Bio: Ken Chiarella

I am lucky. Brookdale allowed me to earn a degree at an affordable price with a quality education which rivals even the largest universities in New Jersey. Here is the difference, Brookdale cares. The staff, faculty, administration and student body have created a great atmosphere which is conducive to learning and an atmosphere which will continue to inspire students to further their educational careers to their hearts’ desires. I have seen single mothers achieve what they believed to be impossible, military veterans returning from overseas conquer their demons and a countless number of my peers accomplish what otherwise may have not been affordable or even imaginable.

However, the luxuries in which we indulge are not without consequence. At this point in time, the College is not without problems. During my time at Brookdale, I have witnessed several budgetary crisis, disastrous albeit necessary cuts, and the first tuition increase in over a decade. If we are to preserve the meaning and mission of our college and provide our peers with the same quality education which we have thus far been granted, we must first address the issue of funding. As the representative and liaison of the student body to the Board of Trustees, I will spearhead financial reform. I will ensure that those who are elected to serve the residents of Monmouth County are held to their oaths and do not detract from our mission. It is imperative that we explore all avenues of funding, something I did while working for the State Legislature. I have tirelessly fought for equal and fair funding for all state and county and local educational institutions and intend to hold both the State and County governments to their funding commitments which more often than not, are ignored.

Furthermore, the Board of Trustees at this time lacks a Student Advisory Committee. In order to prevent the slashing of the services for which we pay, we, the student body need to voice our concerns and opinions. My first action as a Board Member will be to close the ever widening chasm between the student body and those who run our college. We will establish a Student Advisory Committee through Student Relations and ensure that our voices are heard and acted upon. After all, it is our money. The best way to create change is to be change.

Lastly, we need to start dedicating meaningful resources towards student life. As a Board Member, I intend to build our community partnerships to provide better internship and job opportunities for students along with a student life system that stops us from getting in our cars and running home after class is over. Guilty as charged. If we can provide better incentives to stick around, we can also drive higher student enrollment which will offset the costs of funding and provide better career opportunities to our students.

It is going to take some work and your votes, but I think we can fix our college.

VOTE KEN CHiarella