

GREATER ALTOONA  
CAREER & TECHNOLOGY  
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**Where Careers  
Come Alive!**

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# GACTC Update...

ISSUE 4 — 2011 - 12 MARCH 2011

## GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT

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### 2011-12 Application Process

Applications for the 2011-12 school year were due the first week in February. To date, the Guidance Department has received 404 new applications. Guidance counselors have been processing applications, and letters are being sent to the parents of all applicants informing them of their son's/daughter's application status.

### Blair County Head Start Presentation

On February 11, Guidance Counselor, Gayle Swales, and seven GACTC students representing five class areas (Carpentry/Construction, Culinary Arts, Dental Assistant, Cosmetology, and Emergency Services) went to Longer Elementary School. Students presented information related to their programs of study to 3, 4, and 5 year olds in the Blair County Head Start Program.

### Attendance Letters

Mid-year attendance letters have been sent to the parents of students who have missed 15+ days this school year.

### Classroom Management and Behavior Modification Programs

Guidance counselors developed and presented programs on classroom management and behavior modification to GACTC teachers. During three, one-hour sessions, the goal is to improve the learning environment and, ultimately, increase students' test scores.

### Scholarships

Information and applications have been distributed for the following scholarships:

- ARC Credit Union Scholarship
- Sgt. Brandon Adams Memorial Scholarship
- Altoona Alumni Scholarship
- Blair County Bar Association Scholarship
- Dan Clark Scholarship
- Finelli Memorial Scholarship
- Scott Garlick Memorial Scholarship
- Hite Scholarship
- Reliance Bank Scholarship
- Rotary Club of Altoona Scholarship
- Aaron Stuckey Memorial Scholarship

### Cooperative Education

At the present time, thirteen seniors are placed on Cooperative Education. GACTC senior students will return to the school on April 4 and continue to attend GACTC until NOCTI testing is complete. Adult intergenerational students become eligible for Cooperative Education at the beginning of April if they meet eligibility requirements.



Middle States Assn. of  
Colleges & Secondary Schools



Council on Occupational Education



# Report from Adult & Continuing Education

## PRACTICAL NURSING NOTES

### Practical Nursing Update

The full-time Practical Nursing class of 2011 currently has 50 women and 5 men enrolled. Students are in Level II of the curriculum which includes pediatric and obstetrical rotations. There are 24 women in the Part-time class. These students are in Level II of this two-year program. They are scheduled for clinical at Altoona Regional Campus A.

Pre-entrance testing is ongoing for the Practical Nursing full-time class that begins in August 2012. At least 70 prospective students have tested or are scheduled to test and interviews are in progress. This year the Community Education Center has been conducting LPN Pre-entrance exam prep classes at no cost to participants. They have been very instrumental in assisting individuals to be successful on the exam.

### Alice E. Garman Award

Mr. Ken Garman gives this \$500 award annually in memory of his late wife, a 1966 graduate and valedictorian of the GACTC Practical Nursing Program. The qualifications for this scholarship include an 85% average in all courses, role model demeanor that of a practical nurse, and most importantly demonstrates interest in caring for clients with Alzheimer's disease. The award this year went to Jesse Haselbarth.

### Scholarship Winners

Courtney Cruthers, a current student of Practical Nursing at the Greater Altoona Career & Technology Center, was recently awarded a \$4,000 WISE Women of Blair County Scholarship. The WISE Women of Blair County awards scholarships to deserving women of Blair County who are pursuing postsecondary education and who have overcome adversity in their lives. The mission of WWBC is to empower women and eliminate racism through collaboration, service, and education. In addition, Jane McCracken-Krepich, another full-time LPN student, was awarded a \$1,000 scholarship from the Hollidaysburg Women's Club. The Hollidaysburg Women's Club provides scholarship monies to aid adult women pursuing new careers. Congratulations to both Jane and Courtney on these achievements!



