



MVCC Orientation Ambassador Program

Academically successful student volunteers are needed for the College's new Orientation Ambassadors Program.

Ambassadors will help new students through the process of orientation and scheduling during summer orientation, July 18-22 in Utica, and July 25 in Rome. They will welcome and guide new students and their families when they arrive for their orientation session. They will also assist academic departments and faculty advisors guide new students during the process of Web scheduling in the computer labs. This may include helping students interpret their plan of study, search for courses in the course schedule, work out a weekly class schedule, and navigate SIRS.

For many students, beginning college can be intimidating and involve many unknowns and confusion. Peer to peer interactions can minimize anxiety and stress, and help new students get off on the right foot for a successful college experience.

Ambassadors should have a GPA of 3.0. They may be members of Phi Theta Kappa, work as peer tutors, or be recommended by their academic department or student activity advisor. Ambassadors should demonstrate strong people and leadership skills, and possess a warm and friendly manner, sincerity, patience, flexibility, enthusiasm, dependability, and maturity of judgment.

Ambassadors are expected to attend training on Saturday, May 14th, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. They will be asked to serve at least two four-hour shifts at Orientation, up to a maximum of 12 shifts.

continued on page 2



Children's Cuisine Day

On April 28th, approximately 75 students and staff of the Kiddie Campus served faculty, staff and students a variety of "children's cuisine"; dirt cups, cracker stacks and cupcakes. The children made the food with help from members of the Sodexo staff.

The fund raising event helped Sodexo raised \$250 dollars, which will be given to the summer breakfast program through Catholic Charities.

The response was so positive that Sodexo and Kiddie Campus may make this a yearly event.

A special thank you to Sam Russo who made a generous donation that went towards the purchase of tickets for the student parents of the center.



The Learning Center: Helping Students Become Effective Learners

Two years ago, a student walked into the Learning Center, frustrated, discouraged and stressed out. "I can't do college," he told Donna Sawyer White, Coordinator of Tutoring Services.

"Sure you can," she and others in the Learning Center told him. "Let's find out what we need to do to make you successful, how we can help you." That help not only included tutoring but a study plan, and occasional pep talks. Today that student is succeeding in class, has developed strong communication skills, and is a symbol of what the Learning Center can do for every student who seeks its services.

continued on page 2

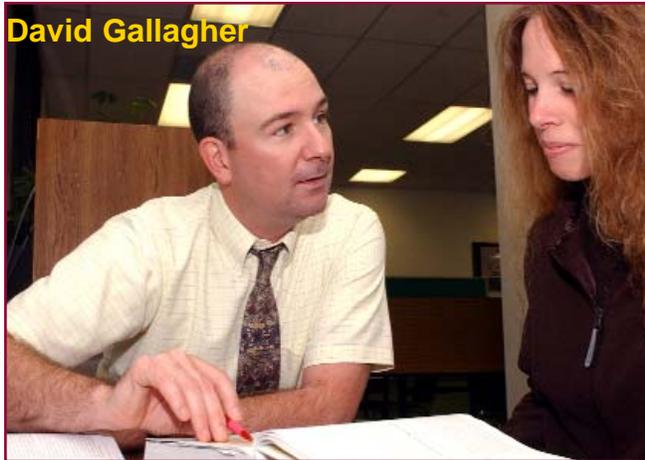
The Learning Center, cont.

A Growing Need for Service

An increasing number of students are currently seeking its services, according to Sawyer White. In the Fall 2003 semester, the Learning Center provided 6,733 hours of tutoring. A year later, during the Fall 2004 semester, the total climbed to 9,908, which represents 1,174 individual students, and included specialized tutoring for student-athletes.

Professional and Peer Tutors

Both professional and peer tutors work in the Learning Center, and the vast majority are part-time employees. All undergo specialized training in topics that include learning styles, confidentiality, pedagogical issues, study skills and more. Peer tutors must be recommended by two faculty members, one in the specific



content area. They must also have received a grade of A or B in the course for which they wish to tutor, and must have an overall 3.00 grade point average. Many become tutors at the suggestion of individual faculty members, and are often members of Phi Theta Kappa or curriculum-related student clubs. They are paid, and are able to include their tutoring experience both on their resume, and the Student Development Record. Professional tutors are required to have a Bachelor's degree in the subject area, and must have successful teaching experience. (A list of both professional tutors accompanies this article.)

A Student-Centered Supplement to Instruction - Not a Replacement

Sawyer White emphasizes a couple key points when talking about the Learning Center. The first is that it is student-centered. "The students tell us what they need, and we try to provide it," she says. "An example is the Brown Bag Lunch Series, developed because students said they wanted more information on topics like time and stress management and study skills."

