

Butler Eagle

Former state Sen. Tim Shaffer donates \$1 million to BC3 project

**By Steve Ferris
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Feb. 22, 2018**

BUTLER TWP — Former Republican state Sen. Tim Shaffer donated \$1 million to Butler County Community College for a proposed \$10 million building for its nursing program.

BC3 held a lunch Wednesday to thank Shaffer, a retired attorney and retired district judge who represented the 21st District for 16 years, for his donation toward the proposed Victor K. Phillips Nursing and Allied Health Building housing the Shaffer School of Nursing and Allied Health.

The donation from Shaffer of Prospect and a \$1 million donation made in September from Janice Phillips Larrick of Butler Township will be put toward the \$5 million in matching funds needed for a \$5 million state grant BC3 will apply for to construct the nursing building.

Shaffer, who made the donation in honor of his parents and brother, said BC3 offers an affordable education and the nursing program leads graduates to good careers.

"The school is where moderate income people can get their college education without going broke. That's the genius," Shaffer said after the luncheon. "The nursing program is where people can get a good, solid career and go anywhere."

His parents, John and Jean Kaufman Shaffer, created BC3's first scholarship in memory of their other son, Stephen Shaffer, who was a member of the school's first graduating Class in 1966.

Stephen Shaffer was a U.S. Navy veteran and a business administration student at BC3. He was killed in a vehicle crash in 1967, when he was 23.

John Shaffer, a Butler County commissioner and BC3 trustee, died in a vehicle crash in 1968, when he was 56.

Tim Shaffer served as a lieutenant in the Army during the Vietnam War. He also served five years as a district judge in Slippery Rock following his nomination by Gov. Ed Rendell in 2011.

"I love my parents and I have never done anything to publicly acknowledge them. As I get older it is becoming more

important that I acknowledge things that I never really thought about before," Shaffer said.

The building housing the nursing program bearing the Shaffer name would be a 30,000-square-foot, two-story facility on the south side of the main campus in Butler Township.

The donations from Shaffer and Larrick combined with \$300,000 raised by the BC3 Education Foundation would be combined with another \$2.7 million the foundation hopes to raise would comprise the \$5 million match to a \$5 million state grant the school is seeking for the building, said Nick Neupauer, BC3 president.

"We're really looking forward to raising those additional dollars," he said.

Other government funding might be available to go toward the match, he said.

The school will apply for the state grant in March.

If it is approved, the building would be constructed in one to three years.

The building would have two skills laboratories, two simulated hospital rooms, eight classrooms including a tiered auditorium-style hall with 80 seats. The hall would have overhead cameras focused on the instructor's table and projecting onto back wall screens for lessons that could involve work on a cadaver.

The laboratories would be equipped as hospital rooms with a waiting area and an emergency-room-like entrance with an ambulance's patient compartment.

"This state-of-the-art facility will allow us to expand and further enhance the success that we have in the program," Neupauer said.

Last year, 96 percent of the nursing program graduates passed the National Council Licensure Examination for registered nurses. The state average is 84 percent, said Patty Annear, nursing and allied health dean.

She said BC3 currently accepts 70 students into the registered nursing program each year, but that number could rise to nearly 100 if the building project proceeds.

More than 200 people apply for the program annually, she said.