L-R: Jane McCracken-Krepich, Courtney Cruthers



L-R: Joshua Penrod, Felicia Amick, Jennifer Worthy, Amanda Yon

### Practical Nursing HOSA Award Winners

Four practical nursing students were awarded medals at the HOSA State Leadership conference in Lancaster, the first week in March. Felicia Amick won a gold medal in Sports Medicine, Josh Penrod a silver in Medical Math, Amanda Yon a silver in Medical Terminology and Jennifer Worthy a bronze in Human Growth and Development.

### Careers in Technical Education

Donna Cunningham, an instructor in the Practical Nursing Program, attended the Careers in Technical Education celebration on February 8 and 9 at the State Capitol in Harrisburg. She spoke with legislators as well as the public regarding the

need for education in "High Priority" careers such as practical nursing. She is pictured here with 79<sup>th</sup> District Representative Richard A. Geist (R) who stopped by the GACTC display.



L-R: Donna Cunningham, Representative Richard A. Geist

# Report from Adult & Continuing Education (cont'd.)

## Continuing Education Facts



### Spring 2011 Continuing Education Update

To date, the Continuing Education Department has trained 346 people this academic year. This number includes full-time programs (Medical Assistant, Medical Office Specialist, and HVAC); short-term programs (EFDA, Nurse Aide, CDL, and Phlebotomy); Intergenerational co-enrollment programs (adults enrolled in secondary programs); a wide variety of part-time evening courses (Welding, Machining, Electrical, Cooking, State Auto Inspection, Computers, etc.); and contract training (customized training for local companies). This number will increase over the next month as preparations are made to begin another class in Nurse Aide, Phlebotomy, CDL, State Auto Inspection, and work with more local businesses to meet their training needs.

### WEDnetPA Update

With the current state budget crisis, cuts are expected in the area of workforce training initiatives. How these cuts will affect WEDnetPA is not yet known. The WEDnetPA Statewide Director, Tom Venditti, offered the following (as quoted directly from an email message from him dated March 10, 2011):

- Consolidation and overall budget cuts seem to be the main themes among programs funded through DCED.
- A new initiative, called **Pennsylvania First** will merge CJT, Opportunity Grants and Infrastructure Development into a single pool of funding, proposed at \$25 million. Combined, these programs total over \$41 million in the FY 2010-11 budget. The new level of funding represents an overall reduction of 40% for FY 2011-12.
- How much of the \$25 million proposed for PA First, if any, would be used for WEDnetPA has yet to be decided.
- We remain cautiously optimistic about having a viable program next year, since we are in excellent standing with DCED and I believe there is strong support there to continue WEDnetPA activities, but nothing is certain.
  - Opportunity Grants are funds available through DCED to create or preserve jobs. There are few restrictions on these funds. They can be used for a wide range of activities, including the purchase of machinery and equipment; working capital; job training; land and building improvements; site preparation; and more, all tied to job retention or creation.

### Nurse Aide and Phlebotomy Programs

The Office of Continuing Education recently underwent a PA Department of Education Nurse Aide Program Review with no significant findings—only two minor recommendations. One recommendation is to add another clinical site. For the past three years, the GACTC has used Garvey Manor as the only clinical site. We will seek to add another site in the upcoming months. Also, the GACTC is preparing to begin another Nurse Aide class in April.

The Phlebotomy program is undergoing some changes. In keeping aligned closely with Mount Aloysius College's Phlebotomy Program, the GACTC is working to offer a new certification through the National Healthcare Association (NHA). The NHA certification will be offered at the GACTC following successful completion of the didactic and clinical components of the 240-hour program. The GACTC is excited about the opportunities that this opens up for our Phlebotomy graduates.

### Expanded Function Dental Assistant Certificate Program

The weekend EFDA course being offered to travelers from Western PA is going extremely well. All seven students will complete the didactic portion of the course next weekend. Dr. Zajac reports that all students are doing very well and are ready for the clinical portion of the program, which is completed at their place of employment.