"The second point," she adds, "is that we do not attempt to replace classroom instruction. We try to supplement what happens in classrooms and labs so those experiences, directed by members of the faculty, will benefit students even more. Our role is to help students acquire the learning skills they need to succeed, not to re-teach the content of their courses. We provide supplemental instruction, not primary instruction."

The Learning Center has a good relationship with faculty and instructional departments. Sawyer White meets regularly with department heads, and the tutoring schedule is widely distributed among full-time and adjunct faculty members. Proctoring services have recently been expanded, making it possible for students who have excused absences to take exams they missed. The Learning Center also works closely with the Counseling Center, since students who are having difficulty in one area may find it impacting their lives in other ways as well. Together, this coalition has a synergetic positive effect on a student's chances for success at the College, and in life.

Some students believe that a referral to the Learning Center is an indication that they may not be able to handle college-level work. However, the

continued on page 3

MVCC, Boy Scouts Collaborate on Summer "Ed-Venturing" Program

Boys and girls ages 14-20 will have an opportunity to experience a challenging Adirondack adventure this summer in a program called "Ed-Venturing," coordinated jointly by MVCC and the Boy Scouts of America.

Participants may choose between three-day and five-day adventures that include mountain biking, hiking in the Adirondack high peaks, canoeing, sailing, kayaking, canoeing, snorkeling, swimming, archery, wilderness survival, and orienteering. Activities take place in the Adirondack Mountains, on White Lake and Russell Island.

Benefits for participants may include greater self confidence, self-reliance and skills in decision-making and critical thinking as well as a summer adventure.

The fee is \$250 for individuals, for the three-day version of the program, or \$350 for the five-day version. Fee covers all meals and lodging.

Enrollees must provide evidence of a recent physical exam and insurance coverage. Parent or guardian approval is required for participants under 18 years of age. For additional information, or to enroll call Therese Vella X5300.

Madden Correction

Information published last week incorrectly indicated that Eugene Madden was initially appointed to the MVCC Board of Trustees by Governor Mario Cuomo. It should have indicated that he was initially appointed by Governor Hugh Carey and was reappointed by Governor Cuomo.

The Learning Center, cont.

reality is quite the opposite, says Sawyer White. "Students who realize that they may need extra help with a subject almost always benefit academically from our services. We understand students' needs, especially those of returning adult students who have to cope with family or job pressures as well as anxiety about returning to the academic setting after a significant absence." The Learning Center hosts an open study/writing lab, with 19 personal computers that students use to work on papers and projects. The Center provides specific informational handouts on a number of topics, which are also available for use by members of the faculty. The Center includes a writing lab and a math lab, with general hours of 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday, staying open until 4:00 p.m. on Fridays, when classes are in session. On the Utica, the Center is located in Room 151 of the Academic Building. In Rome, tutoring takes place in the Library.

What the Future May Hold

The Center is working to become a certified member of the College Reading & Learning Association. Donna Sawyer White says "We'd also like to do more with learning communities and other innovative approaches to helping students succeed." She adds that she would like the Center to serve even more students.



Desired Outcomes: More Student Success & A "Learning Energy"

How effective are services of the Learning Center? According to Sawyer White, students who use its services frequently improve their course performance by a full letter grade. She emphasizes that this takes place largely because students begin to understand what they need to do, and begin working harder and spending extra time on their studies. "We simply help students to become competent self-directed learners. We work to create a 'learning energy,' an excitement about learning."

Who's Who in the Learning Center

Professional Tutors - Utica Campus
Pat Cummings - Accounting 1 & 2, Business Law, Economics, Introduction to Personal Computers
Heather Ramsdale - Engineering Technologies & The Trades
Mary Jo Ferrare - English/Writing/Study Skills
David Gallagher - English/Writing/Social Sciences/Spanish
Maegen Lohnes - English/Writing/Study Skills
Paul Nandzik - English/Writing/Math 050
Kristen Raab - English/Writing
Susan McCulley - ESL/English/Writing
Clayton Callahan - French/Art History
Marlene Snyder - Life Sciences (A&P 1 & 2, Biology, Microbiology, Human Life Science), Chemistry
David Kolb - Mathematics Lab
Diane Langone - Medical Terminology
Julie Wells-Tsiatsos - Dosage Calculation (NU102-103)

Orientation Ambassador, cont.

Orientation 2005 shifts are July 18-22 (M-F) 8:30-12:30 and 12:00-4:00 in Utica, and July 25 (M) 8:30-12:30 and 12:00-4:00.

