2012 ALUMNI AWARDS RECIPIENT BIOGRAPHIES

Brian M. Kolb ’71
DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI
AWARD RECIPIENT

Leader | Entrepreneur | Public Servant

New York State Assembly Minority Leader and Assemblyman

In recognition of Brian Kolb’s outstanding career of dedicated public service, private sector leadership, support for community organizations and commitment to education

A.A., St. Petersburg Junior College; B.S. and M.S., Roberts Wesleyan College

2012 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

Brian Kolb has a long-standing affiliation with CCFL/FLCC. He attended classes in downtown Canandaigua during the College’s storefront days after graduating from Honeoye Central High School. In his words, “Although I moved to Florida and actually earned my associate degree from St. Petersburg Junior College, Finger Lakes Community College’s prior motto that it is a ‘great place to start’ was especially true for me since FLCC is where I began my educational journey.”

Public service, community involvement, private sector leadership and a long-time commitment to education are hallmarks of Assembly Minority Leader Brian Kolb’s personal and professional history. In 1986-1987, Brian served as the supervisor for the town of Richmond and as a result became a member of the Ontario County Board of Supervisors. He was first elected to represent New York State’s 129th Assembly District (encompassing parts of Cayuga, Cortland, Onondaga, Ontario, and Seneca counties) during a special election in February 2000 and has been overwhelmingy re-elected by his constituents six times. In April of 2009, he was unanimously elected minority leader by his colleagues in the state Assembly.

Sought after to assist many organizations and boards, Brian has accepted membership and leadership positions with numerous community, regional, state and national organizations.
Currently, that includes the Canandaigua Rotary Club, Ontario ARC Advisory Board, Ontario Charities Classic Board of Directors, Merrill Hose Fire Company, and the New York Farm Bureau. He is a member of the National Conference of State Legislators, the American Legislative Council, the Heartland Institute's Board of Legislative Advisors, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the National Rifle Association, the Shooter's Committee on Political Education, the American Irish Legislators Society and the Knights of Columbus. In the past, he was a member of Ontario County Revolving Loan Fund and the New York State Public Control Board. He was chairman of Leadership Rochester's Board of Directors and served on the Rochester district of Key Bank Board of Directors, the Honeoye Central School Board and the Honeoye chapter of the Sons of the American Legion. Brian is proud to have received the Seneca Waterways Council of the Boy Scouts of America's Distinguished Citizen Award in 2010.

Brian's interest in participating on decision-making bodies began early when he joined the CCFL Student Senate in 1970–1971. Nearly two decades later, he was recruited to serve on the College's Board of Trustees from 1998–2000. He was a director on the FLCC Foundation Board from 1995-2001, serving as the elected chair from 1999-2001. The most significant contributions during his Foundation tenure include an increase in the scholarship funds awarded from $35,000 (1995) to $170,000 (2001) and the Foundation's acquisition of 48 acres and a private residence donated by Mrs. Florence Muller that became the Muller Field Station. As a member of the state Assembly, Brian secured a member item grant in 2004 to build a Fish Culture and Aquatic Research Center which expanded the field station's offerings to students and the community. A strong supporter of the Foundation's annual fundraising efforts, Brian became a member of the Heritage Society when he designated the College in his will. For all of these reasons, he was presented with the FLCC Foundation Award in 2003.

Brian earned his bachelor's degree in 1996 and master's degree in 1998, both from Roberts Wesleyan College, where he also served as an adjunct professor of adult and graduate education. His students twice selected him as Outstanding Faculty Member. In addition to his educational background, Brian possesses 25 years of private sector experience acquired as a business consultant, entrepreneur and chief executive officer of technology-based businesses. He served as the former president of Refractron Technologies, was co-founder of the North American Filter Corporation and is the only legislative leader serving in state government with an extensive private sector business background.

Brian's roots in the Finger Lakes are strong and deep: he was born in Rochester, grew up in Honeoye and currently lives in Canandaigua with his wife, Lauren. He has three grown children, sons Britton and Clayton and daughter Kylie, and one grandson, Everett.

