



April 2019

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Failure is a choice we make

TOPICS: Commentary



BY JOHN J. "SKI" SYGIELSKI APRIL 4, 2019

Colleges do not fail because of competition, environmental changes or even declining or changing student demographics. Colleges fail when leadership ignores warning signs and becomes paralyzed by tradition or ignorance.

Colleges are businesses hidden in the mystique of academics. As a community of thinkers, innovators and educators, we should rightfully be proud of the role we play in contributing to an educated, open-minded and civil society. That being said, we also have a commitment to the communities we serve to provide jobs and prepare our neighbors for the workforce.

Beneath curricula and academia, colleges need to be viable and sustainable on a long-term basis. That requires that we create and follow strategic plans and budgets and, more urgently, adapt to the changing demands of an evolving globalized society of students who are, in fact, our customers.

Lessons from Sears and Toys R Us

Companies like Sears and Toys R Us folded not because of the Internet, but because they did not adapt to the changing environment. They did not identify the risks inherent in maintaining their standard business model to meet the needs of their customers or challenge their competitors. As a result, they did not have a fighting chance to retain market share.

Other retailers have made significant changes to keep pace with client demands. Time will tell if their actions positioned them for success, but for now, these businesses are thriving. Colleges should look to these businesses for lessons on how to maintain their long-term operating viability, and they need to start the process before warning signs become critical. Too frequently, I read announcements about [schools across the country](#) that have closed their doors.

Paying attention

At [HACC, Central Pennsylvania's Community College](#), we know our current business model is not sustainable over the long term. The average age of a student in our credit programs is 25 years old. Just over 75 percent of our students take classes part time while likely raising families, working and studying. Thousands of our students take online classes, and their demand for an online learning environment continues to grow. If our business model ignores the needs of these students, we, rightfully, will not survive.

Fortunately, HACC is paying attention. Two of our fastest-growing areas are workforce development and virtual learning. In 2016-18, we reviewed all of our programs, discontinued some and revamped others to help students graduate on time and maximize the number of credits that would transfer to a four-year school. But so much more needs to be done.

On all of us

All of us – faculty, staff and administrators – are challenged to think differently, consider other points of view and position ourselves in unfamiliar surroundings to ensure the college – and our students – thrive. We cannot afford a tepid attitude toward change. We cannot turn a blind eye to student feedback about inconsistent experiences or class availability. Our leadership team must lead the entrepreneurial spirit that encourages our overall long-term sustainability. I am encouraged and energized by those pioneers at HACC who challenge us all to embrace disruptive change.

The increasing pressure to provide students with an affordable education, historically low unemployment rates and the continued decline in high school graduates will challenge our operating performance for the foreseeable future. Higher education will struggle to deliver its mission under these conditions unless we are open to and implement radical change.

We all experience different degrees of change – some are subtle and unnoticed by the human eye, while others can be cataclysmic extinction events. Businesses and colleges are

also influenced by changes big and small.

At HACC, we encourage colleagues to take calculated risks and embrace the reality that, sometimes, there are lessons to be learned from failure. However, there is a critical difference between making bold choices and stubbornly avoiding choices. When colleges choose not to act, they choose failure.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



John J. "Ski" Sygielski

is president of HACC, Central Pennsylvania's Community College.

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Community colleges, the PROSPER Act and the path to student success

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BTC Instructor Joins Initiative to Fight Shortage of New Antibiotics

January 23, 2019

Blackhawk Technical College joins the Tiny Earth initiative to address a global critical health crisis: antibiotic resistance. BTC Microbiology instructor, Daniel Harrigan, has been selected to be a part of a network of instructors and students focused on crowdsourcing antibiotic discovery from soil.

The Tiny Earth Program Initiative (TEPI) is a global network of students and instructors dedicated to discovering new antibiotics from soil and creating engaging laboratory coursework. The program includes nearly 10,000 students in 45 states and 15 countries. It was originally launched by Jo Handelsman in 2012 at Yale University but is currently headquartered at University of Wisconsin-Madison's Wisconsin Institute for Discovery. Its mission is two-fold: to encourage students to pursue careers in science through real-world, applicable laboratory research, and to address the diminishing supply of effective antibiotics.

“All of us at BTC are very excited for the purposeful application and experience it will provide agribusiness, microbiology and lab technician students,” said BTC faculty member Daniel Harrigan.

BTC students in the [Lab Technician Program](#), [Medical Lab Technician Program](#), and General Microbiology courses will be among those participating in the initiative. In addition, students from the [Agribusiness Program](#) will be helping collect diverse soil samples. Tiny Earth's student scientists will hunt for new antibiotic organisms in soil samples; many of them will be experiencing the scientific method in action for the first time,

As part of the curriculum, BTC faculty Kathi Winker and Kevin Holmin will help the students characterize their potential discoveries. Harrigan continued, “As we launch and expand the program here at BTC, we plan to include K-12 and other community partners because outreach and providing engaging scientific education is part of the initiative.”

Harrigan and other partner instructors from institutions across the U.S. recently attended an intensive five-day training hosted at the Wisconsin Institute for Discovery. Tiny Earth leverages a network of partner institutions where instructors learn the curriculum and incorporate best practices into their classes. Adding new instructors is part of Tiny Earth's commitment to engage schools, departments, colleges and aspiring scientists across the globe.

For more information about Tiny Earth visit tinyearth.wisc.edu. To learn more about the initiative at Blackhawk Technical College contact Daniel Harrigan at dharrigan@blackhawk.edu.

Remodeling for success: Blackhawk plans changes to engage students

By Catherine W. Idzerda cidzerda@gazettextra.com Mar 24, 2019



JANESVILLE

Blackhawk Technical College describes its latest project as “co-locating services to support pathways initiatives designed to improve student retention and success.”

It would be easier to call it “remodeling for success.”

Last year, the Blackhawk Technical College Board approved a three-year facilities plan. Such plans usually languish on some administrator’s shelf, but work already has started on one of the school’s top priorities: combining the student success center and the library for a new learning resource center.

The student success center, which is at the front of the building, houses learning labs, a testing center, tutors and open areas for studying.

The library is toward the back of the building. An enclosure in recent Blackhawk Technical College Board packet notes the library's holdings and resource material have "largely migrated to an electronic/online format" resulting in the need for less space.

The cost of the remodeling to combine the two will cost an estimated \$280,000 and must still be approved the Wisconsin Technical College System Board. The project will be paid for with money from previous remodeling projects that came in under budget.

Mind set

It's significant that Blackhawk officials decided to do the learning resource center before the other 10 items on the list. The project is more than a consolidation and a name change. If it is successful, more students will stay in school, more students will graduate and even more will consider the possibility of continuing their educations after getting their associate degrees.

"There's a pretty significant synergy in having those two groups in one place," said Jon Tysse, Blackhawk Tech's director of institutional research and effectiveness. "It's all based on theoretical research that has proven to be true over time."

First the obvious: Student who go to tutoring do better in school. Students who visit the research librarian do better on their papers.

Now the unexpected: Students who visit the research librarian are three times more likely to return to school the next semester.

"Students need to understand that there's more than just their instructors," Tysse said. "There's other people who care about them and want them to succeed."

It's not just about the librarian, it's about students becoming more a part of an institution.

"The most interesting piece is that when you have engagement outside the classroom, the students become more engaged with their work, more engaged with the belief in themselves and more engaged with the idea of themselves as a graduates," Tysse said.

Tysse pointed to the work of Vincent Tinto, a sociologist whose specialty is student retention and learning communities.

In a September 2016 essay in “Inside Higher Education,” Tinto wrote about the qualities students need to graduate successfully.

One is “self-efficacy,” a term Tinto defines as “a person’s belief in their ability to succeed at a particular task or in a specific situation.”

It’s a quality that’s learned, and unlike self-confidence, it can vary from task to task.

Another is a sense of belonging.

“While believing one can succeed in college is essential for persistence to completion, it does not in itself ensure it,” Tinto wrote in his essay. “For that to occur, students have to come to see themselves as a member of a community of other students, faculty and staff who value their membership—that they matter and belong.”

That’s what Tysse sees happening here.

“This is going to be really powerful move for our students,” Tysse said. “It’s going to have lasting effects, both for the students who graduate and for the community.”

https://www.leadertelegram.com/news/local/menomonie-summer-program-gives-high-school-students-chance-to-pursue/article_57006880-3f3a-5d41-a320-6681c2cc88f4.html

Menomonie summer program gives high school students chance to pursue possible career paths

By Dan Holtz Leader-Telegram staff Jan 9, 2019

The Menomonie school district's summer school program this year will expand to allow high school students to explore possible career paths while earning high school and college credits.

"We're excited for the partnership we're going to be having with" Chippewa Valley Technical College, said Brian Seguin, assistant superintendent of instruction for the Menomonie district.

"It's a pretty big addition to our summer school programming at this point," Seguin said.

The summer school program in Menomonie up until 2019 has been limited to a remedial program for elementary students.

But starting next summer, high school students in the Menomonie school district can take classes through CVTC's High School Academies program.

Students can earn both high school and college credits in the program, said Kristel Tavare, director of pre-K-12 initiatives at CVTC.

"This allows students in high school to check out a possible career path," she said. "They are working toward a jump start on their college education as well as meeting their high school requirements."

Through the High School Academies program, students in high school can earn up to a year of college credits.

This program is offered in other area school districts and began in Menomonie last summer with a certified nursing assistant academy. That was expanded and offered this fall and this spring as well for Menomonie High School students, Tavare said.

Nine academies will be offered for Menomonie High School students for summer school in 2019.

provide students with an option to explore career pathways. And that will make them more successful and prepared to enter college," she said.

"This is really an exciting time for students in high school, to have a more individual approach to their career path," Tavare said.

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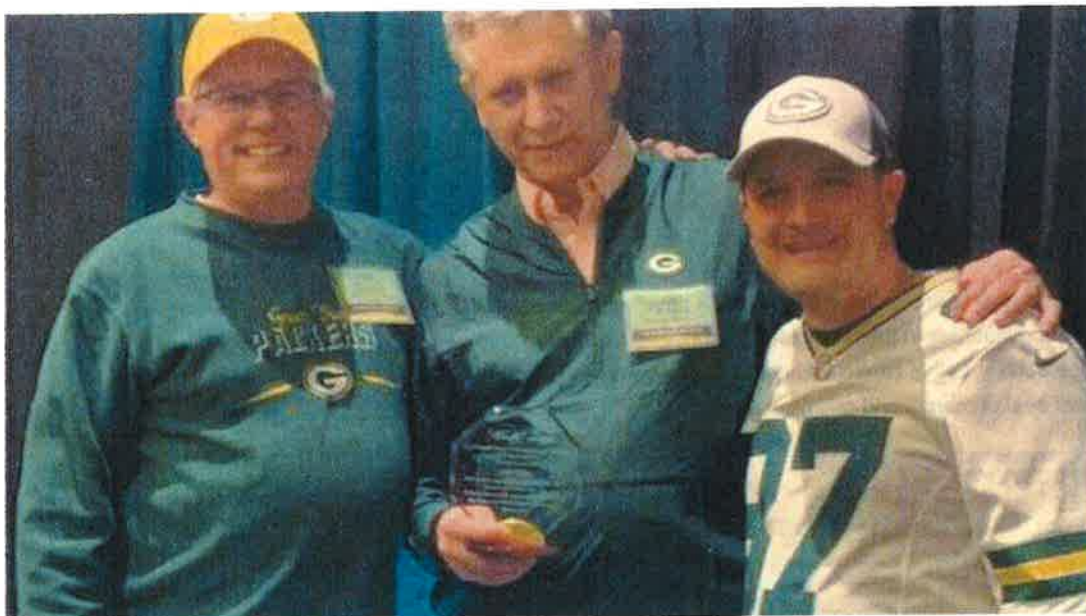
Dan Holtz

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Joe Simon recognized for distinguished service to Electrical Apprenticeship Program

By [New Richmond News](#) on Feb 6, 2019 at 10:00 a.m

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Joe Simon (center) is pictured receiving the outstanding service and contributions to the Wisconsin Apprenticeship System award from NECA/IBEW training coordinator Jim Cook (left) and Training Director, Mike Wagner (right) Submitted photo

The Wisconsin Chapter of the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) recently recognized Joe Simon, of New Richmond, for 23 years of outstanding service and contributions to the Wisconsin Apprenticeship System while serving on the Eau Claire Area Electrical Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee. The award was presented at the Wisconsin Chapter, NECA annual winter conference held at Lambeau Field in Green Bay, the largest gathering of electrical contractors in the state.

Simon founded Simon Electric in 1983 and has 36 years of experience in the electrical construction industry. Throughout his career Simon has been a vocal advocate for his trade ensuring that Chippewa Valley Technical College provided the highest quality of training to all electrical apprentices through new classrooms, lab equipment including a commercial generator and was in integral part of the instructor interview teams. He touched the lives of several hundred apprentices in western Wisconsin area while on the apprenticeship committee and as an active training employer and mentor.

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The members of the Eau Claire Joint Apprenticeship & Training Committee (JATC) have witnessed Simon's utter determination serving as a volunteer on the committee in the face of long hours and a lengthy commute to and from the meetings. As anyone serving in this capacity knows, despite common perception, it is a tough, thankless job that requires a great deal of mental and physical stamina.

