

Greater Altoona CTC

Where Careers Come Alive!

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Career & Technical Education Week

February is designated as National Career & Technical Education Month. The week of February 6-10 will be celebrated as Career & Technical Education Week. A recognition breakfast is planned on **Thursday, February 9, 2012**, to name the "Employee of the Year" and the "Educator of the Year." Honorees are selected by committee from the nominations submitted by their colleagues and peers. A Student of the Year will be selected later from nominations submitted by teachers, counselors, teacher aides/assistants.

Guidance Activities

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Ninth Grade Assemblies and Visits

From November 1-9, Guidance personnel conducted assemblies at eight sending schools to provide students with 2012-2013 enrollment information. From November 14-18, the GACTC hosted 628 ninth grade students as listed below (numbers are approximate):

Altoona Area	170	Glendale	63
Bellwood-Antis	37	Hollidaysburg Area	116
Bishop Guilfoyle	2	Tyrone Area	111
Central	40	Williamsburg	28
Claysburg-Kimmel	61		

On December 5, counselors conducted a ninth grade assembly at BGHS, and these students visited GACTC on December 14.

Tyrone Area Student Tours

Tyrone tenth and eleventh grade students toured the Carpentry, Culinary Arts, Health Occupations, and Precision Machining programs on Tuesday, November 29, prior to the Tyrone School Board's decision to maintain Carpentry and Health Occupations programs.

Financial Aid Night

Financial Aid Night was held on Wednesday, December 14, for interested parents of graduating seniors. Dr. David Pearlman, Director of Financial Aid at Penn State Altoona, presented PHEAA information to approximately 30 people.

2012-13 Application Process

The application process for the 2012-2013 school year is underway. The deadline for applications is February 2. Guidance counselors are meeting with current students, including ninth graders, to schedule next year's classes.

Scholarships

The Guidance Department is disseminating scholarship information to senior students as it becomes available, including the Congress-Bundestag Vocational Youth Exchange Scholarship. Since 2008, our school has had three students spend an outstanding year in Germany under this program's sponsorship.

Cooperative Education

At this time, eight seniors are placed in Cooperative Education. These numbers reflect two factors: the first is more stringent Co-op qualifying criteria as a result of PSSA and NOCTI requirements; the second is, of course, the slow pace of a recovering economy.



Middle States Assn. of
Colleges & Secondary Schools



Council on Occupational Education

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Report from Adult & Continuing Education

Continuing Education Notes . . .

The Post-9/11 GI-Bill

Beginning October 1, 2011, postsecondary CTCs became eligible to approve students for Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits. The Post-9/11 GI Bill provides financial support for education and housing to individuals with at least 90 days of aggregate service on or after September 11, 2001, or individuals discharged with a service-connected disability after 30 days. Students must also have received an honorable discharge to be eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

The Post-9/11 GI Bill became effective August 1, 2009. Approved training under the Post-9/11 GI Bill includes all of the vocational/technical training programs offered for adults at the GACTC.

The Post 9-11 GI Bill will pay eligible individuals:

- Full **tuition & fees** directly to the school for all public school in-state students. For those attending private or foreign schools tuition & fees are capped at \$17,500 per academic year.
- A **monthly housing allowance (MHA)** based on the Basic Allowance for Housing for an E-5 with dependents at the location of the school. Monthly housing allowance for students attending the GACTC is approximately \$1,100.
- An **annual books & supplies stipend of \$1,000** paid proportionately based on enrollment.

Enrollment Applications for FALL 2012

To date, the Continuing Education Department has received 26 applications for the fall 2012 semester. These applications are primarily for the EFDA Certificate to Associate Degree, Postsecondary Welding, and Medical Assistant/Medical Office Specialist programs. At this time last year, 18 applications were on hand. With the increase in enrollment activities by the Recruitment/Retention Specialist, Continuing Education is poised to have what looks to be an excellent enrollment year for 2012-13.



FCI Loretto Contracts

All three contracts (Microsoft Office Specialist, Automotive Service Excellence, and Retail Sales/Entrepreneurship) have been signed for a five-year period. Instruction in the Microsoft Office Specialist program will begin again on February 6. Instruction for the Retail Sales/Entrepreneurship program will begin on February 13. The Automotive Service Excellence program will begin in early June.

Norfolk Southern—Juniata Division Meeting

Lanny Ross, Marty Marasco, Leanne Sidney, and Greg McConnell met with Donald Faulkner, Norfolk Southern Juniata General Superintendent, on Thursday, January 12. The focus of the meeting was to discuss the future of Norfolk Southern and how the GACTC can help with their continued growth and success. Mr. Faulkner certainly was open to discussing how the GACTC can help meet the training needs of his employees. Norfolk Southern recently hired 80 new employees, bringing the total of employees hired in the past three years to 400. This growth is good news for our community, the GACTC, and our students. The meeting ended with a tour of the impressive and booming facility. The next step is for Mr. Faulkner to gather a few key individuals at Norfolk Southern and visit the GACTC to see our facility and discuss more specifics in terms of training needs.