### EFDA Certificate to Associate Degree Initiative

The GACTC and Mount Aloysius College have finalized the agreement to offer the Expanded Function Dental Assistant long-term (2-year) EFDA Certificate to Associate Degree. Following several months of meetings and preparation work, the EFDA program is ready to begin. Following agreement signature and receiving approval from both the PA State Board of Dentistry and Middle States, we are in the program planning and development stage. Dr. Zajac and the Coordinator of Continuing Education are planning marketing initiatives, developing curriculum, developing a schedule of GACTC courses, working with Mount Aloysius College on their course offerings, identifying materials and textbooks, and a great deal more involved in establishing this new, in-demand program. The dedicated work and expertise of Dr. Zajac has been invaluable in getting approval to offer the program and in all of the behind-the-scenes efforts to ensure the program is ready to enroll students.

# Report from Adult & Continuing Education (cont'd.)

## FCI Loretto Contract Training

The GACTC received notification that it has been awarded a 5-year contract to offer Microsoft Office Applications training to inmates at FCI Correctional Facility in Loretto, PA. This was a very competitive contract, with over 20 vendors submitting bids. The GACTC is charged with training 66 inmates per year in Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. The inmates who complete the program will take the Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) test to gain certification from Microsoft Corporation. Training is scheduled to begin soon and will be taught by instructors from the GACTC. In addition to obtaining this contract, the GACTC is being asked to develop another plan to offer small business and entrepreneurship training at FCI. The amount for the five-year contract is \$310,002.

## Growth and Development/Enrollment for 2011-2012

The Growth and Development Committee continues to meet on a monthly basis. The emphasis of the last meeting, held on March 18, 2011, was on marketing the Spring Open House and purchasing banners for advertising the school. Ten thousand placemats have been printed distributed to local restaurants to promote the Open House event, which will be held on Tuesday, April 19, 2011. Information about the Open House is also on our website at [www.gactc.edu](http://www.gactc.edu). An ad will be placed in the Altoona Mirror as well. At this point, the Office of Continuing Education has sent out more than 95 applications. Moreover, we have received a total of 43 applications (including full-time “Intergenerational” and “Adult Stand-Alone” programs) for the 2011-2012 academic year.

## Welding Certification Program

Mr. George Woomeer continues to administer the AWS test to local welders. Mr. Woomeer has worked with an array of local companies, including Norfolk Southern and McLanahan Corporation.

## New Choices Career Development

The ***New Choices Career Development*** program resumed services on October 18, 2010. The opening of the office was delayed due to slowness in funding notification.

The New Choices grant is approved for \$59,000. The program is funded through June, 30, 2011. There is some reason for optimism that the program will be funded for 2011–2012, despite the large state deficit.

The GACTC New Choices program has been in existence for 20+ years and has graduated more than 1,500 students in this span of time. The program has awarded more than \$300,000 in tuition assistance, \$100,000 in gas/bus transportation assistance, and \$35,000 in child care assistance and other supportive services.

The impact to our school warrants mentioning. At a minimum, 675 New Choices graduates completed the program and went on to enroll in short- and/or long-term training at the GACTC resulting in significant tuition revenue.

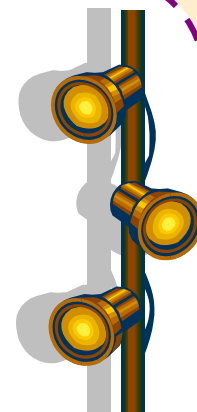
To date, **37** students have successfully completed/graduated from the 60+ hour program between October 25, 2010, and March 17, 2011. These numbers demonstrate our success as we have already exceeded the threshold required to be served during the current fiscal year.

The sixth and last New Choices session this school year is scheduled April 4-28, 2011.

Plans are underway to participate in Leadership Day to be held on May 3, 2011, in Harrisburg, PA. Leadership Day provides an opportunity for the 17 New Choices programs across the state to meet in the State Capitol and share their successes.

Most importantly, follow up with dozens of previous years' graduates have been ongoing and will continue into June. Follow up consists of job placement and retention services, training program placement and follow up, and reporting of statistical data. Quarterly reports are due April 15 and July 15, and completion and submission of the New Choices grant is due by June 30.

## Employee Spotlight



The annual Employee Recognition breakfast was held for all staff as part of National Career and Technical Education Month, on February 10, 2011.

