On April 20, Bryant & Stratton will hold its commencement at the Civic Center in Syracuse. The ceremony will celebrate the hard work and dedication of students who have completed their degree programs, including the first group of students to earn associate degrees in medical reimbursement and coding.

Jennifer Erard is one of those students. While studying medical assisting at Bryant & Stratton, she “was exposed to medical reimbursement and coding and fell in love with it” – leading to the decision to obtain a second associate degree. Yolanda Rodriquez, studying primarily at the Albany campus, chose MRC because it would allow her to work in a variety of settings, including from home. Back here at Syracuse North, Kelsi Shoop was influenced by her nursing background and interest in technology.

Of course, we will also be celebrating the achievements of graduates in our more established degree programs: areas of study which have allowed students to channel their natural talents into job-specific skills.

Kristen Gibson chose accounting because “it is a stable yet challenging career that would allow me to
Campus Celebrates April Graduates

Jennifer Erard
move anywhere in the country with job security.”
“I chose graphic design because growing up I was always the artsy student in school, so I wanted to take my passion and go further with it,” said Dan Cole.

Similarly, a long-standing interest led John Mero to major in network technology. “My friends constantly talking about computers and such drove me nuts because I didn’t understand what they are talking about. I do now though.”

“I chose paralegal studies because ever since I took a law–based elective in high school I’ve been interested in pursuing a career in the legal field,” Carrina Ferraro explained.

“My two most memorable teachers are Steve Kempisty and Annette Lombard,” Carrina continued.

“Steve has become such a great friend and mentor to me and I am so incredibly thankful for all of his lessons and efforts. His humor and kindness have picked me up numerous times when I felt down or overwhelmed. Annette always made me feel comfortable and confident in class and has shown that she genuinely cares about each and every student and their paths to success. I believe that there should be more teachers like Steve and Annette.”

Dan Cole is also a Steve Kempisty fan: “great guy, incredible humor, love his sarcasm.” But Dan’s absolute favorite teacher is Lee Shelton. “She’s an amazing person and great to be around! It was cool she went out of her way to plan out the class trips she does every year in the fall, going out of town or out of state was awesome and a fun experience!”

Like Carrina and Dan, John cited the instructor most associated with his major: David Green. “Dave and I just seemed to click right from the start which was good since I would be spending most of my time at BSC with him.”

Kristen Gibson

Kelsi Shoop

Yolanda Rodriguez
Other instructors mentioned by name include Bill Rava, Mike Dellorm, Jeffrey Jackson, Andrea Cass, and Deb Lum. Jennifer Erard echoed the sentiments of other students with this statement: “Every teacher I had here I loved!”

As our graduates search for jobs in their fields and contemplate further education, the relationships formed here may have as lasting an impact as the content of their courses. While some students named special events such as field trips and TAP Lobby Day (featured in this issue) as favorite memories, most mentioned quieter moments, such as chatting with friends in the parking lot and meeting classmates for study sessions. As Kristen put it, suggesting that students put their cell phones away and focus on the people around them: “Relationships are made in real life.”

When asked what advice she would give new students, Yolanda said: “Believe in yourself, never give up hope, no matter what obstacles get in the way you can conquer anything if you put your mind to it. Never lose focus and always be open to learn. Go after your dreams and keep moving toward your goals.”

“It’s going to be hard, you’re going to want to quit,” Kelsi said. “Just hold on. Remember why you are here and reach out to those around you for support. It’s okay to fall, but don’t forget to get back up.”

On April 12, faculty and staff gathered in the events room to honor students at the traditional graduation breakfast. In front, from left, are Mckenzie Bortel, Jennifer Erard, Angela Cargen, Hope Yerdon, Shaquana Lewis, Trenton Marquart, and Dan Cole. In back, from left, are Natalie Todd, Giani Iozzia, John Mero, Michael Savino, Joe Alvarez, and Deborah Maddox.
Editor’s Note: In preparation for this issue, a request was sent to graduating students asking them to share their experiences at Bryant & Stratton College. Mikayla Guile, a medical assisting major, was among the first to respond. Just over a week later, on March 30, Mikayla passed away as a result of an automobile accident. Her responses to the graduate questionnaire are printed below.

**Why did you choose BSC?**
I chose BSC because it was close by and I would be entering the health care field in just two short years.

**Why did you choose your major?**
I chose medical assisting because I am very intrigued by healthcare and helping those that are in need.

