

SPRINGFIELD

# Valley Gives Day raises \$29K for STCC Foundation

When the Springfield Technical Community College Foundation began planning for Valley Gives this past spring, organizers set a goal of raising \$10,500.

They met that goal – and then some.

By the end of the day, the foundation had received \$29,460 in donations and prize money.

The Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts on May 1 hosted Valley Gives 2018, a 24-hour fundraising marathon that provides community members an opportunity to donate to more than 400 nonprofits in the region, including STCC.

“The campus community and the community at large rallied behind us,” said the college foundation president, Franklin D. Quigley. “It was a strong showing. We were excited to see people throughout the day making generous donations to support our students.”

Each year, the college foundation distributes about \$325,000 worth of scholarships to students, which includes money raised through

Valley Gives, Quigley said.

The scholarships help students like Darya Bandarchuk, of West Springfield, a computer science student who graduated in May and transferred to the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

“I was able to pay for my studies and books,” said Bandarchuk, who was a member of the Society of Women Engineers chapter at STCC. “The scholarships meant I had more time to study. I felt less anxious knowing that my expenses for school were covered and I won’t have to pay off any debt or bills after I graduate.”

On Valley Gives Day, the STCC Foundation was taking in more donations than any other nonprofit for much of the day. When the fundraising event came to a close on May 1, the STCC Foundation was ranked sixth among 408 participating nonprofits.

The amount raised during the fundraising marathon was much larger than previous Valley Gives fundraising efforts. The STCC Foundation raised only about \$300 in 2016. A year later, the amount



Administrative Services at STCC are among those who donated to the STCC Foundation on Valley Gives Day.

raised reached \$9,412.

What led to the significant jump in donations over the past three years?

Quigley credited a robust social media presence for getting the word out in addition to impressive faculty and staff participation. A handful

of faculty and staff had their own fundraising pages to motivate others to donate. It was the first time Valley Gives was able to offer this type of peer fundraising.

College president John B. Cook said the faculty and staff provided the foundation

for this year’s success.

“We never would have nearly tripled our fundraising goal without the generosity of our faculty and staff,” said Cook. “The results from Valley Gives Day demonstrate that the STCC community sincerely cares about supporting students as they transform their lives.”

The 205 donors on May 1 had the option of giving to the STCC Foundation or directing their money toward a designated scholarship.

The STCC Foundation also received an anonymous \$5,000 donation which was used to double donations to designated scholarships (up to \$500).

In addition to funding scholarships, some of the money raised through Valley Gives will support the Student Success Emergency Fund, which is used for students who need help paying for things like food, books or utility bills.

The STCC Foundation also provides faculty incentive grants and funds the “RAM cupboard,” STCC’s emergency food pantry for students.