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CVTC manufacturing design teams earn national recognition

By CVTC News Bureau Mar 30, 2019



CVTC Mechanical Design students Alex Husfloen of Ellsworth, left, and Eric Wolle of Baldwin show the claw mechanism that earned them second place in the ATEA national design competition. Wolle is holding part of what would be a mechanical arm and showing how a small electric motor fits inside.

CVTC photo

Chippewa Valley Technical College students swept the top two spots in a new nationwide design competition focused on the use of digital tools in industry.

One group's design of what they called a Kara Learning Robot that demonstrates how robotic mechanisms learn from each other placed first in the American Technical Education Association 3D Futures Competition. A second group's design of a robotic arm and gripper placed second in the competition.

Both groups of students are enrolled in the Mechanical Design program at CVTC's River Falls campus.

"The groups worked on two different program projects," said instructor Mahmood Lahroodi. "They were learning mechanical design concepts through project-based learning and had a chance to learn and enter the competition at the same time,"

The team of first-year Mechanical Design students on the Kara Learning Robot team included Jon Knapp of River Falls, Rick Hever of Hager City and Franklin Lozano of Baldwin. The second-year students on the mechanical arm and gripper team included Eric Wolle of Baldwin and Alex Husfloen of Ellsworth. Andrew

Boster was a member of both teams, creating the three-minute explanatory videos that constituted the actual entries in the competition. The teams won prizes of \$1,500 for first place and \$1,000 for second place.

Lahroodi suggested the learning robot project for the first team.

"One tool that hasn't seen much use yet in technical colleges and universities is machine learning," Boster said in introducing the winning video. "Machine learning has had great success in the field of image and language processing. Our goal is to apply the same ideas to problems of force and motion in mechanical systems."

The students designed Kara to turn a simple crank in a variety of rhythms, with a second unit learning the patterns from the first. They then added more units to form what they called a "Kara Swarm."

"One thing of importance to machine learning is the ability to share information just as we human beings do," Knapp said. "The Internet of Things is a rapidly rising concept of machine communication — the idea that your smart devices are all connected and can share information. With Kara we applied the concepts of IOT technology."

Kara uses two motors and an Arduino board, a kind of open-sourced circuit board, to execute the code of a machine learning algorithm. Using the Arduino board, both motors are able to learn from one another as their motions become synchronized.

Besides the electronic components and programming, the students also had to design and build the physical housings that enabled them to assemble the device. Essential to success in the contest was use of digital tools. The team noted the importance of Solid Works software, 3D printers and Google Drive.

The robotic arm and gripper project came from a request by CVTC's Automation Engineering Technology program which uses an automated system designed to move small plastic bottles. The gripper they were using wasn't consistent in holding the bottles.

Husfloen was working on that problem even before the ATEA competition was announced, while Wolle was working on a mechanical arm. They combined the projects into one.

"The projects were something we were building for the class, but the contest gave us a way to apply it," Wolle said.

"Our task was to create a gripper that has the ability to pick up multiple objects of various sizes, shapes, textures and hardness," Husfloen said. "I wanted something where the fingers could be changed out depending on what you wanted to pick up."

"Our manipulator arm is built to be both compact and modular," Wolle said. "It gives us the ability to have multiple configurations and have an appealing look. The arm houses a small DC motor which creates side-to-side movement. The modular portions are critical, giving the arm the ability to be both portable and adaptive."

Wolle and Husfloen decided on magnetic connections for the modular components, an idea the Kara team found useful.

"The fun thing about the project and getting second place is that we didn't design all of this for a contest," Wolle said. "It's stuff we were using in class, and we're still working on it."

The competition was sponsored by Dassault Systemes, a French 3D design and engineering software company that developed the SolidWorks program. Judging was by a panel of industry experts. The winning teams are invited to the ATEA national conference April 3-5 in Indianapolis.

Firefighter of the Year: 'Reliable, responsible, dedicated'

By [Gretta Stark](#) on Feb 13, 2019 at 8:00 a.m



Justin Wilson is this year's River Falls Firefighter of the Year, an honor which surprised the man his colleagues describe as reliable, responsible and dedicated. Submitted photo

Saturday, Jan. 19, Justin Wilson was at the annual River Falls Fire Department awards banquet. As he listened to a list of things the Firefighter of the Year does for the department, Wilson realized those things sounded familiar.

"And then it started to click that 'oh, this is going to be me,'" Wilson said.

Wilson said he was very surprised to realize he was this year's Firefighter of the Year.

"It wasn't something that I was necessarily expecting," he said. "It was quite a surprise. But it was exciting. It was definitely something that I was honored to receive."

Assistant Chief Mike Moody, whose family sponsors the award, said Wilson was chosen for the added responsibilities he's taken on, and because he can be counted on. Moody described Wilson and "very reliable, responsible and dedicated."

He said he feels it's important for the department to recognize members who "go above and beyond."

The Firefighter of the year is chosen by a committee of past firefighters of the year.

Chief Scott Nelson said the committee made a great choice with Wilson.

"Justin is one of our newer firefighters that has come a long way and has shown a lot of leadership qualities within the department," said Nelson. "He has a way of bringing people together."

Nelson said Wilson, who has been with the department six years, "exemplifies the pride and ownership" that firefighters take in the River Falls Fire Department.

"He bridges the gap between the younger firefighters and the veterans," said Nelson. "So that we can all work well together."

"Justin's outgoing personality creates a positive environment with whatever is going on at the time," said Moody.

Wilson said firefighting had been a dream of his long before he joined the RFFD. After graduating high school, Wilson attended Fox Valley Technical College in Appleton, earning a two-year fire protection technician degree.

He'd originally planned to become a full-time firefighter, but life had other plans. Wilson met and married his wife, Melissa, and started a family. He said the time wasn't right for him to work as a firefighter.

Then about 14 years ago, he and his family moved to River Falls. And when the time was right, there was an opening at RFFD, which is a volunteer department.

"I applied and became part of the membership here and just have been doing it ever since," Wilson said. "And I love it."

What Wilson likes best about being a part of the RFFD is working with the community, whether it's community education or being there for people in a time of need.

Wilson often volunteers to help with events such as the fire department's annual open house or the kids' water fight during River Falls Days.

He said he especially enjoys working with kids and seeing their excitement to meet firefighters or go inside a fire truck.

"I think it brings a smile to their faces," he said, "and it's neat to have that interaction with the kids and see the joy that it brings them."

His favorite memories with the department have been times that the department has brought together the members and families for events. He counts them as especially meaningful, because there are often days when he gets a page during dinner, for example, and he has to get up and leave.

Wilson said his family has been supportive of his decision to join the department, especially his wife.

"I wouldn't be able to do what we do and be able to come to the training and make the calls that I make if it wasn't for her support," he said.

The community of River Falls, Wilson said, gives back in many different ways.

"To be able to be a part of the fire department is really a way that I can give back to the community," he said. "It's just outstanding how many people support the department and always appreciate what we do. That doesn't go unnoticed, for sure."

Combining New Orleans and Wisconsin flavors, Ace Champion's recipe for success

Daniel Higgins, Appleton Post-Crescent Published 10:17 a.m. CT Feb. 28, 2019 | Updated 1:10 p.m. CT Feb. 28, 2019



Ace Champion moved to Green Bay from New Orleans to pursue a culinary career. He's made a name for himself infusing Wisconsin and Louisiana flavors. (Photo: Courtesy of Ace Champion)

Tossing a few cheese curds into a crawfish boil is great way to ruin the famed foods of Wisconsin and Louisiana.

However, with expert advice you can add a little Creole to your meals this Mardi Gras season without leaving the land of polar vortex and snow. Better yet, you can enjoy the flavor of New Orleans all year in America's Dairyland.

If you don't believe me, you haven't tuned into Green Bay chef Ace Champion's [cooking show, "Cook Like A. Champion."](https://www.chefchampion.com/TV-Schedule.php) Or attended one of his cooking demos or classes.

Champion, yes that's his real last name, grew up in New Orleans before moving to Green Bay. He has spent the past 13 years combining Louisiana and Wisconsin flavors.

It's not an obvious pairing of foods, but Champion has proven successful winning competitions with his unique creations.



Mardi Gras flavors are infused into Wisconsin foods by chef Champion



Classic Cajun Smoke House Grilled Cheese from Green Bay chef Ace Champion won the 2018 Wisconsin Grilled Cheese Championship. (Photo: Courtesy of Ace Champion)

Sometimes he adds Southern flair to Wisconsin staples like his recipes for Cajun cheese curds and Cajun smokehouse grilled cheese.

In other recipes, he brings the North to Southern cooking like his cheesy hush puppies and a cream cheese sweet potato pie.

Then there's the seafood stuffed baked potato. Champion's recipe calls for shrimp and crawfish meat and a sherry cream sauce made with sherry and, among other things, brandy.

Which brings us to some culinary common ground between the Badger State and the Big Easy. Sort of. Alcohol is frequently used in cooking in New Orleans, Champion says.

In Wisconsin, it's just frequently used. You know, straight from the bottle.

Still, Champion is well-aware that Wisconsinites heads turn when brandy or bourbon or other alcohol is in the recipe title. His penchant to flambé these dishes, causing flames to leap from the skillet, also helps.

And who is going to turn down a helping of cherry bread pudding with a bourbon cream sauce?

Yeah, that's the kind of dish that makes for delicious TV. Soon you will be able to enjoy private label Champion wines (Peach on the Beach and a cabernet sauvignon) from Mona Rose Winery. A Champion beer at Copper State Brewing is also in the works.

Finding success included a leap of faith, a stroke and school

Champion was working in a sausage plant during the week and restaurants on the weekends in New Orleans, often considered one of America's best food cities, when he decided to leave to pursue his culinary dreams in Wisconsin.

He started with jobs in restaurant kitchens. He perfected his knife skills as a meat cutter for a local grocery store. Still, his career didn't progress as hoped.

At age 30, Champion suffered a stroke. It left him blind in his right eye. It was a wake-up call.

Champion says his wife encouraged him to go back to school. He enrolled in the Fox Valley Technical College culinary arts program. Though his restaurant experiences had him thinking about a different path to success.

In one of his first classes, everyone was asked what they hoped to accomplish in their culinary careers. When Champion said he wanted to be a celebrity chef, everyone laughed. Looking back, he understands the reaction. Wisconsin isn't exactly known for producing celebrity chefs.

He pushed on, graduating from FVTC, then holding down a job as a chef at a retirement community while using his vacation days to find places to do cooking demonstrations and lead cooking classes. He's since expanded to do cooking classes as corporate team-building exercises.

He self-published a cooking instruction book. It's not a traditional recipe cookbook as it is a book aimed at improving skills and confidence in the kitchen.

Mardi Gras flavors are infused into Wisconsin foods by chef Champion

Then he made the jump from being just a guest chef on local television shows to having his own show. That came with a lesson as well. He was into the first season of the cooking show when he realized he'd only be the talent and wouldn't have rights to the content if he didn't strike out on his own.

Now he's filming another season of "Cook Like A. Champion." Going this route has him writing the script, finding guests and sponsors, and pitching his show to television stations and networks. But he says it is worth the extra effort because now he has control of his brand.

Moving to Wisconsin was a culinary shock

Even if you've never been further south than Racine, it's not difficult to imagine there is a big gap in the food scene between Wisconsin and Louisiana.

Champion got a big helping of culinary shock when he moved here.

Gone were the days of cooking with seafood caught fresh that same day. Wisconsin sausage, especially bratwurst, are fattier than Andouille sausage, common in New Orleans dishes.

Then there's cheese.

The only time he used cheese in New Orleans was to put a slice on a burger, Champion says.

Here, well, cheese is a way of life.

Champion has more than adapted to using cheese in his cooking, bringing home a first place and a pair of second-place honors at the 2018 Wisconsin Grilled Cheese Championship. One of his creations, an apple pie grilled cheese topped with a 10-year-old brandy caramel sauce, had "Wisconsin Foodie" host Kyle Cherek, who was emcee for the event, saying, "you should all just kneel. Really. There's a reason they call him Ace Champion."

Clearly Champion has mastered the art of cheese in cooking. When Shullsburg Creamery, one of Champion's show sponsors, hands him a block of its latest cheese, Champion finds a way to combine it with a little Creole flavor.

Though you don't need fancy sauce or years of culinary experience to add a dash of Louisiana flavor here in Wisconsin, Champion says. Just find a quality Cajun seasoning, he's partial to Slap Ya Mama brand, and stir it into green beans just before serving or season a skinless, boneless chicken breast before pan searing or baking.



Seafood Stuffed Baked Potato (Photo: Courtesy of Ace Champion)

Seafood stuffed potato

"Seafood is king all the time especially (during) Mardi Gras, but they wouldn't dare put cheese on it, but I would ... lol."

