



# Columbia Greene Community College

## Our Legacy

### 1960's

The State University of New York Board of Regents established Columbia-Greene Community College on December 8, 1966, to serve Columbia and Greene Counties. The college initially operated from a temporary office in Catskill in February 1968 before moving to Athens in January 1969 under its first president, Edward Owen.

**Fun Fact: The first day of school at Columbia-Greene Community College brought together 175 full-time students on September 15, 1969.**

### 1970's

The first graduation ceremony in June 1971 saw 35 students receive associate degrees. Since its inception, Columbia-Greene's alumni have spread far and wide, contributing to diverse fields and communities across the globe. In 1974, the college moved to its current campus in Hudson and received accreditation from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education the following year.

**FUN FACT: The \$4.3 million “megastructure” – now the Main Building – was heralded as one of the most unique college campuses in the country and won an award at an architects’ show in Paris, France. At 600 feet long, all the basic facilities were housed under one roof, from the two-story library at one end to the gymnasium at the other. These ends of the building were divided by enclosed, landscaped courtyards.**

### 1980's

Under Roger A. Van Winkle's leadership from 1978, the curriculum expanded to include vocational programs, leading to a peak enrollment of 1,428 credit students in 1982. Dr. Robert K. Luther became president in 1984, overseeing significant campus expansions and program additions in automotive technology, fine arts, and nursing. Dr. Terry A. Cline succeeded him in 1989, enhancing the automotive program.

**FUN FACT: Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. visited the College on October 11, 1982. Tickets for the lecture and dinner were \$15 and benefitted the Columbia-Greene Scholarship Fund. (You could pick up the same-day New York Times in the library for \$0.30!)**

### 1990's

In the 1990s, Columbia-Greene faced enrollment declines but initiated "Project Renew," a \$13 million renovation, adding new facilities and certificate programs. By the end of the decade, non-credit program enrollment exceeded 8,000 annually. The college also acquired the Hudson River Environmental Field Station.

**Fun Fact: By Founders Day - April 29, 1994 - the Foundation had awarded more than 350 scholarships to students. The Board said then “the economic, social, and cultural fabric of the community depends on the availability of accessible educational opportunities...”**

### 2000's

James R. Champion became President in 2000, revitalizing long-range planning and introducing new academic programs. Under his administration, enrollment reached a record high in 2004, and the Professional Academic Center was dedicated in 2006.

### 2010's

After celebrating its 50th Anniversary the previous year, Columbia-Greene began a \$20 million capital project to upgrade its infrastructure in 2018.

**Fun Fact: Columbia-Greene Community College ranked third among New York State community colleges according to *EDsmart*, an independent review journal.**

### 2020's

Dr. Carlee Drummer became president in 2019, steering the college through the COVID-19 pandemic and joining the *Achieving the Dream* network in 2021. New initiatives included offering micro-credentials and forging partnerships with SUNY Delhi and *The Olana Partnership*.