**What are some of your best memories?**
Spending time and going to school with my best friend.

**Who have been your favorite teachers?**
My favorite instructors have been Professor Bettinger as well as Annette Lombard.

**What have been your favorite classes?**
My favorite classes have been medical terminology, pharmacology, along with the clinical classes too.

**What do you plan to do next?**
Next, I plan on entering the workforce and starting my career in the medical field. After working for a couple of years I am going to go back to school for Diagnostic Medical Sonography (DMS), but where I am unsure.
Each semester, graduating students in the medical program take part in a pinning ceremony to recognize their accomplishment. From left are Natalie Todd, Shaquana Lewis, McKenzie Bortel, Angela Cargen, Hope Yerdon, and Giani Iozzia.

Students Alexis Casale, Ashley Bill, Jennifer Salvatore and Barbara Kipp show off both anterior and posterior views of the heart in Rebecca Bettinger’s Survey of Anatomy and Physiology class.
College Representatives Attend TAP Lobby Day

On March 5-6, a contingent from Bryant & Stratton College Downtown and North campuses traveled to Albany to participate in the Association of Proprietary Colleges (APC) annual TAP Lobby Day. The trip included a Tuesday boot camp training for the students and a reception and dinner at the Renaissance Hotel. Wednesday was a busy day for the lobbyist including 13 appointments with elected officials and their staff. The day included meetings from the following Assembly representatives: Mark Walczyk, John Salka, Marianne Buttenschon, Al Stirpe, Ken Blackenbush, Will Barclay, Pamela Hunter and Bill Magnarelli. Senate meetings included: Betty Little, Rachel May, Joe Griffo, Bob Antonacci and Sue Serino. All were very supportive of Bryant & Stratton College and APC. Pictured from left are Campus Director Michael Sattler, student Nurallah Alaysaj, alumna Chelsea Zangari, Senator Robert Antonacci, Career Services Director Shelley Schmidt, Market Director Sue Cumoletti, student John Mero, and Career Services Director Chris Godleski.
What You Need to Know about Graduation

The graduate ceremony is at the John H. Mulroy Civic Center, 421 Montgomery Street, Syracuse. Graduates need to arrive at **10:15 a.m.** (Please note that guests will not be seated until 10:30 am). Graduates will go downstairs where they will pick up their identification card with your name, program and any distinction you may have earned. This card will be handed to the person at the stage.

**YOU MUST HAVE THESE CARDS WHEN YOU APPROACH THE STAGE. IF YOU DO NOT RECEIVE AN INDEX CARD WHEN YOU ARE LINING UP, PLEASE SEE A STAFF MEMBER.**

Associate students and bachelor students will line up separately. Someone will help you find your place.

We will begin lining up at 10:30. **At precisely 11:00 am the procession into the theater will begin.**

**When you enter the rows to your seats, REMAIN STANDING!** The faculty and staff will follow behind you. After the invocation, you will be instructed to be seated.

After the speakers, you will proceed to the stage in the following manner: All graduates will approach the stage one row at a time in alphabetical order. You will hand the person at the stage entrance your identification card. Proceed across the stage where the directors will shake your hand and give you the diploma cover. Return to your seat.

**DO NOT RUSH ACROSS THE STAGE!!** Give your family and friends a chance to see you.

After all degrees and diplomas are presented, we will begin the presentation of awards.

All 4.0 participants will be asked to rise as your name is called. Approach the stage to receive your award. Proceed back to your seat.

Tassel Ceremony – After the presentation of awards, you will be asked to rise for the Tassel Ceremony. Keep an eye on the Academic Advisors, when they move their tassels from right to left, you do the same. You will then be announced as the graduating class of 2019.

You will begin your exit from the theater in **reverse order from the way you entered – stage first, graduates last, beginning with the row closest to the stage and continuing row by row in sequence.**

Your degree/diploma will not be in the cover; you will pick up your diploma at the same table where you picked up your identification card after the ceremony.

*Please invite your family and friends to join us for a reception in the downstairs following the ceremony.*

**If you have any questions, please ask.**

**NOTE: THERE WILL BE NO SECURE FACILITIES AVAILABLE TO KEEP PURSES, WALLETS, OR OTHER VALUABLES DURING THE CEREMONY. YOU MUST MAKE OTHER ARRANGEMENTS.**