4 large Russet potatoes

Olive oil to coat potatoes

Salt (optional)

½-pound shrimp, 31/40 size

2 tablespoons Creole seasoning

1-2 tablespoons butter

¼-pound crawfish tail meat

8-12 ounces smoked gouda

Sherry cream sauce

1 tablespoon butter

2 large cloves garlic, minced

2 medium shallots, diced

¼ cup brandy (optional)

2 cups sherry

1 cup vegetable broth or chicken broth

1 cup heavy whipping cream

2 tablespoons butter

½-pound crawfish tail meat or shrimp

½-cup green onion, sliced on a bias for garnish

Heat oven to 400 F.

Rub potatoes lightly with olive oil. Season with salt if desired. Wrap each potato in aluminum foil and bake until potatoes are tender to the touch and you can stick a toothpick through it, about 1 hour, 20 minutes.

Close to 400 students declare intent to attend Gateway

By TERRY FLORES tflores@kenoshanews.com Feb 7, 2019



Lena Carrubba smiles after signing her letter of intent to attend Gateway Technical College and putting on her Gateway hat. Kaitlyn Beck is at right. PHOTO BY PAUL WILLIAMS

Nearly 400 students from Kenosha, Racine and Walworth counties already know where they want to attend college this fall.

On Thursday, the seniors from 26 high schools made their intentions public by participating in the National Career Technical Education's Letter of Intent Signing Day at Thursday at Gateway Technical College's Madrigrano Auditorium in Kenosha.

The event, sponsored by the National Coalition of Certification Centers, is in its sixth year and was established to "bring back the passion for technical education and the skills need to create a new workforce," said Kathryn Leiting, the centers' program manager.

“It is important to understand that the steps you are taking today not only change your lives but all of the lives of countless others in your community who rely on you and your newfound skills that support and sustain your community,” she said.

“Even though you chose a career today that you’re going to sign for, make sure you take advantage of all the opportunities Gateway has to offer,” Gateway CEO and President Bryan Albrecht told 389 students in attendance.

Those opportunities include international studies, campus organizations, business and professional groups, service learning and internships, among others.

“This is what makes this school special and so unique, I think,” Albrecht said. “I’m always excited to learn what our students are doing. Many of our students are involved in service learning, so they take what they learn in class and give back to our community.”

Growing in popularity

Katie Graf, Gateway’s assistant director of college access partnerships, said the signing day celebrates students entering a technical career field.

Graf said the event has grown from 57 students in 2015 to almost 400 this year, the largest yet. Last year 214 students signed letters of intent.

“There are more students who are enrolling here directly out of high school than ever before,” she said.

She said she believes the signing event helps reinforce retention in various Gateway programs. It also strengthens Gateway’s partnerships with business and local public schools.

“I think we’re retaining them more because we’re getting them started on their career paths even earlier,” she said, noting students can earn Gateway credit while still enrolled in high school.

“We’re celebrating them becoming Gateway Redhawks, but the truth is, most of them already are. They’re already taking classes. Their college education has already started,” she said.

Many of the students who signed letters were also encouraged to apply to the Gateway Promise program, which helps offset tuition costs. According to Ken Riley, the program's coordinator, the assistance is valued at about \$10,500 per student.

Pursuing their futures

Miguel Ortiz, 18, of Kenosha, who plans to study business, said Gateway was a good fit for him because it's close to home and affordable. Ortiz also applied for Promise assistance and expects to receive word soon.

"I really like the programs. I heard that their business program is really good, I had talks with my dad about it and I decided this was a better fit for me," said Ortiz, who also wants to earn certification as a barber. Eventually, he wants to open a barbershop.

"I got into cutting hair last year. I started watching a lot of videos and I learned on YouTube. I started cutting my friends' hair, and I was pretty good at it. They liked it," said the Tremper senior. "Right now, they usually just come over and I cut their hair."

Kaitlyn Becker, 17, and Lena Carrubba, 18, who attend certified nursing assistant classes at Tremper in a partnership with Gateway, said they, too, were excited to start in the fall.

Becker said she has always aspired to be a nurse like her grandmother.

"I want to go into pediatrics through nursing," said Becker. "I want to help people and make a difference. My grandma was a nurse for 40 years in Kenosha. If something ever happened to us, she would help us. She always explained it to me because I wanted to do this."

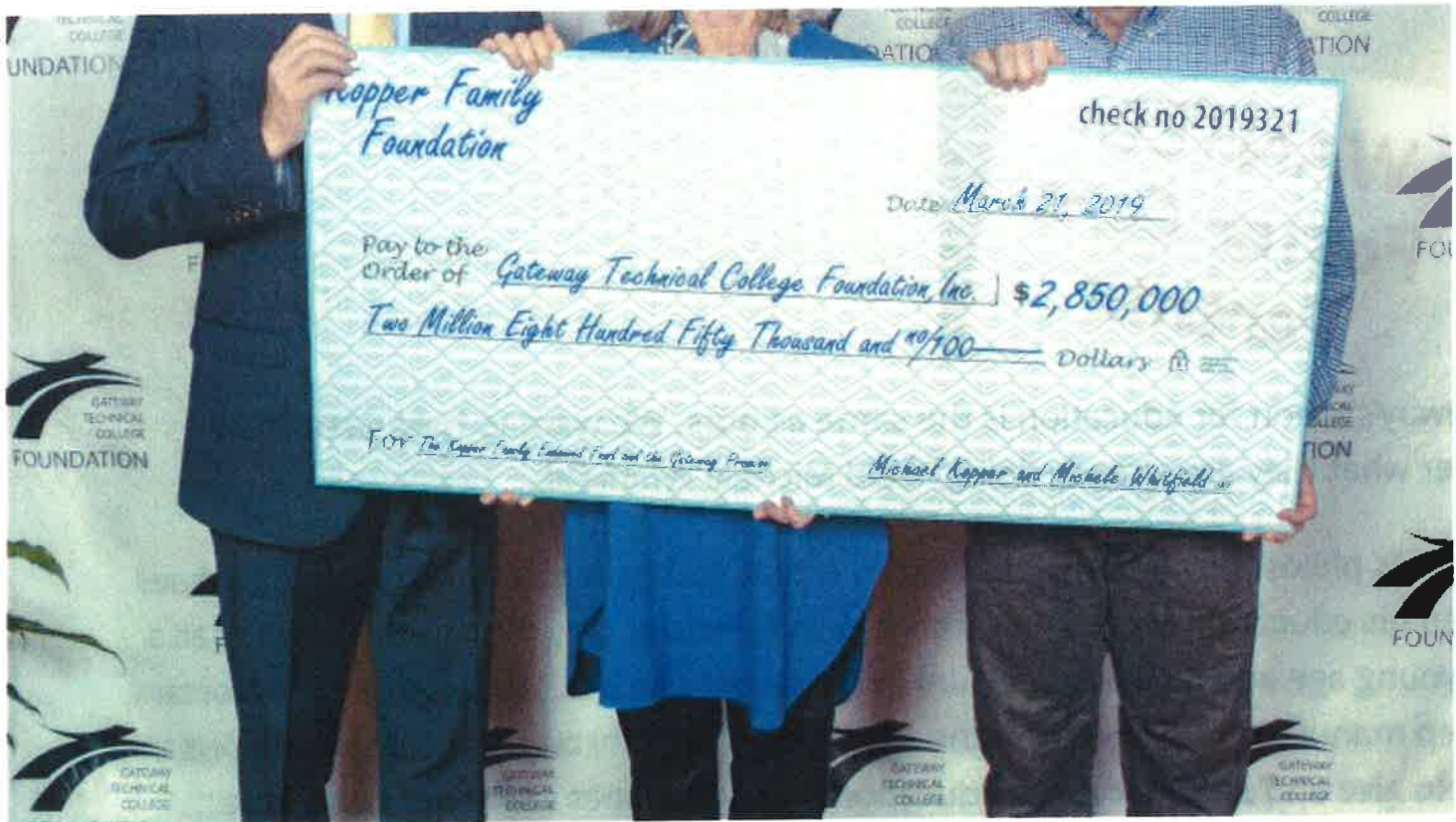
Lena Carrubba wants to earn an associate's degree in nursing and then transfer to the University of Wisconsin-Parkside to earn a four-year degree.

"Nursing is where I would like to stay, but I want to minor in music," said Carrubba, a singer. She said she wants to keep her options open to other career paths, including teaching music.

She said she is looking forward to starting college in the fall.

"I can't wait to start school in a more mature atmosphere," she said

Michael Kopper, Michele Whitfield donate \$2.85 million to Gateway Technical College Foundation



Gateway Technical College received the single largest donation in its history of \$2.85 million from Michael Kopper and Michelle Whitfield on March 21, 2019 at the Gateway Technical College Board of Trustees Meeting held at the Kenosha Campus.

PRESS RELEASE:

Michael Kopper and Michele Whitfield today announced a \$2.85 million donation to the Gateway Technical College Foundation to fund scholarships for students in engineering and manufacturing-related programs as well as benefit students in the college's Promise program.

A total of \$1.5 million was contributed to establish the Kopper Family Fund while

\$1.35 million will go to Gateway's Promise program. Both will benefit students as they gain an education at Gateway to family-sustaining careers. Kopper is the founder and

CEO of the decanter centrifuge manufacturer Centrisys Corporation and his wife, Whitfield, is the marketing director of the company.



"Gateway's vision for education is the same as ours. We want to help Gateway to further what they are already doing," said Michele Whitfield.

"Michael's philosophy and my philosophy is that you have to pay it forward. Michael started his education at a technical college in Germany very much like Gateway at a very young age and it has helped him in his career success. We believe it's important to keep manufacturing alive, and the way to do that is through education. We felt the need to give and allow for more educational opportunities in the Kenosha area."

"The legacy established with this inspiring gift will transform the educational opportunities available for generations of students attending Gateway Technical College," said Bryan Albrecht, Gateway president and CEO.

"The value of a legacy gift of this type can only be measured in the hopes and aspirations of those who will fulfill its purpose. On behalf of the entire Gateway community, we are grateful for the generosity and trust exemplified by Michael and Michelle in establishing the Kopper Family Fund endowment honoring the value of technical education."

Whitfield said her and Michael's ultimate goal is to spark an interest in technical education among others as a viable and solid way to gain the skills to a career. "It also

provides a way to train the next generation of manufacturing workers and engineers – which helps all of manufacturing to be successful,” she added.

This is the largest donation ever to the Foundation.

“We are so honored Michael and Michele have chosen to invest in generations of Gateway students’ education and the community through Gateway Foundation’s endowment,” said Jennifer Charpentier, Gateway Technical College Foundation executive director. “Their support is inspiring. I am grateful.”

Whitfield said Kopper and his business partners sold a portion of the business three years ago, and their donation to the Foundation for the scholarship and Promise program came from that sale.

With a technical background that spans 40 years, Kopper is a centrifuge manufacturing and service expert. Kopper began his career in the dewatering industry as a 14-year-old apprentice at the centrifuge manufacturer Humboldt-Wedag. After earning an engineering degree from a Cologne, Germany, technical college, Kopper supervised the startup, operations and process refinements of Humboldt centrifuges around the world.

After many years of working in centrifuge operation and service with Humboldt, Kopper founded Centrisys in 1987 as a repair and optimization company for decanter centrifuges.

To see photos of the event, go to: Photos: <https://flic.kr/s/aHskT9jRGW>

Gateway Technical College collaborates with communities in Kenosha, Racine and Walworth counties to ensure economic growth and viability by providing education, training, leadership and technological resources to meet the changing needs of students, employers and communities.

Terms and Conditions

Manitowoc Chamber honors Amy Cops of LTC as Education Impact winner | Chamber Notebook

The Chamber of Manitowoc County, For USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin

Published 7:43 a.m. CT Feb. 22, 2019

The 2018 Manitowoc County Education Impact Award recognizes an exceptionally dedicated educator who impacts parents, students or the community beyond the scope of the classroom while integrating business and community resources to enhance student learning opportunities. Amy Cops of Lakeshore Technical College (LTC) was the recipient of the 2018 Education Impact Award.

Cops' focus at LTC is to help students earn a general education diploma/high school equivalency diploma and a post-secondary credential. Having these can significantly improve an individual's ability to earn a better wage as a result of having more employment opportunities and, therefore, positively impacting Manitowoc County. She is collaborating with two community agencies, Lakeshore Community Action Program and Forward Services. By building these relationships, she serves as a bridge to help connect students with community programs.

Motivating students to continue when studies and other commitments make it difficult is one of Cops' greatest strengths. Committing to something is an essential skill employers look for in employees; they want to know a potential employee can be dedicated to his or her job. Cops is often their biggest cheerleader. She focuses on developing the whole person academically and mentally/emotionally, striving for students to live self-satisfied, balanced lives.



Amy Cops of Lakeshore Technical College (LTC) was the recipient of the 2018 Education Impact Award.
(Photo: Provided)

One of her professional goals is to create a community resource center in her classroom. Bringing in speakers from the community is another essential piece to her efforts. Cops is a firm believer in showing a balanced life with commitment to family, work and relaxations is important to long-term success.

The Chamber is proud to recognize Amy Cops for her all the great things she does as an educator. The impact she has through her work helps strengthen our community.

The Chamber of Manitowoc County, with its publishing of The Chamber Notebook, provides space for Chamber members to present information about their business. The publishing of this information is in no way intended as showing preference for that business by The Chamber.