Enrollment/Retention

Enrollment of full-time adult-only students stands at 88. Retention has improved over last year at this time: 5 students dropped this year compared to 11 who dropped by this time last year.

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Report from Adult & Continuing Education

Continuing Education Notes (continued) . . .

Part-Time Evening Spring 2012 Classes

The following are classes that are scheduled to operate during the Spring 2012 semester.

Commercial Electricity	Super Sunday—2 sections
Residential Electricity	Valentine's Dinner
Electricity for Plumbers (HVAC)	Mexican—2 sections
Machine—Advanced (for Small Tubes)	Candy
Intro Excel	Asian Persuasion—2 sections
Intro Word	Fresh Herbs—2 sections
Anatomy & Physiology	Breakfast Pastries
Specialty Sandwiches—2 sections	Chilled Soups
Pies—2 sections	

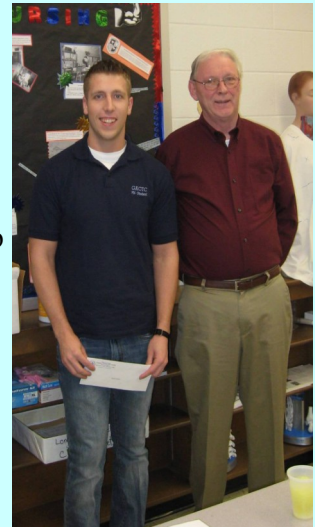
Practical Nursing Notes . . .

GACTC Practical Nursing Students Receive Scholarships



Jennifer O'Neill Yohn (seated) receives \$1,000 scholarship from the Hollidaysburg Women's Auxiliary

Two GACTC Practical Nursing students began the new year with some exciting news. Both Jennifer O'Neil Yohn and Dalton Growden recently received notification that they were being awarded scholarships to help with their educational endeavors. Jennifer was chosen by the Hollidaysburg Women's Auxiliary to receive \$1,000 for an essay that she wrote addressing why she chose the nursing profession. Dalton received the Alice E. Garman \$500 award for his exemplary care of patients with Alzheimer's disease. Mr. Ken Garman funds this annual award on behalf of his late wife who was a graduate of the LPN program in 1966.



Dalton Growden and Ken Garman (L-R)

Practical Nursing Student Update

The program once again is conducting a bridge course for transfer students from Mount Aloysius College. Students are provisionally accepted and will be utilizing the advanced placement process to gain full acceptance into the program in Level III, which begins at the end of February.

With the addition of transfer and returning students, 64 full-time and 20 part-time students are enrolled in the program. Students in the full-time day program, comprised of 54 women and 10 men, have recently completed mid-semester exams and are now studying pediatrics and obstetrics. The 20 part-time female students have just completed pediatrics and obstetrics and are beginning their rotation at HealthSouth, Altoona.

Practical Nursing's retention rate is almost 91% compared to 70% last year.

Student Activities

All students were very busy participating in volunteer activities over the holidays. They went caroling at Garvey Manor and the Presbyterian Home. They also held a Christmas auction which raised over \$300 for needy families. The students continue to conduct fundraising events for the GACTC Relay for Life team.

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Report from Adult & Continuing Education

Practical Nursing Notes (Continued) . . .

Blood Drive

The program's second blood drive will be held, Friday, February 3, 2012, from 8 a.m. to 2. p.m., with a goal of 65 units. Individuals who donated at the last drive in December will have surpassed the 56 day requirement and will be eligible to participate. Participants should remember to eat well and drink plenty of fluids the days prior to donating. This blood drive occurs during a critical shortage of the blood supply in our region. Your donation can save as many as three lives.

Employment

The program continues to survey the graduates of the August 2011 class. The following is a list of facilities that have hired our graduates:

Altoona Regional Hospital	Homewood
Altoona Regional Health System Partnering for Health Services	J.C. Blair Hospital
Altoona Center for Nursing Care	Morrison's Cove Home
Allegheny Lutheran Home	Penn Knoll Village
Blair Medical	Private Care Resources
Cambria Care Center	Pyramid Health Care
Epworth Manor	Valley View
Garvey Manor and Our Lady of the Alleghenies	The Veteran's Home
HealthSouth of Altoona	Various doctor offices
Home Nursing Agency	

ISO 9001:2008 Management Review



ISO Management Quality Team members participated in the required annual ISO Management Review.

The GACTC Quality Management Team (QMT) met in a Management Review session on January 9-10, 2012. As required by the ISO 9001 standards, the QMT must meet in a Management Review session annually to review the school's Quality Management System. The inputs to Management Review include information on: results of audits, customer feedback, process performance, status of preventive and corrective actions, follow-up actions from previous management reviews, changes that could affect the quality management system and recommendations for improvement. Management Review also serves as a platform for the exchange of new ideas, with open discussion with QMT representatives.

ISO 9001:2008 External Audit

An ISO 9001:2008 Renewal/Surveillance audit was conducted on January 19-20, 2012, by SRI Quality System Registrar. The required two-day audit event is to ensure that the GACTC is continuing to maintain a documented and effective Quality Management System in conformance with the ISO Quality Management System requirements. Processes assessed will include Curriculum Delivery, Curriculum Design, Fiscal Services, and Staff Development.