We are proud to honor Brian M. Kolb for devoting his professional and personal energy and commitment to the citizens of New York State. For approaching his life and career by setting goals focused on clear-cut priorities and the strategies to achieve them and for assuming leadership roles in his profession and community that enhance our region and state, we present Brian M. Kolb with the 2012 Distinguished Alumni Award.
David K. Swarthout ’77  
OUTSTANDING HORTICULTURE ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

David Swarthout grew up in Rochester and went to work following his graduation from high school. He continued working part-time after he enrolled in what was then the newly approved conservation degree program at CCFL. David earned an A.A.S. degree then transferred to Nazareth College where he received a teaching certificate.

After teaching horticulture for a time at BOCES, David determined that he would be happier working outdoors. At the time, his father owned a small landscaping business which was primarily a mowing service. David joined his father and later became the president of what is now Brighton Landscape Service in West Henrietta. The business built a customer base and reputation by offering high-quality lawn and property maintenance. It currently specializes in courtyard design and building.

Given annually since 1985, this FLCC department award recognizes professional achievement in the field of horticulture. It is with pride that the 2012 Outstanding Horticulture Alumni Achievement Award is presented to David K. Swarthout ’77.

Donna P. Smith ’81  
OUTSTANDING NURSING ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Although her path was not what she anticipated when she graduated from high school in 1977, Donna Smith has devoted her life to furthering her education while pursuing a successful nursing career. Donna was accepted into the Willard School of Nursing before it closed unexpectedly in the summer of 1977. She had no backup plan, but her mother came to her rescue. Her mother, a graduate of St. Jerome’s School of Nursing in Batavia, contacted the Sisters of Mercy. They allowed Donna to enroll in what had become the Catherine McAuley School of Practical Nursing. Several years later when Donna moved to Clifton Springs, she enrolled at CCFL in the accelerated nursing program and graduated in December 1981. Since then she has completed a bachelor’s degree in organizational management at Roberts Wesleyan College and the Healthcare Executive Fellowship in Management at Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University. In 2004, she earned a master’s degree from Keuka College.
Donna describes her education as an intentional part of her career and acknowledges the opportunities it has provided for her professional advancement. After earning her initial degree as a licensed practical nurse, she worked as a float nurse at Tompkins County Hospital and Newark Manor Nursing Home. Her career as a registered nurse began at Clifton Springs Hospital & Clinic in the medical surgical unit, followed by 13 years in the operating room. Although Donna left Clifton Springs Hospital to work in home care and in an OB/GYN office while her children were small, she later returned to the operating room at Clifton Springs as the clinical director of the surgical services. Following the completion of her bachelor’s degree in 1994, she was promoted to clinical director of nursing administration. In 1995, Donna was named vice president of nursing and currently serves as vice president of patient care services/chief nursing officer.

Satisfaction with her career decisions stand out in Donna’s comments: “The patients are the most important part of my personal mission. It is a joy to be in the profession of nursing.” In her current role, Donna is accountable for all nursing services, pharmacy services and behavioral health services for the 206-bed acute care community hospital. In addition, she implemented an RN to BSN program to support advanced nursing education with on-site classes. As the chair of the health system’s Customer Satisfaction Committee, Donna was responsible for developing and implementing a customer service training initiative that led in 2010 to the health system’s number two ranking in customer service in New York.

Donna, a consistent advocate for the FLCC nursing program’s students, provides clinical placements at Clifton Springs Hospital in fundamentals of nursing, medical-surgical nursing and psychiatric/mental health nursing. She is instrumental in ensuring this process is seamless. In February 2010, site visitors for the FLCC nursing program’s accrediting agency, the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC), visited Clifton Springs Hospital. Donna’s attention to detail ensured that the team received the information and conducted the interviews they required for the clinical site tour portion of the reaccreditation process.