Wisconsin students take top honors at Midwest Dairy Challenge

Carol Spaeth-Bauer, Wisconsin State Farmer Published 3:40 p.m. CT Feb. 18, 2019



During the Midwest Dairy Challenge, Team 1 was awarded the top ranking for their evaluation at Hunter Haven Farms. Molly Henschel- Lakeshore Technical College, Payton Duitscher- Iowa State University, Jordan Agrimson- University of Minnesota, Beau Cartwright- College of the Ozarks (Photo: NAIDC)

Applying theory and learning to real-world dairies, Wisconsin students were among 97 students from 19 schools who competed in the Midwest Regional Dairy Challenge at the University of Illinois, Feb. 13-15.

The Midwest event is one of four regional contests sponsored each year by [North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge](http://www.dairychallenge.org/) (<http://www.dairychallenge.org/>)[®] (NAIDC). The challenge incorporates all facets of a working dairy business in an interactive, fun, educational forum with students working in teams.

Students started off with educational sessions to gathering information they can use during the three-day competition.

The second day of the event was dedicated to visits to one of three farms: Hunter Haven Farms, of Pearl City; Willow Valley Farm, of Kent; and Mitchell's Dairy, of Winnebago.

All students were able to walk through the whole operation in order to evaluate and make recommendations with the guidance of an industry mentor. The main focus areas include: nutrition, reproduction, milking procedures, animal health, cow comfort and financial management. In the afternoon, students worked on their presentations until dinner.



Team 10 captured first place on Willow Valley Farm. Mark Nyentap- Iowa State University, Emily Unger- University of Guelph - Ridgeway, Jenna Van Wky- South Dakota State University, Tyler Vande Wattering- University of Wisconsin - Madison (Photo: NAIDC)

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(<https://profile.wisfarmer.com/newsletters/manage/>)

On the last day, students gave 20-minute presentations on the strengths and areas and opportunity to a panel of judges and the farm owners.

Wisconsin students awarded first or second place with their teams were:

Molly Henschel - Lakeshore Technical College: First place, Team 1 at Hunter Haven Farms.

Julia Mitchell - University of Wisconsin - Platteville: Second place, Team 8 at Hunter Haven Farms.

Tyler Vande Wattering - University of Wisconsin - Madison: First place, Team 10 at Willow Valley Farm.

Ryan Hafften - University of Wisconsin - River Falls: Second place, Team 14 at Willow Valley Farm.

Emerald Hastreiter - University of Wisconsin - Platteville: Second place, Team 14 at Willow Valley Farm.

Eric Helmer - University of Wisconsin - River Falls: Second place, Team 24 at Mitchell's Dairy.

The 2020 Midwest Regional Dairy Challenge will be hosted by University of Wisconsin – River Falls.

Top Headlines from Wisconsin Farmer:

Time to Dairy Forward with Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin
(<https://www.wisfarmer.com/story/opinion/2019/03/19/time-dairy-forward-professional-dairy-producers-wisconsin/3218409002/>)

Madison College Student Intern Manny Turrubiarres Earns National Achievement Award

By Madison365 staff - Mar 29, 2019



Manny Turrubiarres will receive the national Cooperative Education and Internship Association 2019 Achievement Award at the awards reception on Tuesday, April 2 in Chicago.

Turrubiarres is currently employed at Sun Prairie High School where some of his positions have included Front Office Assistant, Study Hall Supervisor, Cardinal Chess Coach, Latin Culture Club advisor, and Activities and Games Staff (Game Manager) for after-school athletic events.

“During his time as an intern, Manny consistently worked hard and asked to learn as much as possible,” said Andrea Omeja, administrative assistant to the Sun Prairie High School principal, in a statement. “He even taught me some things and shared ideas about how to better improve office processes.”

Turrubiarres is the son of beloved Sun Prairie High School staff member Antonio Turrubiarres Sr., who passed away in July of 2016 after a short battle with cancer. During 12 years at the high school, Antonio Turrubiarres Sr. worked in several different positions including at the front desk,

according to a press release from Madison College, and friends and family mentioned the many ways the younger Turrubiarres resembles his father such as his smile, humor and welcoming presence.

He decided to pursue a career as an administrative professional and work at Sun Prairie High School as his father had.

In fall 2016, Manny enrolled in Madison College's Administrative Professional associate degree program and he completed his internship at Sun Prairie High School in spring 2018. Instructors nominated him for the CEIA Achievement Award, for students who show excellence in applying the knowledge and skills learned in their college education to their internship.

CEIA recognizes distinguished achievement and excellence by annually recognizing students, educators and employers who have excelled in or made significant impact in work-integrated learning. Awards are given in areas of student achievement, research excellence, outstanding employer contribution and outstanding educator contribution.



GOVERNOR EVERS' VISIT TO MID-STATE TECHNICAL COLLEGE FOCUSES APPRENTICESHIP

MARCH 6, 2019

Governor Tony Evers made a stop this week to visit Mid-State Technical College and learn more about the College's apprenticeship programs. The visit to the Wisconsin Rapids Campus included a tour of the campus highlighting a number of apprenticeship labs and a meet-and-greet of current apprentice employer sponsors. The visit concluded with remarks from Governor Evers and Caleb Frostman, secretary designee of the Department of Workforce Development, as well as Mid-State's president, Dr. Shelly Mondeik.

Evers addressed the importance of having good interactions between the business community and our technical colleges as well as the role of apprenticeship in Wisconsin's economy. "In 1911 Wisconsin was one of the first states to start an apprenticeship program," he said. "Now there are 12,000 registered apprentices in the state of Wisconsin. I can't tell you how important that is to our state's economy."

Frostman shared his surprise when first seeing the starting salaries for apprenticeship completers in his new role, at a reported median of \$77,753 in a recent survey. "It was really compelling," he said. "I was blown away by that."

Frostman also stressed the importance of making connections between students and employers early and often and developing those relationships to build a strong workforce talent across all industries. "I'm really excited to be part of the team that's going to make those connections and hopefully retain our best talent here in Wisconsin and attract more to come join us."

According to College officials, Mid-State provides apprenticeship training for over 100 businesses in Wisconsin, and statewide participation in apprenticeship increased by 47 percent since 2013. Apprenticeship combines on-the-job learning with classroom instruction and is sponsored by employers, employers or labor/management groups that have the ability to hire and train in a working environment. The system of work-based learning fulfills the needs of preparing workers for skilled trades but is equally advantageous to students who would like to earn while they learn and gain entry in fields that they are interested in. Learn more at mstc.edu/apprenticeship.





Governor Tony Evers addresses an audience of apprentices and industry partners during his visit to the Wisconsin Rapids Campus of Mid-State Tech Tuesday, March 5. Also pictured, left to right, are College President Dr. Shelly Mondeik and Secretary Designee of the Department of Workforce Dev. Frostman.



Governor Tony Evers learns about Mid-State's recently launched Arborist apprenticeship while touring the urban forestry lab on Mid-State's Wisconsin Campus, Tuesday, March 5. Also pictured, left to right, are President Dr. Shelly Mondeik, Secretary Designee of the Department of Workforce Development, and Dean of Transportation, Agriculture, Natural Resources & Construction Ron Zillmer.



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Collaborative partnership between Mid-State Technical College and UW-Stevens Point creates new student housing option for Mid-State students

All News Releases

February 05, 2019

WISCONSIN RAPIDS – Thanks to a new partnership between Mid-State Technical College and the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Mid-State students can now live in one of UW-Stevens Point’s co-ed residential halls. Representatives from both institutions formalized the arrangement with a signing event on Feb. 4 at Mid-State’s Stevens Point Campus.



The new housing option is available to any Mid-State student, whether they are full- or part-time, a recent high school student or an adult. Cost is the same as it is for UW-Stevens Point students at \$3,500 to \$4,000 per semester and includes a meal plan and residential life programming. The rooms include beds, bureaus, closets and desks for two students, and students will have the added benefit of living in the same residence hall in proximity to other Mid-State students or can request to room with a friend who may be attending UW-Stevens Point. Transportation between the UW-Stevens Point and Mid-State’s Stevens Point campuses will also be available.

In attendance at the event was Amherst High School student Hannah Hoffman. Hoffman said she was considering getting an apartment while attending Mid-State’s Nursing program in the fall but was feeling “iffy” about the expense and hassle. When she heard about the new residential hall living option for Mid-State students, her plans changed immediately. “I just think this is an awesome idea,” she said. “Now I can attend Mid-State and enjoy that dorm experience of meeting people and making friends while pursuing my degree.”

According to Mid-State president Dr. Shelly Mondeik, work on the partnership to create the new residential living option was a direct response to requests from Mid-State students. “The average age of our students is now 25 years old,” she said. “Having younger students also means some may appreciate or even need a residence hall, and anything we can do to keep students local ultimately serves the community and our employers.”

More details about the housing available and an application for students can be found atmstc.edu/housing.



Dr. Shelly Mondeik, president of Mid-State Technical College (center), and Dr. Al S. Thompson, Jr., vice chancellor for student affairs and senior diversity officer at UW-Stevens Point, sign an agreement to provide housing for Mid-State students in a UW-Stevens Point residential living hall. The signing took place during an event formalizing the new partnership on Mid-State's Stevens Point Campus, Feb. 4. Also pictured (left) is Dr. Mandy Lang, Mid-State's vice president of student services & enrollment management.



The rooms available to Mid-State students as a result of the housing partnership include beds, bureaus, closets and desks for two students. A meal plan is also included in the cost.

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About Mid-State Technical College

Mid-State, one of 16 colleges in the Wisconsin Technical College System, offers associate degrees, technical diplomas and certificates in a variety of high-demand fields. With campuses in Adams, Marshfield, Stevens Point, and Wisconsin Rapids, the College district serves a resident population of approximately 171,370. Mid-State's supportive environment, state-of-the-art technology and faculty with professional experience in the fields they teach provide Mid-State graduates with real-world skills, knowledge, experience and confidence they need for an in-demand career. More than 9 in 10 Mid-State graduates are employed within six months of graduation. Visit the College's website at mstc.edu.

MATC Promise program gives thousands an education lifeline

MARCH 7, 2019 BY [EDGAR MENDEZ](#)



Carissa Peters, 27, is an adult Promise student at MATC. She is grateful for the program, which provides free tuition. Before she was accepted, she “had to work and go to school, which was tough because my classes were so demanding.” (Photo by Edgar Mendez)

Editor’s note: This article is one of [an occasional series](#) profiling the 12 finalists for the Milwaukee Awards for Neighborhood Development Innovation, also known as the MANDIs. MATC Promise is a finalist for the “Associated Bank Trail Blazer Award” for an innovative approach to a community problem.

This story has been updated to correct the age of Carissa Peters.

Carissa Peters had her future all mapped out: Graduate from high school. Head to college. Earn a degree.

And she was well on her way toward fulfilling her goals until a major impediment unraveled her plan — money.

“Paying out-of-state tuition there was really expensive,” Peters said. “I had to work and go to school, which was tough because my classes were so demanding.”

Struggling to juggle work and school, she left Xavier University, a historically black college in Louisiana, in 2011 and returned to Milwaukee, where she found a job as a flight attendant.

As she traveled the world for work, school became somewhat of an afterthought, until she decided her education could wait no longer. She researched local colleges and came across a program at [Milwaukee Area Technical College](#) that promised free tuition —music to her ears.

“Now I could focus on what I wanted to do with my future without having to worry about how I would pay for school,” she said.

Peters, who made the Provost’s List this year, is one of thousands of participants in [MATC Promise](#), which provides a free education for low and middle-income students. The program, launched in 2017, was originally open only to new high school graduates in the Milwaukee area. Last year it expanded to include adults who started but didn’t finish college.

The program was funded through a public/private partnership supported by more than 230 private donors who provided more than \$2 million, said Johnny Craig, vice president of student services and enrollment at MATC.



Johnny Craig, vice president of student services and enrollment at MATC, speaks with a student. “Education is one of those tools that doesn’t change you, it changes generations,” he says. “Your cousins, your kids, they might see opportunity to obtain a college degree that they didn’t before.”

Craig said there are more than 75,000 low-income students in Milwaukee and 135,000 adults who “started college and life happened. The Promise program allows us to meet their needs.”

Students in the program, who also must apply for federal financial aid, receive up to 75 tuition-free credits, with an average scholarship of \$930 per participant.

“Education is one of those tools that doesn’t change you, it changes generations,” he said. “Your cousins, your kids, they might see opportunity to obtain a college degree that they didn’t before.”

MATC graduates earn \$400,000 more in their lifetime than someone with only a high school degree, he added.

The top programs for Promise students are nursing, business, human services and education, said Virginia Gnadt, coordinator of public relations for MATC.

While new high school graduates entering the program are able to choose any educational focus, adult Promise students get funneled into one of Wisconsin’s top 50 in-demand fields such as early childhood or health care, Craig said. The goal is to help the adults find employment immediately upon completion of the program.

“We want them to build skills to get a higher-paying job and help support the regional economy right away,” Craig said.

While getting a job after graduating is the long-term goal for Rogelio Balderas, 20, it was the idea of staving off debt that drew him to MATC.

