
HISTORY OF PIKEVILLE COLLEGE

Pikeville College was established in 1889 as an outreach of the Presbyterian Church, after an extensive survey of the religious and educational needs of eastern Kentucky. An 1887 scouting party, which included Dr. W.C. Condit, Rev. Samuel B. Alderson, and Rev. James P. Hendrick, set forth (in Condit's words) to "select the location for an institution of higher learning for the youth of the mountains."

September 16, 1889, was the first day of class at Pikeville College Institute, a four-room, brick building situated on three acres of land in Pikeville, Kentucky. It functioned as both school and church. The institute was not originally intended to confer degrees, but to give "good practical education to those persons who pursue its courses." At that time, the institute offered schoolwork in primary, preparatory, and "college" departments.

In 1909, the structure of the school changed. After obtaining permission from the Synod, the articles of incorporation were amended to make Pikeville College a chartered college, empowered by the state of Kentucky to offer four years of college work and confer baccalaureate degrees. Although the college immediately began planning the additional curriculum and faculty needed for this endeavor, the school maintained its commitment to primary and secondary education in the region by sustaining the Pikeville College Academy for grades 1-12. Pikeville College admitted its first college freshman class in 1916. The final two years of college were not added until 1955, and the first baccalaureate graduation was held in 1957, a year that also marked the closing of the Pikeville College Academy.

Pikeville has continued to evolve throughout the years, changing its curricula to meet the changing needs of Appalachia. Currently, students may earn either associate or baccalaureate degrees in a variety of majors in conjunction with a quality liberal arts and science curriculum. As further evidence of its commitment to the health and well being of the Appalachian region, in the fall of 1997 Pikeville College admitted its first students into the newly established Pikeville College School of Osteopathic Medicine. Pikeville College trains students from the region who, upon graduation, receive the degree of Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.) and have the opportunity to remain in the region to serve its people.

The motto of the College is "Prospiciam ad Montes" or "Look to the Mountains." When people in the valley below do so, they see a thriving college dedicated to the education of its people. What began as only a dream has endured more than a century of strife and prosperity, emerging as a leader in central Appalachia.