New Choices Career Development

During the second quarter, a 2nd New Choices session was conducted from November 14 December 9, with 13 students graduating. A third session is scheduled to operate from January 23 – February 16. A total of 18 students have graduated/completed to date during this 2011-2012 grant year.

As of this month, a total of 10 previous graduates have entered various training: one is confirm to enter Licensed Practical Nursing, two entered Expanded Function Dental Assistant, one entered Administrative Office Specialist, two entered Phlebotomy, and two entered online courses (all at GACTC), one is involved in GED preparation at the Community Education Center, and one entered training in Business Administration at South Hills.

Follow up continues with all previous graduates which entails obtaining current employment or training data, job search assistance, notification of community programs/resources, distribution of CareerLink/community calendars, and various supportive services. Since September 2011, follow up has verified that 16 previous graduates have obtained employment. The average wage of those obtaining jobs is \$12.27/hr.

In coordination of those follow up services, each year graduates are notified of local/state scholarships which they may pursue for training purposes. A New Choices graduate, Marcia Salyards, was recently selected for the WISE Women of Blair County Scholarship. Marcia was selected to receive the \$1,000 scholarship award and commented:

“Happy New Year! I just wanted to say Thank You for the lead to the Wise Women of Blair County Scholarship opportunity. I am very pleased to announce that I was one of the chosen recipients for an award towards my Registered Nursing degree. The New Choices program you represent is a blessing to all of those who are not fortunate to have the means to successfully succeed with our educational goals on our own.

Once again, thank you, and please let everyone know...The New Choices Program does work!”

As mentioned, supportive services are also ongoing. A clothing drive was conducted and graduates have utilized the professional wardrobe for job interviews or maintaining their return to work attire. This has helped alleviate the financial burdens for graduates during these difficult economic times. Tuition assistance continues as well, although amounts allocated have been limited due to New Choices budget reductions over the past few years.

Lastly, community partnerships have continued to be utilized to provide assessments and classroom presentations. These efforts will continue to reduce or eliminate program costs. Partnerships are ongoing with, of course, GACTC, Blair/Bedford County CareerLinks, Community Education Center, Altoona Library, and MidPenn Legal Services, to name a few.

Status of CODA Application

Dr. Tom Zajac, DMD, has been working with the Commission on Dental Assisting (CODA) to complete all requirements for accreditation of the Dental Assistant and Expanded Function Dental Assistant Programs at the GACTC. Dr. Zajac and Greg McConnell continue to work on the initial application which must be submitted by April 1.



Welding Updates



Director Lanny Ross, Instructor George Seese, and Welding Secondary students inspect the updated locker room.

As an update on the improvements that have been underway within the Welding Program, the students greatly appreciated the renovation in the locker room. The Welding facility is used literally day and night and sometimes on weekends. The ensuing wear and tear after forty years had taken a heavy toll on the facility including the locker room.

The downdraft welding tables which were secured through the proceeds of a state equipment grant have contributed to better air quality. New laser cutting tables are in place. Painting and floor treatments, along with lighting improvements, give the classroom, laboratory, and locker room a much cleaner, brighter appearance.

Training Program

In cooperation with the National Retail Federation (NRF), Conrad Consulting, Inc., will deliver a two-day training session at the GACTC on January 23 and 24. Selected instructors from the GACTC will receive the training, curriculum, and approval needed to deliver the NRF Sales and Service Learning Program. Instructors will also be introduced to the NRF University *wired* e-learning platform and provided with an overview of this new resource. The need for this training was precipitated by the requirements of the new Retail Sales/Customer Service Program at FCI Loretto. Three secondary teachers were also selected to attend the train-the-trainer session in an effort aimed at continuous program and curriculum improvement. The three secondary instructors that will receive the training are: Ms. Kathy DePiro, Logistics & Materials Management; Ms. Marie Potter, Retail Marketing/Entrepreneurship; and Mr. John Williamson, Mathematics. Each instructor will receive the following materials:

- A comprehensive notebook containing lesson plans, participant activities, and resources needed to conduct this 120-hour course. Included will be a review of an optional internship component.
- One set of Crisp Retailing Smarts Series Workbooks 1-8
- One set of workbook assessments 1-8 for Crisp Series
- One set of (4) EFF posters for classroom use
- Mentor Guide for internship option
- NRF Skills Standards Publication
- NRF University *wired* handbook

Equipment Grant

The school has received preliminary notification that the recently submitted equipment grant for the Dental Program scored high enough and is on the list recommended for approval. We await additional information.

Featured Artist



Dylan Hann, an eleventh grader at Claysburg-Kimmel High School and enrolled in GACTC's Visual Arts Technologies Program, was the featured young artist at the Altoona Area Public Library during the month of December, 2011. Dylan plans a career in either art therapy or book illustrations via further postsecondary education. Congratulations Dylan and good luck in your future endeavors!