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IN MEMORY: THE PIERCES

by Matt Harris

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It's a sad thing that the premiere edition of this year's Collegian has to deal with the campus's loss of an energetic leader. On October 1, Dr. Harmon B. Pierce, the recently appointed CEO of the Hazleton Campus, and his wife, Anne, were killed upon impact after their

single engine Cessna 152 airplane crashed in a potato field in Medford, New Jersey. Dr. Pierce was 52 years old. His wife was 46.

After accepting the position of CEO in July, Dr. Pierce and his wife proceeded to relocate into the surrounding area of

northeastern Pennsylvania. Although they had their difficulties locating a house and moving their belongings into the area, this did not detract from Dr. Pierce's attention to the campus.

A few weeks prior to the fatal accident, I had the privilege of sitting down with Dr. Pierce one-on-one. From the opening moment, I was very impressed with his personality and his attitude; just as I had been when he appeared on campus last year before myself and a group of students who were members of the Search Committee for a new CEO for the campus. At that time, he was friendly, courteous, and appeared quite capable and dedicated in bringing reform and restructure to the Hazleton Campus.

As Harmon Pierce sat down, he gave me one of his

east-to-west smiles and leaned forward in his chair. Then in that southern dialect which he possessed, he said, "Well Matt, so how are you doing?" I knew that I was going to have a very pleasant conversation with him.

We spent the ensuing moments "shooting the breeze" about how each of us was doing, our health, school, and so on. Then we began discussing his plans for the revitalization of the campus. Dr. Pierce, energetically but firmly, began discussing in detail what he was planning to do to improve the Hazleton Campus.

"There are many things that are on my agenda for the next couple of years as far as campus improvement is concerned. The campus



Harmon and Anne Pierce, posing for a picture last July
(photo courtesy of Public Relations)