As part of the 2012 Nursing Advancement Ceremony on May 19, 2012, Donna gave the keynote address. Donna’s two daughters have joined their mother as alumni of the College: Brittany graduated in 2005 with an A.A.S. liberal arts degree, transferred to Mansfield University and earned her degree from the radiology technology program; Kyla, whose graduation from the FLCC nursing program was celebrated in 2010, is currently enrolled at Keuka College to earn her bachelor’s degree in nursing.

When the FLCC Nursing Department faculty and staff created this alumni award, the purpose was to recognize a graduate who has distinguished him or herself in the nursing profession. It is with pride that the 2012 Outstanding Nursing Alumni Achievement Award is presented to Donna P. Smith ’81 for the advanced degrees she has earned, for her service to the nursing profession, for the instruction and perspective she offers to current FLCC nursing students, and for serving as a role model to all.
Matthew Hill, a three-season athlete who played soccer, basketball and baseball at Bath-Haverling High School, was a member of the soccer teams that won two sectional championships and went to the state finals once. In 2011, he was inducted into the Haverling Athlete's Wall of Fame. Though he graduated from high school unsure which career to pursue, he knew he wanted to enter college and play soccer and baseball. Matt entered this College when it was CCFL, played soccer and baseball for two years and graduated after the name was changed to FLCC in 1992. During his sophomore year, he was a captain on the soccer team, led the NJCAA Region III in goals and was named first team All-Region. That year, Matt also helped lead the baseball team to the College's first-ever regional championship which resulted in a trip to the NJCAA World Series where the Lakers finished fourth in the country.

Matt transferred to Keuka College and played soccer for two more years. He graduated in 1994 with a bachelor’s degree in secondary math education. Matt credits his math teachers, Tom Hagadorn in high school, and Ike Dunham and Len Malinowski at FLCC, for his decision to become a secondary math teacher. Two weeks before school started that fall, he accepted what he believed would be a temporary position teaching math at his high school, Bath-Haverling. After 17 years, during which he earned a master's degree from Elmira College and his permanent teaching certification, he and his wife, Lindsay, still call Bath home.

In addition to teaching, Matt has been both an assistant coach and head coach at the junior high, JV and varsity levels for track, baseball, basketball and soccer. For the past 11 years, he has been the varsity boys head soccer coach, and during that time, his teams have won six sectional championships and reached the state quarterfinals four times.

A small town like Bath can only support such a successful varsity team when the residents sponsor teams for the younger children who live there. Matt has taken a leadership position to provide youth soccer leagues in Bath to help children learn and practice the sport.

The first alumni were inducted into the Finger Lakes Community College Athletic Hall of Fame in 1991. Induction recognizes alumni who excelled as athletes on College teams and who, since graduating, serve as role models for current student athletes. The College and FLCC Department of Athletics are thrilled to honor Matthew J. Hill ’92 with induction into the FLCC Athletic Hall of Fame.
Justin S. Stevenson ’97
OUTSTANDING CONSERVATION ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Justin Stevenson had lived in Williamson, Wayne County, and worked at Nature's Accents Landscaping for several years before he pursued a degree at FLCC. Gary Smith, owner of the business, supported Justin's decision and accommodated his course schedule while he pursued an A.A.S. degree in natural resources conservation.

Although Justin had a lifetime interest in conservation and wildlife, he credits FLCC professors and their courses for the opportunity to explore career options. Justin emphasized their impact in his career by saying, “The professors at FLCC were teachers, but they were much, much more. Their dedication to the students and to the field of conservation was evident through everything they imparted.” Coursework, guest speakers, preparation to speak publicly and encouragement to pursue a bachelor's degree at Utah State University all boosted his confidence and set him up for a successful career.

Attending college in Utah resulted in new experiences that shaped his career and made Justin more willing to take risks to capitalize on opportunities. He also met his future wife, Holly, there when they were both students. Holly, who shares his interests in wildlife biology and management, and Justin began their professional careers in 2001 in Michigan as wildlife disease researchers for the federal government. Four years later, they relocated to Oregon when Justin accepted the position of wildlife disease biologist for the USDA Wildlife Services for Oregon, Washington and Alaska. In this role he oversaw zoonotic disease surveillance programs for avian influenza, rabies and feral swine diseases.