Orientation Ambassadors are volunteers and can consider the training and other hours volunteered a community service to the College. Every Ambassador will receive a t-shirt to be worn when volunteering. Ambassadors will also receive a certificate of service upon completion, noting the number of hours volunteered. Ambassadors will receive free breakfast and/or lunch during their volunteer shifts.

It is hoped that the Orientation Ambassador program will continue after July, and that trained volunteers who wish to continue their service may be called upon to speak to new students in ED100 College Seminar courses, give tours for groups and individuals, and assist during walk-in Web scheduling in August and January.

If you know of students who would be good Orientation Ambassadors, please encourage them to contact Donna Sawyer White in the Learning Center, AB151, or Jennifer DeWeerth extension 5818, PH104E, Advisement/ Student Service Center, this week.

continued on page 4

Learning Center, cont.

Denise Hughes - Nursing
Basil Tehan - Physics
Gerald Vallese - Respiratory Care
Todd Walker - Technical Electricity

Professional Tutors - Rome Campus
Pat Cummings - Accounting 1 & 2, Business
Susan McCulley - English/Writing/ESL/Study Skills
David Gallagher - English/Writing/Social Sciences
Pat Harris - Mathematics
Julie Wells-Tsiatsos - Dosage Calculation (NU102-103)
Tara Cook - Psychology/Art Appreciation

In addition to the professional tutors, there are approximately 19 student peer tutors on the Utica Campus, four student peer tutors at the Rome Campus. There are also approximately 12 student-led supplemental instruction and study groups, on the Utica Campus.

MVCC Announces New Scholarship Program - "MV College Connection" - For High School Juniors & Seniors in Oneida & Madison Counties

School district superintendents and other public and parochial officials in Oneida and Madison Counties gathered at the Utica Campus on April 25th to learn details of a new scholarship program for high school juniors and seniors.

President Michael Schafer announced a new program called "MV College Connection" (MVCC). The program features scholarships for selected 11th and 12th grade high school students in the two-county area, for part-time study at MVCC prior to high school graduation.

The program is an outgrowth of the MVCC-Proctor High School (Utica) Millennium Project as well as the dual high school-college credit course program that MVCC currently operates with 16 area school districts. The program is the first of its type, reflecting a recent change in the State University of New York community college code that allows colleges to establish scholarships for targeted groups of students.

A specific number of scholarship-supported course credit hours will be allocated to each participating school district based on anticipated fall 2005 enrollment in grades 11 and 12, with enrollment information provided by area BOCES.

The total number of credit hours covered by the scholarship program for 2005-2006 will be 1,173. At MVCC's current part-time tuition rate of \$115 per credit hour, the program has a value of \$134,895.

Under the "MV College Connection" plan, each school district will select students for participation, and will determine the number of credit hours to be used by each participating student from within its district allocation. "MV College Connection" will be a pilot program during the 2005-2006 academic year, and will be evaluated for possible continuation based on participation and available funding. Participating students will be required to take the MVCC placement test as part of a formal registration and orientation process. Students will be responsible for providing their own transportation and for purchasing textbooks and related materials.

Among the school districts where MV College Connection Scholarships will be offered: Adirondack, Camden, Canastota, Clinton, Hamilton, Holland Patent, Madison, Morrisville, New Hartford, New York Mills, Notre Dame, Oneida, Oriskany, Remsen, Rome (Free Academy), Rome Catholic, Sauquoit, Stockbridge, Utica, Vernon-Verona-Sherrill, Waterville and Whitesboro.

Upcoming Events

Monday, 5/9

~ MVCC/Utica College Concert Bands Performance, 7:00pm, IT Theater.

Tuesday, 5/10

~ Placement Testing, 6:00pm-9:00pm, PCA10, Rome Campus

Wednesday, 5/11

~Hospitality Programs Theme Dinner, "Beginnings and Endings: Hors d'Oeuvres through Desserts," \$18pp, 6:00pm, Hospitality Dining Room, Rome Campus. For reserva-

tions, call X7702, Monday-Friday, 9:00am-3:00pm.

~ Art Farm, 7:00pm, IT Theater.

Saturday, 5/14

~Mychal Harris Memorial Scholarship Dinner and Fashion Show, 4:00pm, IT Theater.

Wednesday, 5/18

~ASSET Testing, 6:00pm-9:00pm, PCA10, Rome Campus.

Friday, 5/20

~Mohawk Valley Sports Medicine Symposium, 7:30am, Utica Campus.

Saturday, 5/21

~Oneida County Traffic Safety Defensive Driving Program, 9:00am-4:00pm, PC211, Rome Campus.

~ Placement Testing for Students with Disabilities, 9:00am, PC252, Rome Campus.

~ Oneida County Court Judges Town and Justice Training, 8:00am-5:00pm, PCA10, Rome Campus.