set the baseball team career hits record with 84.

SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS

RECOGNIZING DIVERSE NEED



\$575,136

In 2023-2024 Scholarships from
the Middlesex College Foundation



417

Scholarship
Recipients



911

Scholarship Awards from the
Middlesex College Foundation

MIDDLESEX COLLEGE FOUNDATION

EVERY STUDENT CAN BE A SUCCESS STORY

The Middlesex College Foundation is committed to making educational opportunities a reality for students from all backgrounds. Through financial aid, scholarships, program funding, and other resources, students are able to work toward their academic and career goals. When Middlesex College students succeed, communities benefit and families are strengthened for generations to come. Every gift is an investment in a student's success story.



Scholarship Assistance

Available federal and state aid does not completely address the significant financial challenges that some students face. Since 1966, the Middlesex College Foundation has increased access to a college education through scholarships, and for nearly 60 years the Foundation has distributed over \$19 million in scholarships. During the 2023-2024 academic year, through generous donors and diligent stewardship of the Foundation's endowment, 417 students received 911 awards totaling \$575,136.

Program Excellence and Inclusion

The Foundation's support to Middlesex College programs seeks to meet additional academic needs. The Middlesex College Foundation, and its funding partners, recognize that students' dreams are as diverse as their backgrounds, interests, and abilities. Donor support of programs across campus provide opportunities for students to explore and thrive through high-quality, challenging curricula and innovative, specialized programs. In Fiscal Year 2023-2024, program support totaled \$454,592.

Digital equity is a unique challenge, one that the College has been addressing in stages since before the pandemic. The College established a Chromebook Loaner Program during the pandemic and continues to invest in connectivity and infrastructure. In Fiscal Year 2023-2024, the Middlesex College Foundation took the challenge one step further, establishing and funding the Bridging the Digital Divide: Chromebook Ownership Program. Corporate and individual gifts provided 70 new Chromebooks for students in the program's first year.



Measurable Impact

The Foundation's goal is to remove obstacles to educational persistence. Students' most basic needs have become one of the most pressing focuses in our donor outreach. Middlesex College Foundation donors continue to recognize personal financial hardships including food and housing insecurity, unreliable transportation, and limited educational resources for technology as significant barriers to completing an education. In Fiscal Year 2023-2024, the Foundation received 311 gifts from 138 donors for

student basic needs addressed in the Food Pantry, Student Emergency Fund, and Save Our Seat assistance program. Of the total \$74,080 in holistic student support, \$51,539 was in cash donations and \$22,514 was the value of in-kind donations. These gifts ranged from \$5 to \$30,000.

A special thank you to every donor. Know that beyond access, excellence, inclusion, and impact today, your gift is an investment in the future.

THANK YOU DONORS

FOUNDER'S CIRCLE

\$100,000+

Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation
James J. Mikusi Sr. Living Trust
Johnson & Johnson Foundation

BENEFACTOR'S CIRCLE

\$25,000+

Anonymous
Judith Chezmar
Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund
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Foundation
Rutgers Community Health
Foundation

CHAIRMAN'S CIRCLE

\$10,000+

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Southpole Foundation, Inc.
Walter and Louise Sutcliffe Foundation
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Women's Rehabilitation Group of NJ

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\$5,000+

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Hospital
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 Gary Taffet
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 Kathleen Zupcic '82



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\$250+

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 Jasmine Bundy '07
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\$100+