His decision did not please everyone in his family.

“Not many people in my family went to college so they didn’t really understand the burden of those who go into heavy debt while getting their degrees,” he said.

Balderas plans to transfer his MATC credits to a local university. He knows that he'll probably have to pay tuition once he get to that point, but he enjoys not having financial constraints right now.

"It gives me that ease of mind that helps me keep my focus on my larger goal of obtaining a degree in economics," Balderas said.

Peters, whose grade point average hovers near a perfect 4.0, is waiting to learn whether she's been accepted into MATC's highly popular registered nursing program. Her plan to earn a college degree, once derailed, is finally back on track.

"I'm one step closer to my goal of becoming an anesthesiologist," Peters said. "I'm grateful for that."

Moraine Park Earns Place At ABC National Competition



Moraine Park Technical College carpentry students recently participated in the 2019 Associated Builders & Contractors (ABC) of Wisconsin Skill Trade competition in West Bend.

The ABC of Wisconsin Skill competition is an all-day event that includes a four-hour hands-on practical exam and a two-hour written exam. Moraine Park had a total of four students participate, earning four of the eight medals in the competition.

The College's students earned a complete sweep of the top three spots in the carpentry division. Chad St. John of Oshkosh, employed by Northcentral Construction Corporation, placed first; John Paul Rubenzer of Plover, employed by Altmann Construction Company, Inc, placed second; Brian Noone of Madison, employed by Stevens Construction Corp., placed third. Tyler Anderson of Oostburg, employed by DeTroye Electric Service, Inc., placed second in the electrical competition.

"Chad came to NorthCentral with very little construction experience," Jim Brunet, general superintendent at North Central Construction Corp. said. "The past three years I have witnessed his growth in the construction industry, getting the knowledge and support from our experienced foreman and leadman. Having Chad go through the ABC apprenticeship will be a great asset for our company. He is now following in the footsteps of some of our past apprentices by going to nationals to compete and climbing the ladder of success at NorthCentral. I look forward to Chad being a great role model for some of our younger apprentices in years to come, and we wish him the best of luck at nationals."

St. John will represent Moraine Park Technical Collège at the ABC National Craftsman Championship in Long Beach, Calif. this March. This event allows for skilled trainees and apprentices from across the country compete for top honors by demonstrating their superior skills, training, and safe work practices. The championship is expected to have 200 competitors from across the nation.

For more information about Moraine Park Technical College, visit morainepark.edu.

Congrats to Moraine Park's First Gas Utility Program Graduates!



Moraine Park Technical College's first Gas Utility Technician class celebrated their program completion on Thursday, March 14.

In 2017, the College announced their plans to construct an Energy Education Center (EEC) at the Beaver Dam campus, as an answer to industry demands for skilled gas utility technicians. Supporters for the project include Alliant Energy, KS Energy Services, Madison Gas and Electric, Michels Corporation, We Energies, and Wisconsin Public Service. The EEC opened in June 2018, and the first Gas Utility Technician group began their training.

"Students in this program receive top-notch instruction," Bonnie Baerwald, Moraine Park president said. "They work through real gas utility scenarios in the Training Neighborhood, have access to the latest technology, and undergo thorough training to get them ready for the field."

The 2019 class includes Alden Broome of Beaver Dam; Joseph Erdmann of Watertown; Samuel Gantner of Fond du Lac; Cody Gebhard of Brandon; Dylan Gilmore of Jackson; Connor Gray of Cottage Grove; Caleb Madrid of Watertown; Kaleb Mancheski of Deerfield; Ashton Mislivecek of Hillsboro; Zachary Muckerheide of West Bend; Ean Ries of Lomira; Jonah Rohde of Fond du Lac; Gavin Schultz of Waupun; Justin Schultz of Elkhart Lake; Jordan Snyder of Watertown. The graduates will receive their Gas Utility Technician technical diploma at Moraine Park's annual commencement ceremony on May 18.

"I couldn't be happier with the work that these students have put in over the past nine months," Steve Logan, gas utility instructor at Moraine Park said. "In addition to learning the skills needed to be successful in a natural gas / underground construction career, they have learned an even greater lesson – that on the job and at home safety must always be their number one priority."



Applications are now being accepted for the next group, set to begin in June 2019. The nine-month program is uniquely designed to train students and prepare them to fill industry needs for the following summer. Gas Utility Technicians are currently in high demand, with many positions ready to be filled. Graduates can expect to earn a median salary of \$56,675.

Individuals interested in the Gas Utility Technician program can reach out to Sherry Hackbarth, an academic advisor at Moraine Park, at (920) 887-4425 or shackbarth@morainepark.edu.

For more information on Moraine Park, visit morainepark.edu.



Your Northwoods News Leader

WJFW 12 / WJFWDT 12.1

[Main](#): [General News](#): [Local News](#)

Law enforcement agencies struggle to fill jobs due to lack of applicants

Submitted: 01/17/2019

Northwoods - Minocqua can proudly call itself the largest town in Wisconsin by square mileage. Fewer than 20 police officers proudly protect that large community, but it's becoming harder for them to stay fully staffed.



"It's becoming more difficult," said Minocqua Police Chief David Jaeger.

Jaeger says that right now he is looking to fill one seasonal position, and possibly two more full time positions in the near future. But getting qualified candidates for those law enforcement jobs is a widespread problem.

"It's statewide, it's nationwide," said Jaeger. "Probably within the last ten years it's definitely become less and less [applicants]."

He isn't entirely sure what's causing the lack of interest.

"I have a few theories but you know, it's a tough field, it's really a tough field," said Jaeger. "It's a fast paced environment that at any second can be your worst nightmare and sometimes the job is wonderful."

Nicolet College is one place in the Northwoods that's actively trying to get more people into law enforcement.

"In our criminal justice program they can become a fully certified law enforcement officer," said Criminal Justice Specialist and Academy Director Tim Gerdmann.

The program's enrollment numbers were up last year, but Gerdmann says it's not enough to meet demand.

"There's 18 agencies in Wisconsin that are hiring for deputy sheriffs, 74 police departments are hiring, and 22 agencies are hiring for jail staff," said Gerdmann. "So the jobs are out there, we just need the graduates."

Gerdmann believes their program is unique because all of the instructors are active duty officers from agencies in the area.

"They are able to learn how law enforcement is done in the Northwoods," said Gerdmann. "It's a lot different than it's done in a big city."

Gerdmann says more than 90 percent of Nicolet Academy graduates get jobs in the first year. Many of them stay in the North. He encourages anyone who is interested in the field to ask questions.

"Get a hold of their local agencies and talk with the officers, talk with the administrators and find out what the job is like," said Gerdmann.

Though Jaeger knows the job can be tough, he encourages anyone interested in the field to give it a try.

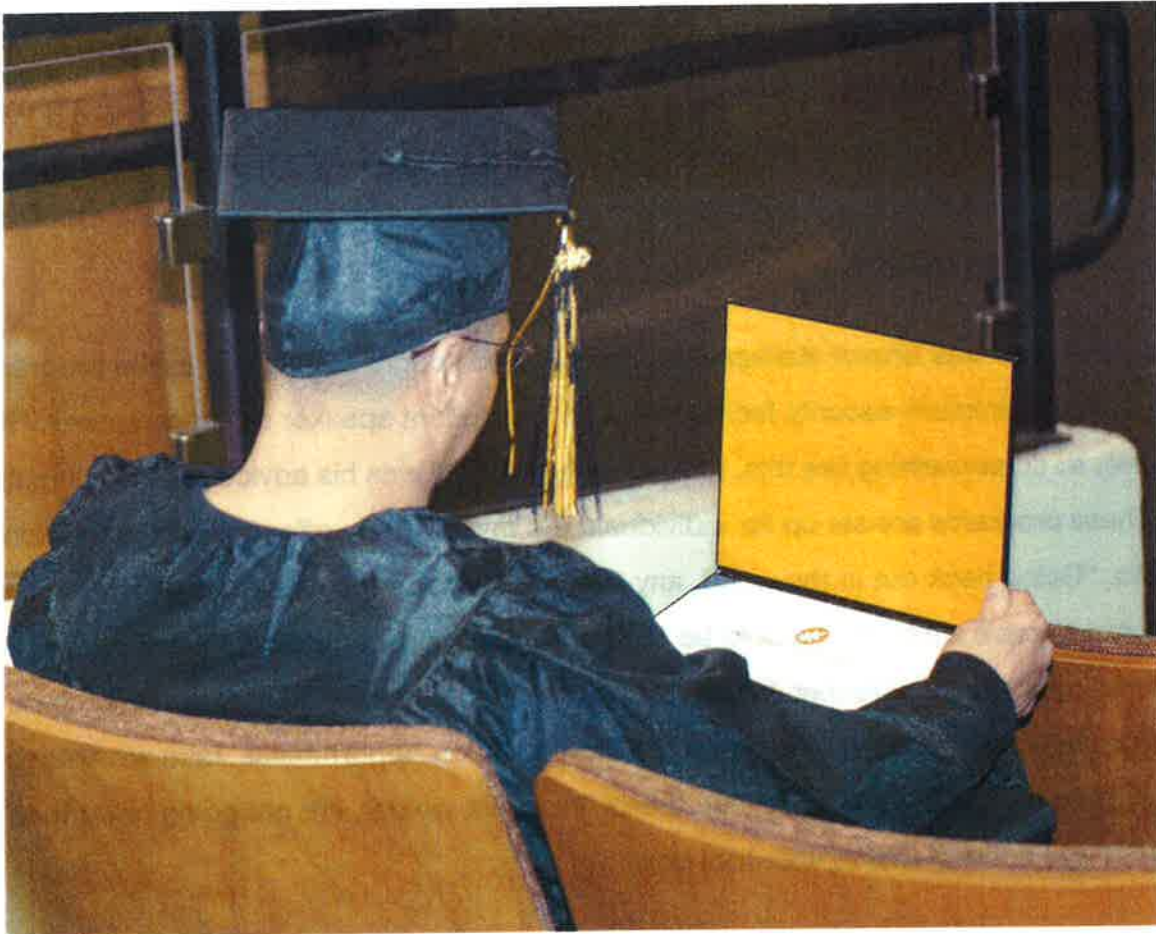
"If your heart and your head is in the right spot and you have a desire to work for the citizens of your community, want to help people, I think this is a great field for you to be in," said Jaeger.

Gerdmann encourages anyone with questions about the criminal justice program or this summer's law enforcement academy to contact him at tgerdmann@nicoletcollege.edu or 715-365-4535.

Written By: Dakota Sherek

McNaughton Inmates Earn Welding Certificates

By DEAN S. ACHESON • JAN 29, 2019



A graduate of the inmate re-entry program looks over his certificate after completing a welding program at Nicolet College in Rhineland.

DEAN S. ACHESON PHOTO

RHINELANDER – A dozen inmates from McNaughton Correctional Center traded prison garb for black gowns and mortarboards as they took part in a graduation ceremony Monday at Nicolet College in Rhineland.

The 12 inmates had completed a 14-week program to earn a certificate in gas metal arc welding. The welding program at Nicolet is designed to give students entry-level skills required in fabrication, construction, maintenance and other metal working industries.

Among those offering praise to the men was state Department of Corrections Secretary Kevin Carr,

speaking by phone after a harsh winter storm prevented him from attending the graduation ceremony. “I want to first thank everyone for being here today to celebrate the amazing accomplishments of these 12 men that they’ve made over the past 14 weeks,” he said. “I am so grateful to have the opportunity so early in my tenure with the Department of Corrections to highlight a partnership and program that has proven successful in educating, supporting and empowering those in our care. “I have a great appreciation for your willingness to try something new and to take concrete steps towards your future. You have a long road ahead of you but this certificate and education will give you the tools to be more successful than we can imagine.”

Among the graduates was Shawn Kaliszewski, age 43, who sought admittance to the program while housed at another minimum-security facility. He was the student speaker at the ceremony. “If you have an opportunity to do something like this, take advantage of it,” was his advice to fellow inmates. “Take it seriously. These programs are set up for individuals like myself. They offer not only education, but job training skills. “Going back out in the world, any one of us, what’s the number one thing that we have to have? We have to have a job. We have to be able to earn a living wage. And it’s this type of program that offers that opportunity. Whether it’s in welding, whether it’s automotive or whether some other program down the road that they may offer different education opportunities, take advantage of these opportunity. Even if you are somebody who thinks ‘I’m not a welder, I’m not going to do this.’ It’s never a bad thing to add another tool to your tool box.”

In comments before the ceremony, welding instructor Peter Kaz praised the men for their accomplishments. Some picked up the welding instruction easily; a few struggled but persevered. “They did very well on their testing; all assignments done on time. It was amazing to see some of their talents and abilities.” Also, no one dropped out of the class. “We all come to a point in our lives where we need to make a change,” he later said in his address to the group. “We have to understand that sometimes change is not easy, no fun. But we have to go through that change whether it’s location or community or friends or whatever. But we need to take that next step. And gentlemen I think you have (by) taking this course and learning that skill that can provide you a very good income and a very good life if you so choose.”