In 2008, Justin became a wildlife disease biologist in New Mexico where he worked on grassroots programs for feral hog eradication and invasive species education and coordinated wildlife disease programs to protect agriculture and native species. Justin launched his business, RD Wildlife Management, in March 2011. He currently enjoys the variety of roles this enterprise allows. As owner and operator, he makes the business decisions, and he also solves human wildlife conflicts in positive, innovative ways. Justin’s diverse daily schedule involves everything from excluding bats from a residential attic to wildlife research contracts and consulting.

Over the years, Justin has specialized in invasive feral hog problems and currently makes presentations throughout the state. An advocate for bat conservation, he is a spokesperson for the North American species and uses speaking engagements, websites and social media to promote understanding of the importance of human co-existence with bats.

Given annually since 1985, this award recognizes professional achievement in the field of environmental conservation. It is with pride that the 2012 Outstanding Conservation Alumni Achievement Award is presented to Justin S. Stevenson ’97.
Erica graduated from Canandaigua Academy before continuing her education at FLCC. After earning an A.A.S. degree in graphic arts in 1998, she transferred to Syracuse University and in 2001, earned a bachelor’s degree in fine arts in metalsmithing. Returning to her hometown, Erica became an entrepreneur in 2004 when she opened the boutique, Adorn Jewelry and Accessories. Erica’s shop is filled with her custom creations, featuring Swarovski elements, semiprecious stones, freshwater pearls, Czech glass, sterling silver, 14k gold filled and more. Over the past eight years, Erica’s business has expanded to include specially designed jewelry for brides and their attendants and an Etsy.com enterprise.

Jewelry and other artwork Erica created have been featured several times over the past few years at FLCC. Her jewelry was highlighted in the third annual Alumni Gallery Art Show hosted at the Honors House in 2010-2011. Exhibiting a large selection of her jewelry, Erica donated the proceeds of everything that was sold during that academic year to an art supply fund she created for FLCC students.

In fall 2011, Erica was one of three artists whose work was included in the biennial alumni art show entitled “A Few of Our Own.” In addition to her jewelry, Erica exhibited paintings, drawings and sculpture that demonstrated the influences her training has had on her jewelry designs. Again, Erica donated proceeds from the sale of several items to the FLCC Foundation for art supplies for students. She also offered a uniquely designed necklace that could be ordered. Works she exhibited during the fall show are now available for sale at Finger Lakes Gallery and Frame at 175 S. Main St. in Canandaigua. Erica describes the value of her FLCC education in shaping her career as a professional artist this way: “Because of my great admiration for FLCC and the amazing quality of education I received, I decided to donate all sales of these items to a fund I started a few year ago that benefits the art students at FLCC.”

Erica’s expertise and her contributions to the Canandaigua community were recently recognized by her peers. In February 2012, the Professional Women of the Finger Lakes presented her with the Entrepreneur of the Year Award.

In creating a new alumni award in 2010, the art department faculty sought to recognize a graduate who has distinguished him or herself as an artist. It is with pride that the 2012 Outstanding Art Alumni Achievement Award is presented to Erica Koch Bapst ’98.
Sarah Brown was named the FLCC Outstanding Scholar Athlete for the 2010-2011 academic year. Annually, the College recognizes the academic accomplishments of one athlete from the previous year who achieved the highest grade point average while participating on an intercollegiate athletic team. Sarah, who grew up in Williamson and was homeschooled, excelled academically at FLCC with a 3.93 grade point average. A member of the soccer team, she played two seasons for the Lakers. Sarah’s athletic contributions and academic talent were recognized when she was named Academic All-American and Distinguished All-American. She transferred to Liberty University in Virginia where she is a political science major with a concentration in politics and policy and a minor in international relations and strategic intelligence. Her long-range plan is to attend law school after she earns her bachelor’s degree.

PHOTOS FROM THE 2012 ALUMNI AWARDS