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Rafael Arocho
Michele Artus

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Kenneth Bauer '69
Barbara Beca '70
John Beca '69 and Barbara Tearpock
Beca '70
Justin Belizario '13
Judi Benimeli
Dorothy Bitetto '69
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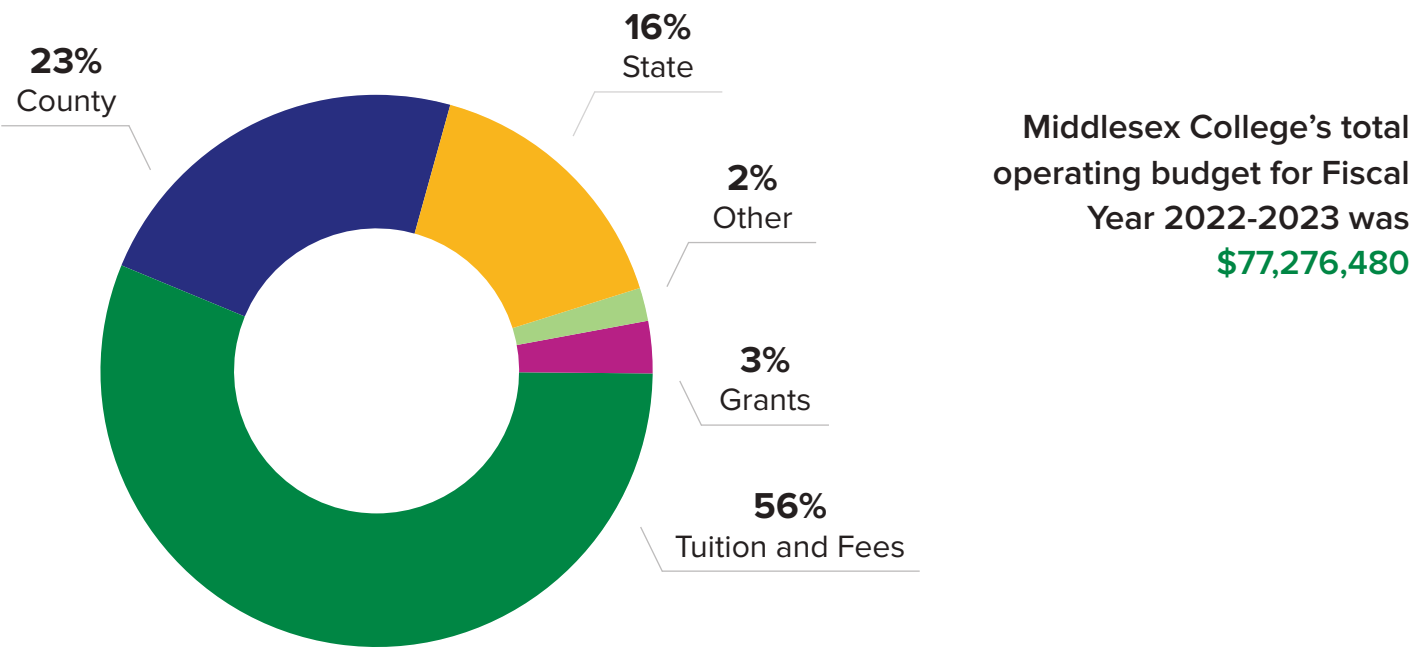