Kaz said the graduates could expect to earn \$14.50 to \$16.50 per hour on entry-level jobs, with the potential of \$20 per hour once they “sharpen their skills” and have some time in the position. While the 12 are the first inmates to graduate from the welding class, they follow in the footsteps of five inmates who completed a mechanical maintenance program at Nicolet last year.

Brad Kosbab, superintendent at the correctional center, said a state grant funded the inmate program. He said another industrial mechanical maintenance program would be offered to inmates this April. Nicolet President Dr. Richard Nelson presented each graduate with his certificate. A reception was held afterwards with examples of the graduates' skill at welding on display.

Trucking industry also impacted by workforce shortage

February 19, 2019

MERRILL, Wis. (WAOW) — The American Trucking Association reports the trucking industry is struggling to find enough qualified drivers. It has affected the entire U.S., including central Wisconsin.

One Northcentral Technical College (NTC) program is working to get more drivers certified and road-ready. Teachers and students were busy Monday practicing backing trucks into spots at the program facility in Merrill.

Instructors said part of the problem is that the average age among current drivers is fifty-five. Many are at or nearing retirement age.

“So in the trucking industry we’re definitely heading towards a cliff where we’re going to have a lot of people retiring and not a lot of people coming into the industry to replace those drivers,” said NTC instructor Mike Sewell. “Plus, the added demands of more freight needing to be moved.”

Sewell said the industry has made strides to attract more workers: increasing wages by “double-digit percentages” over the last five years, more comfortable conditions in trucks and more time allotted to visit home. He also pointed out trucking is considered “recession-resistant” because of the constant demand for shipping.

The NTC program has graduated around 100 students since it began in 2016. They moved into the new Merrill building in August 2018.



Enrollment issues addressed in North Central Wisconsin

March 13, 2019

Wausau, Wisc. (WAOW) — Education leaders gathered in Wausau to address enrollment issues and more on Wednesday.

Lori Weyers, the President of Northcentral Technical College, said the number of high school seniors in our area is declining. That means a smaller pool for colleges like hers.

NTC hosted their Success 2019 Conference on Tuesday and Wednesday, bringing in education leaders from across the country to find solutions for enrollment and student success.

“We are not alone. People are experiencing some of the very same things that we are,” said Dr. Weyers.

Governor Tony Evers, a guest speaker at the event, said, “We need to fully fund our higher education.” He then asked Wisconsinites in the audience to support his budget proposal and said, “Education is the glue that holds it together.”

Dr. Weyers said assistance for mental health, costs of education and a declining number of high school seniors are some of the key issues faced by area technical colleges.

NTC adds vacuum drying kiln here

Langlade County, already a hub of the forest products industry in the northwoods, has gained a new educational tool.

Recently local business and regional business and educational leaders gathered at Northcentral Technical College's Wood Technology Center of Excellence in Antigo for the unveiling of a new cutting-edge kiln.

"We are excited to make this technology available to our industry partners," Travis Allen, wood science instructor at NTC, said. "This research opportunity allows companies to assess and experience the vacuum drying technology before investing in their own unit."

The VacuPress Technology dry kiln will be used to dry wood more quickly than a conventional drying technique.

"With limited availability of third party research on press drying technology, we plan to provide our industry with up-to-date analysis and opportunity to compare this technology with conventional drying technique," Allen said.

Vacuum drying uses a vacuum to create a pressure gradient between the surface and the core of the wood, while conventional drying relies on moisture gradients between the surface and core allowing water from the wetter core to move toward the dryer surface. This can be a slow process since the operator must be careful not to over dry the shell or the result will be a degrade in wood quality.

"The advantage of vacuum drying is that it allows for faster drying rates by maintaining a small differential between the shell and the core moisture contents throughout the drying period," Allen said. "Vacuum drying is often used for high valued species or for large dimension lumber."

NTC partnered with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the Great Lakes Kiln Drying Association to procure the equipment through grant funds.



Shown standing in front of the new kiln at the Wood Technology Center are, from left, Jim Rosenberg, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation; Scott Bowe, University of Wisconsin-Extension; Scott Lyon, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and Great Lakes Kiln Drying Association; Travis Allen, Northcentral Technical College; Vincent Rice, Wisconsin Economic Development Cooperation; students Dylan O'Gorman, Dakota Kakes and Jessica Becker; and Troy Brown, Kretz Lumber.

Marinette County Celebrates 200th GED For Jail Inmates

Issue Date: February 7, 2019

A celebration of the 200th GED earned by Marinette County Jail inmates since the partnership between Marinette County and Northeast Wisconsin Technical Institute began in 2005 was the highlight of the county's Public Services Committee meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 5.

Persons instrumental in the program gathered in the County Board Room of the Marinette County Courthouse to enjoy cake and conversation before the official committee meeting began at 1:30 p.m.

Inmate Education and Programs Sergeant Joe Moser reported the partnership with NWTC on the inmate education program remains highly effective. Twelve inmates have received their GEDs already this year, and two more had achieved that goal just this week. He thanked the jail staff and officers for shuffling inmates, and thanked NWTC staff for their cooperation that enabled the partnership to hit the mark of 200 GEDs or HSEDs earned, "which is a great accomplishment!"

Jail administrator Bob Majewski gave a brief recap of how the program began.

In the late 1990s into early 2000s, planning for the new law enforcement center was underway, with rooms designed for inmate programs. In March of 2004 the Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee (CJCC) had tours of both the new jail facility and NWTC.

In February of 2005, Pat O'Hara, who then was NWTC Dean, discussed with the CJCC programs available for inmates and they discussed a video system between the two buildings for GED and HSED classes. During this time Officer Stephanie Timblin was tasked with trying to coordinate this and other programs at the jail while carrying on her other Corrections Officer duties.

In October of 2005, through the CJCC, a sub-committee was formed to work out the program for inmates to earn their GEDs while incarcerated.

By December of 2005 video equipment was in place for the program to begin, and NWTC staff were available 24 hours per week.

In January of 2006 ten inmates took initial tests and eight more were interested. In March of 2006 there was talk of the jail becoming a testing site and volunteers started tutoring inmates who had low TABE test scores.

In October of 2008 Marinette County was asked to budget money for educational programs in the jail.

In December of 2008 it was reported to the CJCC that three inmates had received GEDs in 2007 and 11 had earned the degrees in 2008.

Changes were made, and October 15 was the last time jail inmates needed to be transported to NWTC for testing as the jail had been approved as a GED test site.

Then in February of 2010, Ellen Hanneman became Marinette County's first Inmate Education and Education Corrections Officer.

Through the hard work of Kathy Cleven (a former county employee in Finance and many other county employees a grant had been received through the Recovery Act Rural Law Enforcement Assistance Enhancing Rural Corrections, Detention & Jail Operations program.

"This is when we were really able to take off," he declared. He said other programs were offered in addition to GEDs to give inmates the opportunity to obtain tools they may need to become productive members of society. He thanked everyone for the efforts and hard work that helped make this and many other programs successful.

Gary Johnson, who has been an NWTC Instructor for 32 years, told the Public Services Committee that when he goes to meetings in other areas he hears that an average of 15 percent of jail inmates who need them earn their GEDs during their time in jail. In Marinette County about 70 percent of inmates will earn the degree that helps them get meaningful jobs when they are released or enables them to go on to further education. "None of this gets done without a great team effort," he declared. He introduced NWTC staff members present. He said the educational component of the jail does pay, recidivism among inmates is going down, "and I am proud to be part of it."

Supervisor Glenn Broderick asked if there is a followup to determine what happens to the inmates who did complete their GEDs, but there is not. Moser said however that people from the Job Center help them fill out job resumes and help them arrange further education if they want it.

Sheriff Jerry Sauve said being in jail is a motivating factor for inmates to earn GEDs, and the judges, initially Judge David Miron was particularly receptive to reducing jail time in return for earning jail credits. Former Judge Tim Duket, and now also Judge James Morrison cooperate with the program.

"It takes the entire staff to move people around" ♦ "this is a tremendous accomplishment," Sauve concluded.

Supervisor George Kloppenberg, chairing the meeting, saluted those who worked with the program, and also commended the people who earned the GEDs.

In his monthly report to the committee Moser said five inmates are currently enrolled in the Adult Education Program. In 2018, 86 GED Tests were taken within our facility with 74 of those tests receiving a passing grade. In total 11 inmates received their General Education Diplomas in 2018.

The next Marinette County OWI Victim Impact Panel is scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 7, with Dick Kendall and Jeff Niesen as speakers.

We currently do not have any community service workers in use. 2018 saw a return to our Highway Cleanup Program which accumulated over 80 bags of trash and debris from our county highways in around 12 miles worked. In total, the community service program earned 92 days credit off of inmate sentences. Currently the jail has approved community service programs with the Salvation Army, the City of Peshtigo Parks and Recreation Department, the Marinette County Maintenance Department, and the Peshtigo Riverside Cemetery Group.

There was data on several other programs such as anger management, Male Domestic Violence, Female Self-Esteem, and more.

In 2018, 118 inmates completed programs while incarcerated, and this number doesn't account for inmates who participated in programs such as NA, AA, religious studies and jail outreach, which are continuous and do not have completion dates. Inmates earned a total of 141 days credited off of their sentence for completing programs.

Moser's program continues to run to run weekly resume building workshops, facilitated by the Job Center of Wisconsin. In these workshops inmates work one-on-one to update existing resumes and creating new ones to assist in obtaining employment post release, or obtaining employment while incarcerated and utilizing their work release privileges. He said to his knowledge eight individuals have begun working with local employers as a direct result from the program, and countless others received post incarceration interview requests.

On the day of the meeting there were 122 jail occupants, 10 on Huber, 12 on sober link, and four on electronic monitoring.

On recommendation of County Administrator John LeFebvre the committee agreed that Medical Examiner Kalynn VanErmen can continue serving as secretary of the Wisconsin Coroners and Medical Examiners Association Board, a position she began while working for the Brown County Medical Examiner's office.

The committee also approved purchase of a new 2019 Ford Police Responder pursuit rated 4X4 truck for use of Sheriff Sauve from Ewald Automotive Group through the Wisconsin State Contract for \$33,972, and assignment of a motor pool to VanErmen to be kept at her home for quick response to calls.

As recommended by VanErmen the committee approved a lease agreement with St. Vincent Hospital for morgue use at a cost of \$7,000 per year, which is a savings over the \$15,000 that had been paid through a Brown County contract.

Lieutenant governor energized by visit with NWTC students

Posted: Wed 8:55 PM, Mar 06, 2019

GREEN BAY, Wis. (WBAY) - Students at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College educated Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes about sustainable energy opportunities.

Barnes toured the college's Great Lakes Energy Education Center in Green Bay Wednesday morning.

The center focuses on renewable energy, electrical power, energy management and other related programs.

Barnes says educational opportunities like these will help the state grow and become an example for the rest of the nation.

"We can be recognized here in Wisconsin as a place that creates our own energy. We can create a model for other states across this country," Barnes said, "and I'm happy, very excited to be given the opportunity to lead that charge. We know we cannot get this done on our own. It's going to take instructors, it's going to take the educational opportunities across the state, and it's going to take the wonderful students who are interested in these types of programs."

Barnes also said the Evers administration is working on making college more affordable so more prospective students can take advantage of these opportunities.



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News Release

For Immediate Release

Contact: Kim Schmelz, External Relations & Alumni Development
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Date: February 21, 2019

Southwest Tech alum earns Customer Service Employee of Year Award at Wilderness Resort

Fennimore -

Justin Johnson, a 2009 Golf Course Management alumnus and Customer Service Employee of the Year Award recipient by the Wilderness Resort in Wisconsin Dells, didn't find Southwest Tech by accident.

Justin, a native of Lake Mills, said the college he was searching would need to have a golf-focused degree program with on-campus student housing that wasn't dormitory style. Southwest Tech met those two important qualifications and led Justin to Fennimore.

"I definitely would not be where I am and doing what I'm doing without my start from Southwest Tech," said Johnson.

Johnson said he learned important skills about golf course management from instructor Scott Kennedy. Johnson said Kennedy, along with Johnson's mentor, taught him to read between the lines of job

Press Releases

Southwest Tech alumna ascends to key healthcare role

Friday, March 8, 2019 - Fennimore

Alumna credits Southwest Tech for belief in paying it forward

Friday, March 1, 2019 - Fennimore

Southwest Tech alum earns Customer Service Employee of Year Award at Wilderness Resort

Thursday, February 21, 2019 - Fennimore

Barry puts community and financial resiliency first

The Path to Compounding Courage

Outdoor Skills Day provides opportunity for active learning

Johnson's mentor, taught him to read between the lines of job descriptions. He knew that the more skills and experience he could gain that would benefit his profession, the more valuable he would be to his employer.

After graduating from Southwest Tech, Johnson went to work at the Lake Mills Golf Club and started working on his bachelor's degree from UW-Stout, as well as taking PGA courses. Johnson used his time off in the winter to get experience at a high-end clothing retailer as well as a nice restaurant to learn more about merchandising and food service. That experience was a huge benefit to the golf courses Johnson worked for. "There were days at one job (in Eau Claire) where I could send everyone home if need be and send out golfers, tend bar and make food all on my own because of my experience and comfort level."

