Lackawanna College Physical Therapist Assistant program accredited

College received initial approval in April from Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education

SCRANTON, Pa. - Following a two-year long evaluation process, Lackawanna College’s Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) Program received its full initial five-year accreditation this spring through the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA).

The new PTA program at Lackawanna is a rigorous, full-time program that spans five semesters including three full academic semesters, and three full-time clinical assignments. The first clinical assignment begins during the first summer term; and then two back-to-back, six-week clinical assignments are held during the final spring semester.

To be accredited by CAPTE, a program must exhibit that it “is taught by qualified faculty; has the resources it needs to support the program and curriculum; meets the missions and philosophies of both the program and the institution; a comprehensive and organized curriculum that leads to the development of the competencies necessary for entry into the profession; has acceptable student outcomes; has policies, procedures and practices that protect the rights and safety of all those involved with the program; and engages in assessment and continuous improvement along with providing accurate information to the public,” according to the organization’s web site, www.capteonline.org.

“The addition of the PTA program not only strengthens the overall reputation and offerings that Lackawanna College has to offer but also adds to the growing variety of health care programs offered by the college,” said Lackawanna College PTA Program Director Michael J. Augustine. “The students who earn this degree will do so in a two-year time period and in an affordable manner. There are not many two-year degrees that upon graduation can provide an individual with the great earning potential that this occupation offers. Students who earn this degree have the potential of starting with a salary ranging from approximately $35,000 to $45,000 per year depending on practice setting, geographic location and experience.”

Following notification of its accreditation by unanimous vote at CAPTE’s annual spring accreditation meeting, the Lackawanna program graduated its inaugural class of 13 students in May. Those students were then eligible to take their National Licensing Exam on the first possible date the test is administered following graduation. The second class of students has finished their first year in the program and the summer session of full-time clinical assignments.

“The need for healthcare workers, including PTA's, is projected to continue to grow. Lackawanna College, by recognizing this need and supporting the development of this program, is continuing to secure itself as a progressive, educational cornerstone that strives to meet the needs of the community,” said Lackawanna College Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education Suzanne Atcavage.

The college is proud to be one of 309 PTA programs currently accredited by CAPTE in the United States.