

YTI LANCASTER

Graduates lauded for can-do spirit

Institute's local campus grants diplomas to 137 at spring commencement

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There's always that one special teacher, state Sen. Lloyd Smucker told his audience Tuesday at YTI Career Institute Lancaster campus's spring commencement.

"The one who cared about us as a person," said Smucker, the event's keynote speaker. "Who expected a lot. ... The one who went the extra mile."

For him, he said, it was Miss Gingrich, who taught third grade at Weavertown Mennonite



MARTY HEISEY/STAFF

Three students embrace before the graduation ceremony for York Technical Institute's Lancaster campus.

School.

Smucker was a voracious reader, and the school's small library

and the bookmobile didn't have enough to offer him.

So Gingrich took it

upon herself to take him and his siblings to the Lancaster Public Library every couple of weeks, all school year.

"She opened my world and taught me to love learning," he said.

Lancaster is blessed to have a school like YTI, Smucker told the 137 students and their families assembled in the auditorium at the Manheim LCBC Church on Mount Joy Road.

It's a school that ties its educational offerings closely to the needs of in-

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on-site exams, U

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YTI: Lancaster campus grants diplomas to graduates

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dustry, and its graduates' futures will be testimony to the quality of their education, he said.

The graduates came from eight programs, among them criminal justice, culinary arts/restaurant management, dental and medical assistant and health information technology.

In completing their degrees, "you have proven your character, persistence and can-do spirit," Smucker told them.

Nicole Miller, a culinary arts/restaurant management graduate and winner of YTI's President's Award, urged her classmates to "take the first step and just go for it."

That's what she told herself before starting her first day at YTI, she said, and that motto "gave me the confidence to do what I never thought possible."

She thanked her family, friends and YTI faculty and staff for their support. YTI opened up opportunities, she said, including an externship at Bolete, a highly respected farm-to-table restaurant in Bethlehem.

To learn in a setting where everyone shares your passion "is what everyone should aspire to," Miller said.

YTI students often have to juggle family and jobs along with their schooling. Many are the first in their family to graduate

from college, registrar Jack McCoy said.

Nicole Jones said this was her first time to wear a cap and gown.

Jones, 37, left high school at 17 when she had her daughter.

Undaunted, she went to school at night and worked during the day. She earned her GED, enrolled at YTI and on Tuesday received her degree in health information technology.

Her daughter, meanwhile, is a college sophomore.

Campus President Kevin Bright told the graduates to remember "not only the lessons that you've learned, but the confidence that you've gained."

Smucker quoted Henry Ford: "Whether



MARTY HEISEY/STAFF PHOTOS

Three students pose for a photo opportunity before the graduation ceremony for York Technical Institute's Lancaster campus at LCBC on Tuesday night in Manheim.

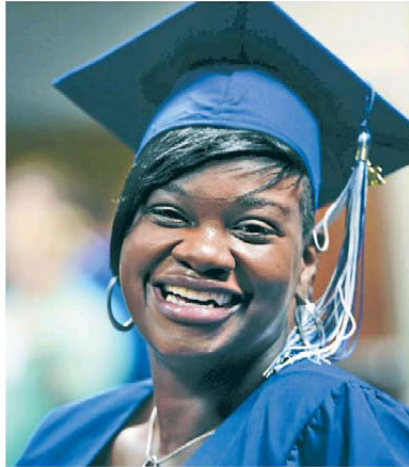
you believe you can do right." a thing, or not, you are "So believe,

and continue to achieve," Smucker said.

MEET THE GRADUATES



Name: Lindsey Cruz
Hometown: Mountville
Major: Criminal Justice
Biggest lesson learned: Don't procrastinate.
What's next: I did my externship with Lancaster County Sheriff's Department, so I'll take my PT (physical training) test next month. If everything goes well, I'll go to the sheriffs' academy, hopefully in August.
Will miss most: My instructors.
Will miss least: Projects. You have to do a lot of PowerPoints and things like that.
Professor(s) who had biggest impact: I have three: Robert Pace, Travis Souders and Steve Henry. They always kept pushing me and always made sure I knew the sky was the limit.




Name: Nicole Jones
Hometown: Lancaster
Major: Health Information Technology
Biggest lesson learned: Never give up 30 seconds before the miracle.
What's next: I'm currently working as a health insurance specialist with Patient First in King of Prussia. I plan on transferring with that position to Richmond, Virginia, in a year or so, and possibly studying for my bachelor's degree.
Will miss most: Instructor Liza McLucas and my classmates.
Will miss least: Projects!
Professor(s) who had biggest impact: Liza McLucas. She was professional, straightforward, compassionate and an awesome coder/instructor! She kept me in line. I'll also miss program director Lisa Hershey. Her level of professionalism is admirable, and I try to model that level every day.




Name: Crystal Riehl
Hometown: Elizabethtown
Major: Health Information Technology
Biggest lesson learned: Don't procrastinate. I always waited until the last minute to do everything. It wasn't until about halfway through that I realized I'll get a lot further ahead if I do things as soon as they need to be done.
What's next: I got a full-time job with Edaptive Systems in York.
Will miss most: My classmates.
Will miss least: Homework.
Professor(s) who had biggest impact: Lisa Hershey, our program director, and Liza McLucas.

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Eunice Colon, left, relaxes before York Technical Institute Lancaster campus's commencement Tuesday.

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