Johnson has been working at the Wilderness Resort for three years. He is a first assistant golf professional at Wild Rock Golf Club and is also an accounting assistant at Wilderness Resort. In his position at the Wild Rock Golf Club, Johnson manages outside service staff, the golf shop, inventory, purchase orders, merchandising and displays. Johnson's ability to adapt to additional positions and gain a range of skills is what led him to the accounting assistant position at the Wilderness during the off-season.

When asked how someone earns the Wilderness Customer Service Employee of the Year Award Johnson explained that employees are placed into the pool of candidates after receiving a written acknowledgement from a customer. Those employees are acknowledged in the all-staff newsletter and then directors of the different divisions in the resort choose who is selected to receive the "Guide of the Month." From there a "Guide of the Quarter" is selected and then, at the end of the year, one employee from the division is awarded the Employee of the Year honor at the annual employee party, which was held on Jan. 16.

Not only has Johnson excelled in his professional life, he's also taken the skills he learned at Southwest Tech and used them for charitable purposes. Justin's brother, Todd, passed away in 2005, leaving a wife

and two children behind. Justin recalls saying a prayer one night while he was in school that he could find a way to help honor his brother with the new skills he had learned. Literally, the next day a friend called and said they were thinking of doing a fundraiser, maybe a golf outing and asked for Justin's help. They have since created a 501 (c)(3) non-profit

Lactalis selects West for Sponsor-A-Scholar program

Jeff Dornink Memorial Scholarship endowed

Traveling civil rights exhibit to be displayed on campus

DRA grant helps equip new Teaching and Learning Studio

Real Estate Foundation breaks ground on new facility

Student emergency funds receive boost during #GivingTuesday

3M Prairie du Chien, Southwest Tech partnership recognized

corporation, have a board of seven directors and Justin serves as president. The mission of the Todd Johnson Foundation is to remember Todd's legacy through Christian education scholarships as well as address autism needs.

To learn more about the Southwest Tech Golf Course Management Program, contact advisor Kyle Bennett at 608.822.2625 (kbennett@swtc.edu) or Scott Kennedy at 608.822.2437(skennedy@swtc.edu).



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News Release

For Immediate Release

Contact: Kim Schmelz, External Relations & Alumni Development
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Email: kschmelz@swtc.edu
Mail: 1800 Bronson Blvd., Fennimore, WI 53809
Date: March 1, 2019

Alumna credits Southwest Tech for belief in paying it forward

Fennimore -

Debbie Kent Johnson started school at Southwest Tech in 1981 when she was a 21-year-old, recently divorced, single mom. Johnson said it was her attorney that encouraged her to go back to school and even bought her books for the entrance exam so that she could get started at Southwest Tech in the Medical Office Aide program. "Attending Southwest Tech was a game changer in my life and I will always be grateful for the foundation it provided," said Johnson.

Johnson talked about the impact her instructors had on her life. "Rita Renke believed in me and told me I could do this. Reflecting on my 21-year-old self, I identify the obstacles that had me stuck, early trauma, low self-esteem with little resources. Clarity is hard to perceive when you are in the eye of the storm with no map to navigate. Southwest Tech

staff not only provided me with the map, they explained it in a way I understood and encouraged me to take the next step. The instructors believed in me, truly cared about me until I started little by little believing

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believed in me, truly cared about me until I started little by little believing and caring about myself. Let's face it, no one really cares what you know until they know you care."

Johnson graduated as a Licensed Practical Nurse, she remarried, raised three children, retired after working 30 years in the field. After retirement, she started volunteering at the Good Neighbor Clinic, a free clinic in Sauk Prairie, Wisconsin. In 2014, she was instrumental in the development of the Sauk Prairie Community Activated Recovery Enhancement (CARE) program, a program funded by St Vincent de Paul of Sauk Prairie. CARE is an integrated system putting each individual at the center of their treatment, which empowers the individual to make better life choices. She accepted the position of Clinic Coordinator/Recovery Coach of the CARE program. In 2015, Johnson's mission of assisting individuals to recovery went from professional to personal when one of her children was diagnosed with addiction. When her child went to detox, Johnson was encouraged to start going to Al-Anon as a place to find support. She became very involved and now runs the Sauk City Al-Anon program.

Johnson and her colleague, Joan Mack R.N have helped over 400 people get into a recovery program. They started with a recovery plan for the incarcerated individuals to cut down on the recidivism. Sauk County was awarded a \$3 million grant based on the success of the CARE program. Mack was appointed to the Governor's Task Force on Opioid Abuse in 2016 and together, her and Johnson have worked tirelessly with insurance agents and healthcare personnel to ensure that treatment is funded by insurance plans. Johnson said they were reminded daily of the criteria insurance companies developed that placed barriers to treatment and worked with law makers to address and change policies thus treating addiction like any other disease.

Johnson said she continuously tells her clients what she was told as a student at Southwest Tech. "I was told I could achieve my dreams, that I was worth it and that I was not alone. I believe rescued people rescue people and it is such a gift to pay it forward and watch the transformation of lives. Southwest Tech is such a gift to that area, it truly transforms lives."

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A top cop who happens to be a woman

Ozaukee County's first female undersheriff didn't set out to shatter the glass ceiling but instead is driven by her love of law enforcement



NEW UNDERSHERIFF CHRISTY KNOWLES, pictured outside the Ozaukee County Justice Center, joined the Ozaukee County Sheriff's Office in 1999 as a jail deputy. The Cedar Grove native worked her way through the ranks to become the department's first woman to be its second in command. Photo by Bill Schanen IV

By DAN BENSON
Ozaukee Press staff

Christy Knowles never set out to be the first woman undersheriff for the Ozaukee County Sheriff's Office.

She just wanted to be a good cop.

"I know it's a big thing to talk about the female thing," she said last week. "But that never dawned on me coming up.

"I hope to be a role model and make my kids proud but I just love all the aspects of being a cop."

That's not how she started out, however.

Growing up in Cedar Grove and graduating from Cedar Grove-Belgium High School, Knowles, whose maiden name is Dlapa, went to college for four years and earned a degree in medical assistance in 1999.

As she was beginning her job search, her mother told her about a help wanted ad: The Ozaukee County Sheriff's Office needed deputies.

She passed through the application process and was hired.

"When I started I knew I wanted to go to patrol," she said.

While a jail deputy, she was selected by Sheriff Jim Johnson, who was a jail sergeant at the time, to teach unarmed physical control techniques and team control tactics.

"She struck me as an effective communicator and being tactically sound," Johnson said in an email.

After two years, she was promoted to patrol and was selected to be an instructor in defense and arrest tactics, training the patrol staff to hone their skills in handcuffing and physical control techniques.

"That was very physical," Knowles said, putting to rest the notion that women can't handle the physicality of the job. "He (Johnson) pushed me to do it and believed in me."

She stayed on patrol until 2007, but not before she began to work sensitive crimes, such as sexual assaults, domestic violence and child abuse.

"It was just that I was good at it; talking to victims and to suspects. I knew if I could get them talking I could put them away for a long time," she said.

"I just had the drive for that position or those cases."

In 2007 she was promoted to detective, continuing to specialize in sensitive crimes.

Being a woman helped, she said.

"We have great men who can do those cases. But it might be easier for victims to talk to a woman about it sometimes because you get into sensitive and maybe embarrassing areas," she said.

In January 2013 she was promoted to be one of the department's three lieutenants, overseeing the patrol division, helping develop training policies, reports and the general running of the division.

Johnson said he encouraged her to apply for the lieutenant's job.

"This was a difficult decision for her as her passion is with empowering victims and helping them transition to survivors through the diligent pursuit of justice," Johnson said.

"But the transition into a leadership role with the Sheriff's Office was a smooth one owing to her communications skills and sound tactics."

Two years later, she was promoted to operations captain, one of two captains in the department.

She was instrumental in initiating the Crisis Intervention Program, which trains sheriff's personnel to recognize signs of mental illness and to act accordingly.

"It helps them to identify people who don't always need to go to jail. It might be PTSD, autism, dementia," she said. "It also helps toward officer wellness."

Plans are to expand that training to local emergency responders and others, she said.

Besides her work with the Sheriff's Office, Knowles teaches at the police recruit academy at Waukesha County Technical College. She also coaches her daughter's seventh grade basketball team. She has three children.

Knowles said she feels a sense of accomplishment becoming undersheriff, succeeding Jeff Taylor, and being the first woman to attain the position.

But it's not the most important thing.

"Women are a minority in this profession and I worked hard to get where I am, but there are a lot of people who helped me," she said.

Those mentors include Johnson and her father-in-law, retired Chief Deputy Jim Knowles. The chief deputy position was renamed undersheriff after he left.

"Chief Deputy Knowles has always had great advice for me. Sheriff Johnson has always been a great mentor to me.

"I love who I work with, the people around me. From jail to patrol to detective — but going from investigation into administration, that was difficult for me."

But one bonus of her job as an administrator is community relations, she said.

"I get to meet so many great people because of all the great programs we have. I love coming to work every day," she said.

Pewaukee, March 21, 2019

Small Business Center fuels entrepreneurs' dreams



Starting and growing a business is about combining courage and dreams with the right knowledge. That's why WCTC's Small Business Center is dedicated to providing affordable courses, free one-on-one counseling, networking events and more for current and aspiring small business owners.

Jayne Laste, owner of Jayne Laste Design Solutions, designs print products for a wide

variety of clients on a national scale. "At a career crossroads five years ago, I knew I had the talent and basic know-how to provide competitive value and services," says Laste, "but as I started my business in 2013, I knew I needed guidance and a push in the right direction." Laste began her journey with WCTC's Small Business Certificate and has since continued working through several for-credit marketing courses and certificates.

"The staff has been amazing," says Laste. "They've been in the field themselves and know firsthand the challenges small business owners face. They answer real-world questions with real-world answers."

The Small Business Center works with businesses of all shapes and sizes, but Laste has found plenty of insight specific to her goals. "I have realized that marketing and graphic design are interwoven skill sets for businesses," says Laste. "I understand the connection in which good design works with marketing efforts to further a business's greater goal."

The Small Business Center is a resource for anyone, regardless of experience level or area of expertise. For **Harrison Keyes**, the road to owning a small business has been long and winding. "I have had an interest in motor vehicles ever since I rode in my first go-kart," says Keyes. His journey into small business ownership started back in 2000, when he got a job at Jerry's Automotive. He moved his way up from sweeping the floors

to head technician, dreaming along the way of eventually owning his own business.

Keyes graduated from WCTC's ACDelco TCEP program (now Automotive Technology - GM ASEP). "This two-year associate degree program helped me with all of the basic skills and knowledge I would need to succeed in the auto repair industry," says Keyes. He has been an active member on the program's advisory board ever since.

After pursuing his goal of business ownership for some time, Keyes grew frustrated trying to sort through the overwhelming amount of information on his own. He decided to reach out to his alma mater and was connected immediately with the Small Business Center. "I knew I was on the right track with the Small Business Certificate program," he said.

Beginning the program in January of 2018, Keyes graduated on May 10 and bought a business on May 29. "The teachers were very knowledgeable and capable of adapting every class to meet the needs of each individual student, which is pretty impressive when you think about all the possible industries the students could be in," says Keyes. "I could not have done that without their help."

The individuals served by WCTC's Small Business Center are a constant source of inspiration. Through thoughtfully designed curriculum, individualized attention, scholarship opportunities and more, the Small Business Center is able to meet its clients wherever they are on their journey and help them achieve their unique goals.

[From WCTC IMPACT, Spring 2019 edition < http://www.wctc.edu/_site-pdfs/wctc-impact-spring-2019.pdf >](http://www.wctc.edu/_site-pdfs/wctc-impact-spring-2019.pdf)

Coming to a Community Near You: NFPA's FAMTEN Program Builds a Pathway for Students into Fluid Power Careers

January 30, 2019 — The National Fluid Power Association's Fluid Power and Applied Mechatronics Training and Employment Network (FAMTEN) is a new fluid power workforce development pathway that creates strong connections between local technical colleges, industry partners, and high school teachers. NFPA's first FAMTEN Hub School, Waukesha County Technical College (WCTC) in Waukesha, Wisconsin, was chosen in 2018, and several area high schools have already begun implementing new fluid power curriculum with the help of industry mentors.

The program, which will expand to Triton College in River Grove, Illinois in 2019, is designed to cover multiple education levels within the chosen community:

1. A community-wide Fluid Power Action Challenge event is the first step in the pathway. The Action Challenge serves as an introduction to fluid power and is a competition that challenges middle school students to solve an engineering problem using fluid power. In Waukesha, WCTC and Price Engineering host an Action Challenge event every year at WCTC.
2. The second step in the pathway includes equipping local high schools with fluid power training equipment, which happened at eight high schools in Waukesha county in 2018. The high school teachers from these schools were trained over the summer on how to teach students about fluid power with the new equipment thanks to the support of NFPA members, Festo and Amatrol. Two of these high schools have already started using the new training platforms in their classes.
3. Third is the Hub School, a local technical school with a validated fluid power curriculum. WCTC already has an outstanding fluid power program, and several fluid power companies serve on their advisory board.