Dr. Ross thanked the Food Service staff once again for preparing the breakfast and for all the meals and delicious store items that are prepared each year.



L-R: Dr. Lanny Ross, Della Gens  
2011 Educator of the Year,  
Dr. Donna Miller

**Della Gens**, Instructor in the Health Occupations Program, was named **2011 Educator of the Year**. Della began her employment with the GACTC as a teacher assistant in 1999.

Della earned her Vocational Instruction Professional Certificate II in 2007. She also serves as an advisor for the Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) organization within the school.

**Karen Chirdon**, Continuing Education Specialist, was named **Employee of the Year**. Karen began her career at the GACTC in 2006 at the Secretary II level. Karen was promoted this year to management support status and serves the adult staff and students with professionalism and efficiency.



Karen Chirdon, 2011  
Employee of the Year



Tami Kaylor, 2011 Special  
Appreciation Award  
Winner

**Tami Kaylor**, Attendance Secretary, was awarded a special appreciation award for her kindness toward terminally-ill, former student, Buddy Long. Tami has worked at the GACTC since 2004, first as a teacher aide. Tami also serves as the advisor for the school's Attendance Incentive Program.

***Congratulations to all of you on a well-deserved recognition.***

## 2011 Pennsylvania DECA State Competition Winners

We are very proud of our GACTC DECA students competing at PA DECA Career and Development Conference held in Hershey, Pennsylvania from Feb 23-25. GACTC DECA competitors earned sixteen medallions for earning the highest Role Play and/or Written test compared to any other Career and Technical students in the state of Pennsylvania. Great Job!

<u>Name</u>	<u>Medallion Winners for Highest Role Play and/or Test Score</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Program</u>	<u>Home School</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Dane Beer	1 Medallion	Principles of Hospitality & Tourism-PHT	Retail Marketing/ Entrepreneurship	Altoona	10th
Josh Gordon	3 Medallions	Accounting Applications- ACT	Multimedia & Web Design	Altoona	11th
Josh Hermesky	2 Medallions	Marketing Communications Team-MTDM	Multimedia & Web Design	Altoona	12th
Kenny McElhinney	1 Medallion	Principles of Hospitality &Tourism-PHT	Multimedia & Web Design	Altoona	10th
Galen Reed	2 Medallions	Marketing Communications Team-MTDM	Retail Marketing	Altoona	11th
Kody Rininger	1 Medallion	Principles of Marketing-PMK	Multimedia & Web Design	Altoona	10th
Logan Tornatore	1 Medallion	Logistics-LOG	Logistics & Materials Management	Altoona	12th
Katelyn Wackerman	2 Medallions	Buying & Merchandising Team-BTDM	Retail Marketing/ Entrepreneurship	Altoona	12th
Kiersten Wenner	1 Medallion	Automotive Services-ASM	Logistics & Materials Management	Altoona	10th
Brittni Williams	2 Medallions	Buying & Merchandising Team-BTDM	Multimedia & Web Design	Altoona	12th

## SkillsUSA State Competition

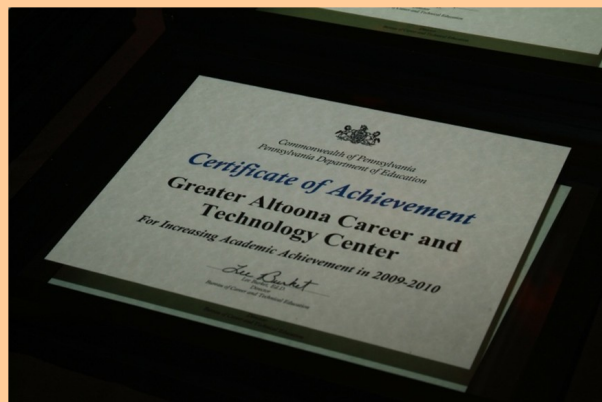
State SkillsUSA competition will be held from April 6-8 in Hershey, PA. Students are fundraising to cover the competition costs. Due to funding restraints, one competitor and two delegates will be unable to attend; however, twenty-three students and three advisors will attend this 3-day event.

## OCCUPATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The second combined Occupational Advisory Committee meetings of 2010-11 were held on the evening of Tuesday, March 15, with a total of more than 225 advisees and instructors in attendance. The school maintains twenty-eight separate advisory committees which meet twice annually in compliance with the Pennsylvania Department of Education regulations and requirements of the school's accreditation agencies.

## Certificate of Achievement

The Pennsylvania Department of Education Bureau of Career & Technical Education awarded a Certificate of Achievement to the Greater Altoona Career and Technology Center for Improving Academic Achievement in 2009-2010. This award was presented to GACTC Business Manager, Danielle Mehalick, as part of the Pennsylvania Association of Career & Technical Administrators (PACTA) 21st Annual Symposium held in Hershey on March 3-4, 2011. The GACTC was one of a select group of career and technology centers in the state to receive this award. Thank you to our educators and students for all of their hard work in making this award possible!



L-R: Dr. Carolyn Dumaresq, Deputy Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education, PA Department of Education and Danielle Mehalick, GACTC Business Manager

## First Book



First Book National Book Bank has approached the GACTC Logistics & Materials Management program with a proposal to expand the partnership developed this past fall. As a new initiative, the organization would like to use grant proceeds to fund the use of our facility and a group of students and instructor, Kathy DePiro, to continue to receive and distribute books throughout the summer months. Currently Mrs. DePiro is calculating a per-carton fulfillment rate and determining the number of students to which we can offer this excellent opportunity to be paid for applying their logistics and materials management industry skills. In addition, these summer shipments would be subject to the 5% local donation, potentially providing area schools and organizations with thousands of additional free books at the start of the new school year.

# AWS PRESENTATION

On Tuesday, March 15, 2011, John L. Mendoza, 2011 President and Chairman of the American Welding Society (AWS) Board, spoke to the GACTC Welding Students about welding careers.

He stressed that a shortage of qualified welders currently exists in the United States. In the next 10 years, more than 220,000 welders will be needed due to an aging workforce and the increased need for skilled labor. The welding industry (which includes production of assemblies and maintenance repairs) is growing so quickly that technical schools cannot train welders fast enough to fill all of the open positions.



AWS President John L. Mendoza



AWS President, John Mendoza, addresses PM Welding Students

The welding field provides family-sustaining wages, from entry-level employees earning more than \$20,000 to welding engineers making more than \$100,000. President Mendoza noted that AWS standards and certifications are recognized worldwide. He lauded students that they are craftsmen, artists, and skilled contributors to the United States economy.

Mr. Mendoza encouraged GACTC students to take AWS certification tests to prepare for employment following graduation. Because of the skill level developed at the GACTC and AWS certifications the students can attain, area employers hire our graduates with confidence in their ability to perform the necessary work.

# GACTC ENROLLMENT

## GREATER ALTOONA CAREER & TECHNOLOGY CENTER Enrollment

	2005-06		2006-07		2007-08		2008-09		2009-10		2010-11	
	Aug/Sept	June	Aug/Sept	June	Aug/Sept	June	Aug/Sept	June	Aug/Sept	March	Aug/Sept	March
<i>High School Students</i>	1,042	959	1,064	974	1,038	939	1,061	947	1,060	970	952	888
<i>Intergenerational Adults*</i>	48	37	39	32	23	12	38	37	55	39	35	33
<i>Full-Time Adults**</i>	84	63	65	52	46	30	70	58	65	58	33	31
<i>Practical Nursing***</i>	52	45	52	41	50	40	88	63	75	66	87	82
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>	<b>1,226</b>	<b>1,104</b>	<b>1,220</b>	<b>1,099</b>	<b>1,157</b>	<b>1,021</b>	<b>1,257</b>	<b>1,105</b>	<b>1,255</b>	<b>1,133</b>	<b>1,107</b>	<b>1,034</b>

\*Adults enrolled in high school classes

\*\*Number includes the following programs: Administrative Assistant, Medical Office Specialist, Medical Assistant, and HVAC/Plumbing

\*\*\*Includes daytime and evening classes