

You Spoke, We Listened



Thank you again to the over 500 employees who participated in our second annual Returning to Learning Employee Survey in December!

The Returning to Learning Partnership Program has done the first step for you: we have already negotiated a 25% (or more) tuition reduction at all of our partner schools to ease the cost burden on you, the student. All of our schools even waive the application fee for City employees.

We work closely with the schools to maximize your experience while minimizing your expenses. You told us what you like and don't like, and we reported back to the schools to improve your experience. More schools have been added to the program, more schools have expanded their degree offerings and we hope to continue that trend this year.

Here are some highlights from the results:

- 46% of employees using the discount are completing their bachelor's degree
- Masters degrees are the most desired degree level employees looking to go back to school for in the future
- Respondents indicated they appreciated the flexibility of class schedules offered by our partners including evening, weekend and online classes
- Cost remains the biggest hurdle for employees who want to go back to school, but haven't started yet
- The most popular majors offered by our partners are: Business, Criminal Justice, Technology, Social Work, and Engineering

Some of the changes you can look out for include:

- More events outside of Center City, including department focused events and locations
- New specialized newsletters with themed editions highlighting important topics you identified: up first is the Financial Aid Edition in March!
- A new FAQ section on our website. *You can submit any questions through our email, returning2learning@phila.gov*
- Student ambassadors and stories
- And much more!

Making the Decision to Return to School at DeVry University

The decision to return to school as an adult is more than just academic. There are several complex, emotionally charged issues that can play a role, including maintaining the family infrastructure, adjusting to a changing educational landscape, not fitting in with the student population, meeting the financial challenges of higher learning, and the emotional guilt associated with time away from work and family.

Emotions are important in adult education because they can either impede or motivate learning. There are higher educational institutions that can accommodate these concerns and are structured to empower adult learners and help them achieve their professional goals. A potential returning student should consider what the university could offer them as an adult learner challenged with balancing work, personal priorities, and school. Such considerations should include:

Flexible Delivery. More educational institutions are offering part-time, evening, and weekend classes, along with the flexibility of taking courses onsite or online. Blended delivery methods help adult students adjust to changing work schedules and travel, as well as job relocations. **DeVry University and its Keller Graduate School of Management**

provide their students more choice and convenience— their national network of 80+ university locations, plus the option of combining onsite and online learning.

Diversified Student Base. A diverse student body may help the adult learner assimilate into higher education. DeVry University's fall term enrollments for 2011 showed that 51.8% were 25 or older, and 47.3% were of ethnic diversity.

Accelerated Programs. Year-round classes and accelerated programs can minimize the concern of education impacting work performance, and maximize the value and application of the degree being sought.

Payment Options. In addition to employer tuition reimbursement, many schools offer other financial incentives and payment plans. DeVry University and its Keller Graduate School of Management offer opportunities for tuition payment deferment, financial aid, as well as financial advisors to help students navigate through these options.

[Click here](#) to learn more about the educational benefits from DeVry University that are available to City of Philadelphia employees.

Philadelphia University Offers 25% Tuition Discounts for City Employees and Spouses



For adults with some college credits, but without their degree, **Philadelphia University's** Accelerated BS Degree Completion Program for Adult Learners can help them receive their degree and realize their dream. Up to 72 credits earned from previously attended colleges and universities can be accepted. Students may also earn additional credits for professional and personal experience. Rolling admissions and five terms per year mean students can apply at anytime. Courses are completed in an accelerated eight week schedule.

A wide variety of career interests are represented. Accelerated BS degree programs are offered in: Accounting, Behavioral and Health Services, Health Sciences, Health Services Management, Human Resource Management, Information Technology, Law Enforcement Leadership,

Leadership in Emergency Services, Leadership in Homeland Security, Organizational Leadership and Pre-MBA.

An additional major benefit to paramedics, firefighters and police officers is that they can receive as a result of their required professional training:

- Paramedics receive 42 credits towards their BS degree when they enter the program.
- Firefighters and Police Officers can receive 12 credits, after successfully completing their first course in the program.

Courses are offered at the main campus in the East Falls section of Philadelphia and at the Bucks County campus in Trevese. With its many flexible features, Philadelphia University's accelerated degree completion program puts a bachelor's degree within reach as quickly as a student's schedule permits.

Upcoming information sessions in March:

- Wednesday, March 4th, 6 to 8 PM, Main Campus (East Falls)
- Thursday, March 5th, 6 to 8 PM, Bucks County Campus (Trevese)
- Saturday, March 7th, 10 AM to Noon, Main Campus (East Falls)

If you would like to reserve a seat, request an information package or schedule an appointment with an academic advisor, please call **215.951.2900**, email evening@PhilaU.edu or visit www.PhilaU.edu/SCPS

In Other News

ACHIEVEability permanently breaks the generational cycle of poverty for low income, single parent, and homeless families through higher education, affordable housing, supportive services, community and economic development, and accountability. Are you or someone you know struggling to break the cycle? Dare to imagine a more self-sufficient you and contact ACHIEVEability at 215-748-8800 or www.achieveability.org.

Veterans, are you interested in attending college and would like to refresh your academic skills? Call **Veterans Upward Bound** at 215-898-6892 to learn more about our free pre-college preparation program. Our next semester begins September 2014!

Reminder: when applying to any partner school, please be sure to fill in the "Employer" section in the application form with the "City of Philadelphia" to ensure your application fee is waived and discount process is started!

Graduate! Philadelphia is pleased to partner with the City of Philadelphia's Returning to Learning Partnership to offer help and advice to adults seeking to complete their college degree. We will work with you from the decision-making through degree completion and will help you find the best academic program that fits your individual needs and financial capacity. Be a Comebacker! Call [215.498.1504](tel:215.498.1504), E-mail advisor@GraduatePhiladelphia.org or Register: www.GraduatePhiladelphia.org