Extremely important to all steps in the pathway is the local network of industry partners connecting with teachers and students. FAMTEN would not be successful without industry mentors getting students interested, helping them learn the basics, and eventually recruiting them when they graduate.

"If we want to attract more of the best and brightest minds to the fluid power industry, we need to build awareness with students at an early age," said Bill Haley, a Business Development Analyst at FORCE America. "It's been really rewarding being involved with FAMTEN and working with the exceptional students and teachers in our local school districts. Interacting with them while they use the new fluid power training equipment (provided by FAMTEN), I've been able to tie what they've learned to practical applications like factory automation or an excavator. I'm confident that students in FAMTEN schools will be much more likely to consider careers in fluid power."

Many thanks to NFPA members FORCE America, HUSCO, Poclain, Price Engineering, and SunSource for visiting local classrooms, talking to students and teachers about fluid power careers, and establishing a direct connection to their future workforce in Waukesha.

NFPA plans to launch this program in communities around the U.S. where there is a high concentration of fluid power companies. For more information about FAMTEN, please contact Lynn Beyer at lbeyer@nfpa.com.

About the NFPA

NFPA is a trade association focused on strengthening the hydraulics and pneumatics industry. With more than 340 fluid power manufacturers, distributors and suppliers in its membership, NFPA works to advance fluid power education, technology and the industry as a whole.

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Machine helps remove food waste

January 28, 2019

La Crosse (WXOW) – Food waste left in landfills is said to contribute to 34% of all methane gas emissions into the atmosphere. Methane is about 23 times more potent of a greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide.

Industrial kitchens can be big contributors to that food waste. Western Technical College uses a unique machine to reduce thousands of pounds from heading to the landfill.

“We’re really reducing our waste by about 90%,” Western Tech Chef Ben Salaski said.

Western’s industrial kitchen makes food for thousands of students throughout the year. A piece of equipment called an EcoVim Food Waste Dehydrator helps reduce byproduct.

“The goal is zero waste,” Salaski said. “I can’t control if someone is going to eat all their cheeseburger [or] throw it in the garbage, but I can control what my staff does with what was previously going into the garbage.”

Unused trimmings and other waste from food preparation goes into the machine. It heats and removes the moisture from the waste. What is left is ground up, and out comes compostable material, drastically reduced in size.

Just in the last month, Western has reduced the amount of food heading to the landfill by 1,200 pounds.

“Everyone’s heard of farm to table food, well this is sort of the back side of that,” Salaski said.

Western incorporates the use of the food waste dehydrator with culinary and sustainability education, including it in their sustainable food communities course.

“I was shocked how much food waste was going into landfills,” culinary student Donald Culver said. “Unfortunately, restaurants are one of the main contributors to all the food waste that’s going in landfills.”

The reduced waste goes toward other uses like landscaping or composting instead of the trash.

“This is just a great example and a really easy example, because we already know there’s nutrients, there’s things that are in the food waste that we’re throwing out that are perfectly suitable to grow more food,” Western’s Sustainability Coordinator Casey Meehan said.

Meehan said the machine cost roughly \$20,000, funded partly through the student government's reserve funding. Much of that cost was recovered quickly according to Meehan, because they do not pay as much to dispose of trash due to the reductions they see.

Robotics competition brings out the best

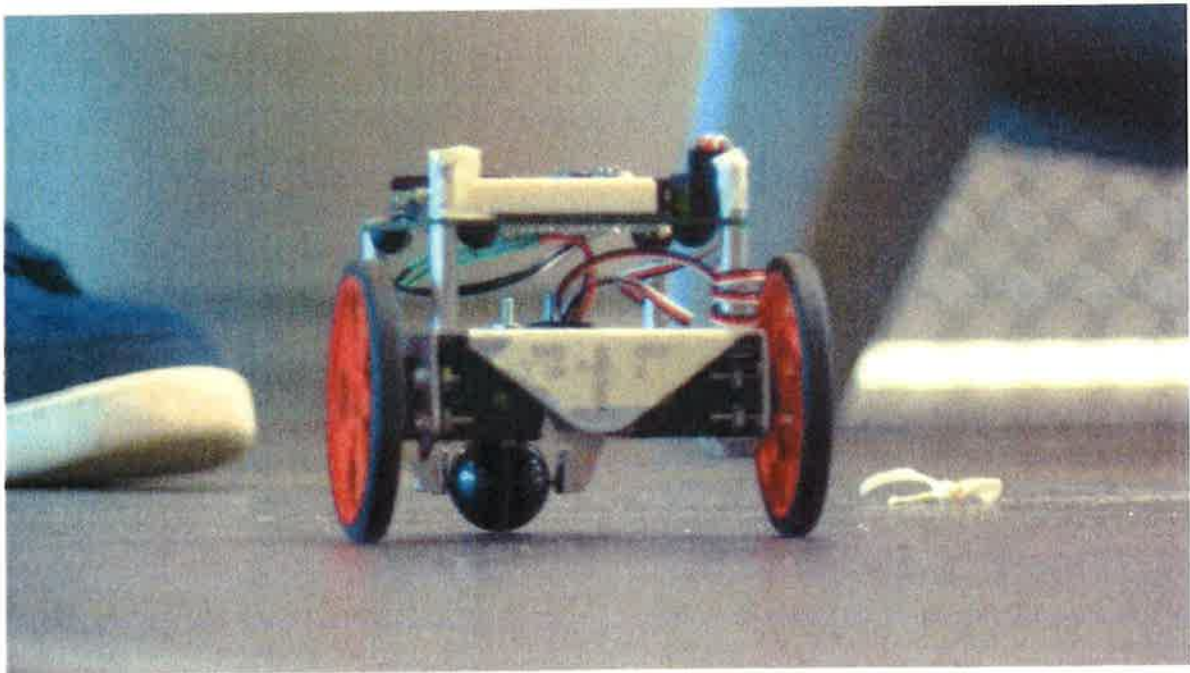
March 22 2019

LA CROSSE, Wis. (WXOW) – A robotics competition was held at Western Technical College on Friday afternoon.

More than 50 students from local schools including Sparta, G-E-T, Black River Falls, Mel-Min, Logan and La Farge competed against one another. The robots, called boe-bots, had to make it through several obstacle courses. The bots use micro controllers and sensors to move.

The students learn how to problem solve during these competitions, and they must learn how to work together. Tyler Ludeking says, “I think it’s really beneficial for them because they are enjoying this, this is a fun task, and at the same time they’re learning. It’s one of those deals where they might not even know they’re learning but they are expanding what they know about the boe-bots, the robots and the career fields after that.”

Some of the kids at the event said that they have plans to work in computer sciences and engineering in the future. Soon the Seven Rivers Regional Robotics Competition will return to La Crosse on April 4-6th.

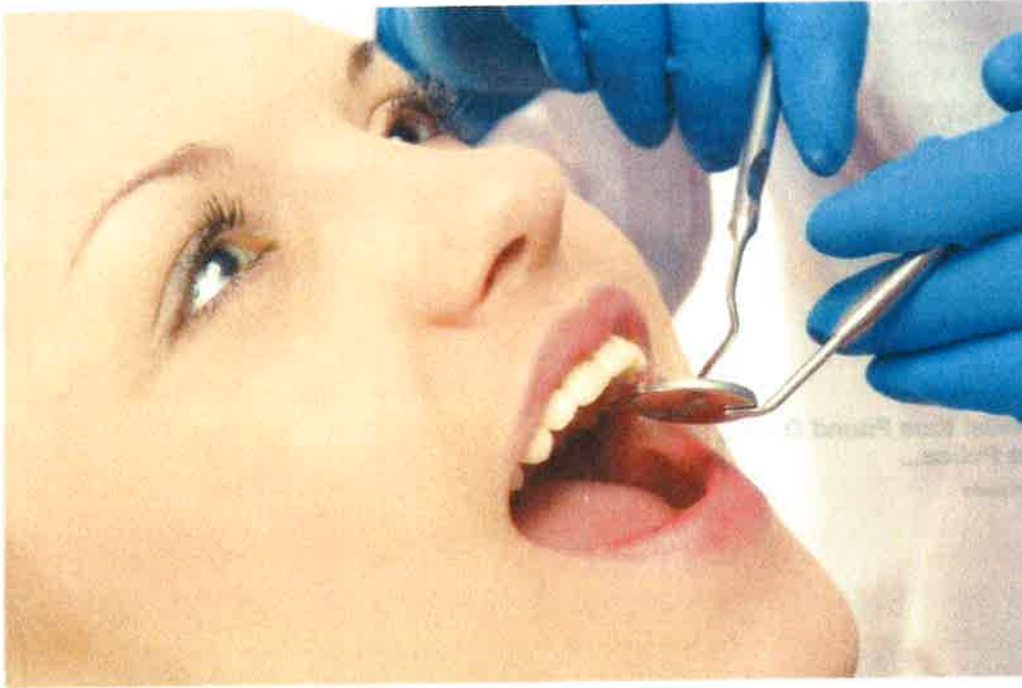




https://www.apg-wi.com/spooner_advocate/free/free-dental-services-available-for-children-at-witc/article_0917aa0c-1dee-11e9-9c83-a3c80e670527.html

Free dental services available for children at WITC

Jan 22, 2019



RICE LAKE– Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College–Rice Lake's dental assistant students, instructors, and area professionals will provide free dental services to children on February 1 through the Give Kids a Smile program.

The annual event, organized by the American Dental Association, will be held at WITC–Rice Lake from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Services will include screenings, x-rays, fillings, extractions, and education. Appointments can be made by calling 715.234.7082, extension 5409. Each child will be given a 20- to 40-minute appointment, depending on age and dental care needs.



The event will fit in as many children as possible, so appointments should be made as soon as possible.

"Our students will experience the importance of volunteering in our community," said dental assistant instructor Jennifer Heutmaker-Holden. "But more importantly, our goal is to provide dental care to children who may otherwise go without."

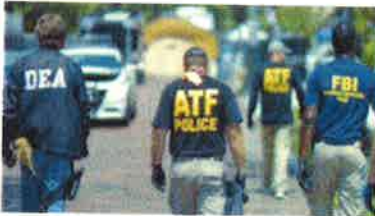
The American Dental Association began Give Kids a Smile in 2003, and it has grown to 1,500 local events held all over the United States, benefiting 450,000 children through the efforts of 40,000 or more volunteers.

Dental professionals who wish to donate time that day should contact Jennifer.Holden@witc.edu.

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By Upbeat News

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https://www.apg-wi.com/plans-to-turn-roundhouse-into-community-center-continuing/article_a070ec9c-a5a9-5ffb-8271-016d8036a617.html

Plans to turn Roundhouse into community center continuing

BY SHAUN ANDERSON Mar 13, 2019

SPOONER– Plans for the Railroad Park and turning the Roundhouse into a community center are progressing.

Aldersperson and Railroad Park Committee liaison Terri Reiter gave an update of the Railroad Park during the March 5 Spooner City Council meeting. Reiter, who also serves as chairperson of the Railroad Park Committee as well as Friends Of Railroad Park (FORRP), a non-profit entity which raises and handles the funding for the park, informed that the Trego Lions have pledged \$5,000 for construction of a pavilion with a roof and concrete floor. She said that that FORRP has two years to raise the rest of the money for the pledge to remain live.

Reiter said that FORRP also has been named a half-beneficiary of this year's annual Spooner Area Chamber of Commerce Food and Wine Tasting Benefit which will be held on Thursday, April 25, at the Spooner Civic Center.



Reiter also informed that Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College (WITC) architectural design students will be designing architectural plans for the (interior) remodeling of the Spooner Roundhouse into a community center. She said that students will be at the roundhouse on April 9 taking dimensions and that the designs from the three groups (two per group) of fourth-semester students will be revealed on May 2 at 10 a.m. at

WITC.

In a later interview Reiter further explained that the student designs are free to the city and that students look for community projects such as this to design plans for since it is a requirement for their degree.

She said that the project was accepted in October and that the potential students were interviewed earlier this winter and were then given ideas on what the committee envisions for the new community center.

Reiter said that the building obviously will need windows and doors, and then a large interior space possibly with several floors is desired along with a kitchenette to allow food to be catered in. She said that few permanent walls are planned and that the large interior space will be divided mostly with portable partitions to accommodate a wide range of uses.

She said a small museum is also in the plan, and with a possibility of leaving a set of tracks inside and after getting the turntable working, parking a real train car or engine inside is being imagined.

Reiter said that the committee anticipates the center to host a variety of events such as banquets, weddings, and dances or even provide spaces where an audience can observe artists creating projects.

She said that there has already been an interest shown by some artists who have been asking when the center would be available. An indoor farmer's market is also another possibility.

Reiter said that the city of Spooner already paid to fix the roof and remediate the surrounding soil back into good health and therefore will not be paying any more toward the project.

It is now up to FORRP to raise and receive the funds, and Reiter indicated that the project will progress toward completion as funding permits although within two years is hoped for.

As for now, Reiter said that Mike Macone from The Potter's Shed is designing benches for the park and will give a presentation to the committee at 3:30 p.m. on March 26.

As for this summer, Reiter expects the park to have tables and benches and handicap accessible portable restrooms from June through September.

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