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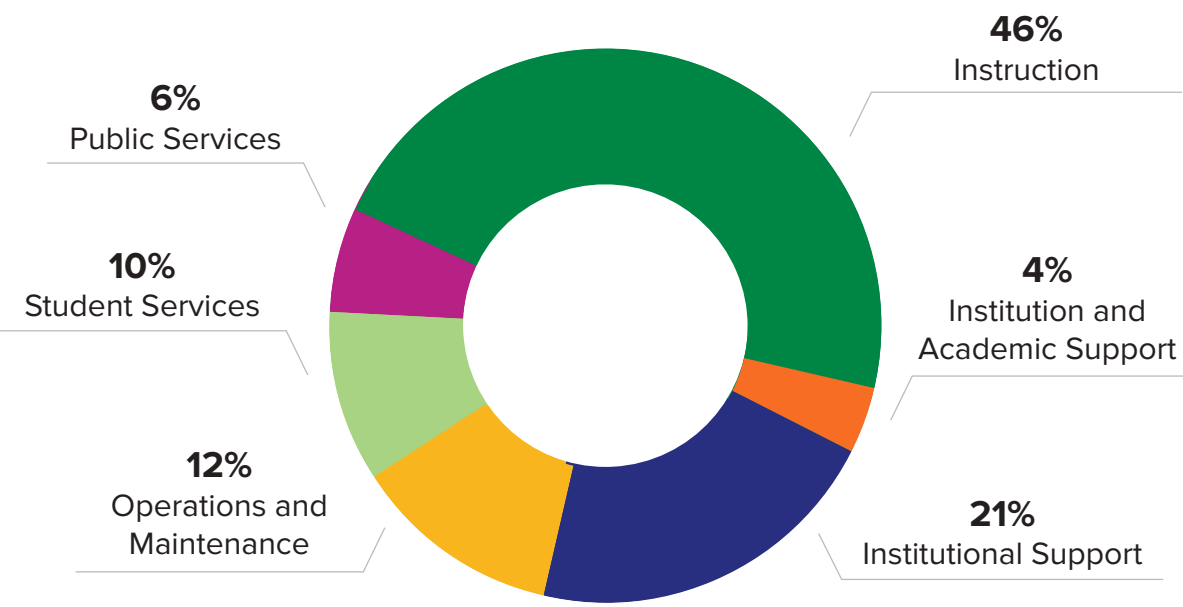
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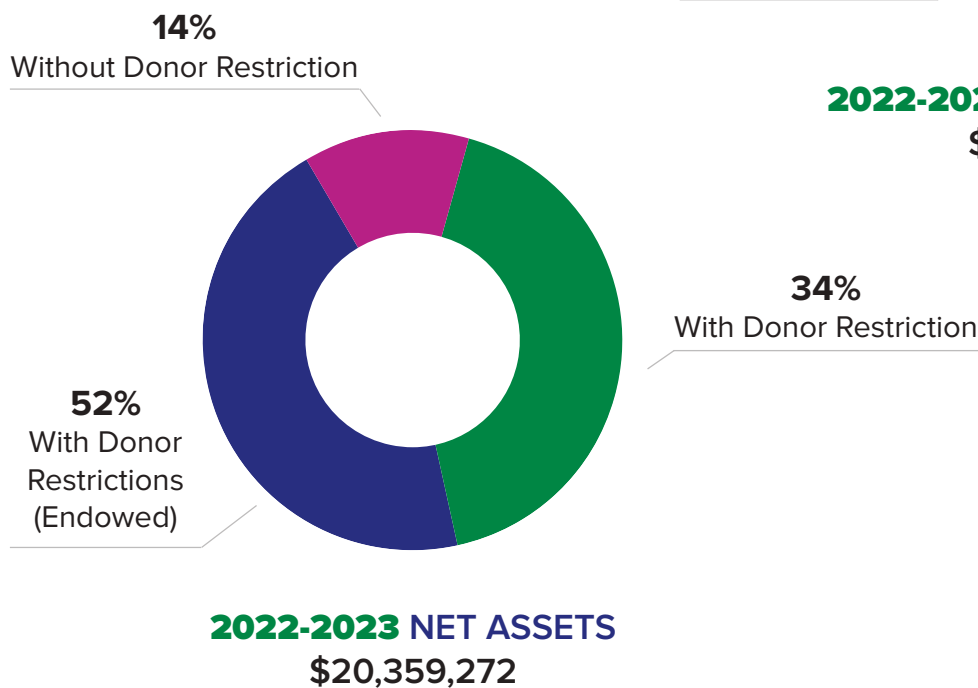
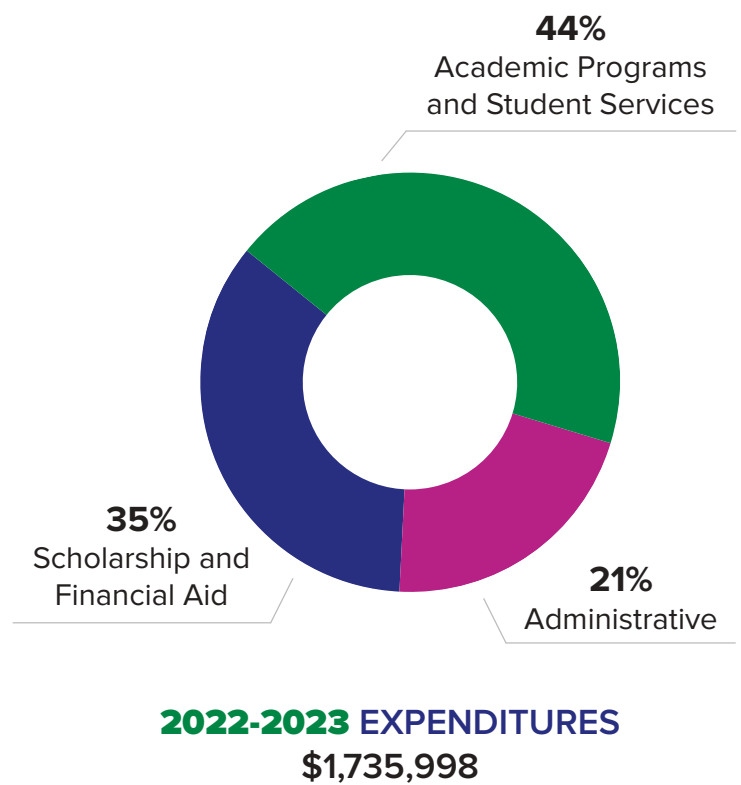
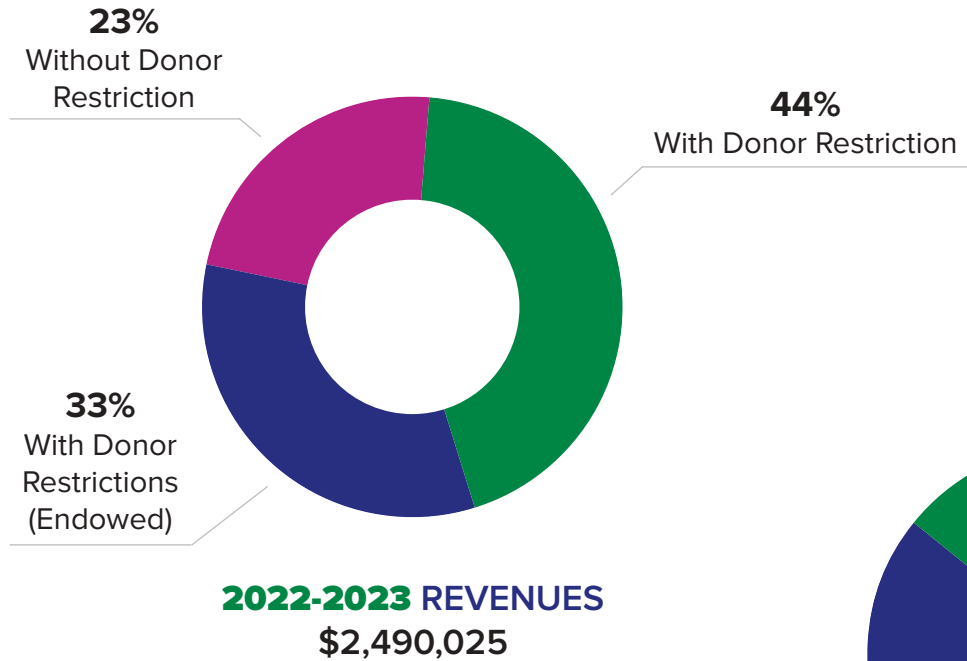


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