

# TRiO

## STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

# March 2018

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE VISIONS AND RX PROGRAMS

IN THIS ISSUE

## March News

The semester is in full swing! We launched the spring semester with the Visions and Rx Kick-Offs. Catherine led a great activity about community and Todd facilitated a hilarious round of Mad Libs. Make sure to join the TRIO Leaders, who will be facilitating the Visions Mid-Semester Gathering on Wednesday, March 21 at 12:30 in the North Café and the Rx Mid-Semester Gathering on Monday, March 26 at 12:30 in the North Café.

### Four-Week Assessments

Every semester, the Visions and Rx Programs send out four-week assessments to faculty. In the assessments, faculty can give feedback on classroom preparation and participation in addition to grades and attendance. These assessments are vital tools in building good academic habits throughout the semester. Not only will the Visions and Rx staff recommend tutoring or time management strategies, but they will also share positive feedback from the faculty. Make sure to stop by the TRIO Complex to see if your four-week assessments have been returned!

### Spring Break

Spring Break is March 12-16. This is a great time to catch up on a variety of personal, work, or academic responsibilities. Ashley shares several great suggestions on how to spend your spring break.

If you are looking for something to do, we are planning a trip to the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, MA on Wednesday, March 14. Stop by the TRIO Complex with your \$5 deposit to sign-up. Pack a lunch or try a local place!

### Transfer Trips & Deadlines

Todd and Lisa have planned transfer visits to Fitchburg State, UMASS Amherst, and Worcester State. See page 3. If you would like to visit another college or university, talk with Todd or Lisa to schedule the trip.

Many institutions have spring deadlines for fall enrollment, so connect with Todd or Lisa to make sure you are on track. Even if you are not planning to transfer for fall 2018, do schedule a meeting with Todd or Lisa. They can help you make sure that you are in transferable classes and majors.

### Scholarships

The MWCC Foundation Scholarships are a great opportunity to apply for scholarships with just one application! Mary provides key strategies to get started on page 3. Stop by the TRIO Complex if you need help or want someone to read over your application materials.

Don't forget that we are here for you! Stop by the TRIO Complex or call the office to schedule an appointment with an advisor or tutor and watch your email for opportunities and events.

Registration



### Registration and Career planning

Catherine shares strategies on how to effectively align your major with your career goals



### Student Spotlight

Kaitlyn shares her education and her path to success!

### TRIO Complex Hours

Monday-Thursday  
8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
Friday  
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.



# Right Major Means Best Career

by Catherine Maddox-Wiley  
Rx Retention Specialist

Did you know that most college students change their majors at least once during their first year of school? How do you know if you're in the right major and pursuing a career that will mean something to you?

To determine if you're headed in the best direction, answer these questions: Are you eager to learn your subject matter? Do you enjoy reading, writing and discussing the subject? Can you explain the importance of the subject? Are your grades in that subject strong? What motivated you to consider this career? Is money the main attraction of this career?

If the answers to these questions leave you with serious doubts about what you're studying and why, perhaps you need to regroup and consider other options. Here are some steps to discovering what you want to do when you grow up.

## 1. To thine own self be true!

Know yourself, honestly. Make a list of your traits, characteristics and personality; likes and dislikes; strengths and weaknesses; personal needs; and academic grades. Take a career interest assessment. An earnest assessment of your interests, abilities, and attitude will help you move forward.

## 2. Keep it real!

There are no short cuts to a satisfying career or job. You may not love everything about a career, nor are you likely to earn top dollar right off the bat. If you find yourself sticking with a career choice but not enjoying the academic path, give some real thought to whether you will enjoy the work. On the other hand, if you reject every career and make excuses as to why a career won't work out, you may have a fear of the unknown or fear of failure. Working through the doubts can be hard, and there are no guarantees in decision-making, so you can only make

the best choice for yourself with the information you have about yourself and the career you are pursuing.

## 3. Create your own Career 101 course!

Make a list of careers that you know pique your interest. Do not place any judgements on your choices and do not eliminate any -- just yet. Take a career interest assessment and then compare your career list with the careers suggested by the assessment. Is there overlap? Are there careers you had not considered? Research the careers, paying attention to job tasks, the required education, the salary, the projected growth of the field, the locations where the careers are in demand. Ask yourself what excites you about the careers and what worries you. Don't eliminate a possible career until you've talked it out with a career advisor and had a chance to explore the career more thoroughly.

## 4. Get hands-y with it!

Interview or shadow professionals in the careers and do an externship. Volunteer in your potential field. Consider this an investment in your profession.

## 5. Use Resources!

Visions and Rx advisors can help you explore various careers and the academic majors required for them.

Degree Works is a valuable MWCC app that provides you with a degree evaluation and enables you to view the course requirements for each program of study.

Career Information sites offer career assessments, career overviews, college listings for ongoing education, job listings, etc.

**Career Coach:** [mwcc.edu/current-students/career/career-coach/](http://mwcc.edu/current-students/career/career-coach/)

**MassCIS:** [masscisintocareers.org](http://masscisintocareers.org)

**Career One Stop** [careeronestop.org](http://careeronestop.org)

# REGISTRATION FAQ'S

by Dawn Babineau  
Visions Learning Specialist

### Q: Why should I register early?

A: This is the opportunity to make a schedule that works best for you. You'll be able to plan in advance for the other commitments in your life.

### Q: What will I be registering for?

A: In April, you'll register for both this summer and next fall classes.

### Q: How do I register for classes?

A: You have options!

- Schedule or walk in for a one-on-one appointment with a TRIO staff member.
- Schedule yourself via WebConnect and then check in with TRIO staff (in person, via email or over the phone) to review your selections.
- Come to TRIO-open registration open labs.

Open Lab Registrations  
Monday, April 2 &  
Tuesday, April 3  
12:30-1:30 p.m.  
RM 240

Priority Registration  
April 2-6

# Applying for MWCC Scholarships

By Mary Roth

Visions Writing Tutor

Spring is just around the corner—and with spring comes numerous scholarship opportunities to help you finance your education. The Mount Wachusett Community College Foundation offers many generous scholarships for students. Here are some tips to help you get started with applying for these scholarship opportunities.

## AwardSpring

Most, but not all, scholarships are listed on the AwardSpring icon. To begin, log into iConnect and click on the AwardSpring website. From here, you can view information on specific scholarships and begin your AwardSpring application. Your completed application will be used to match you to scholarships through the MWCC Foundation based on your eligibility. Other scholarship opportunities exist through specific departments, so be sure to check with professors in your major to find out if

any departmental scholarships are offered.

## Letter of Recommendation

When choosing a faculty member to request a letter of recommendation, be sure to ask an instructor who knows you well and in whose class you were successful. Most importantly, be sure to ask early, so that your letters of recommendation are submitted by the application deadline.

## Application Essays

The AwardSpring application generally requires two short essays. For these sections, pay particular attention to what is being asked in the essay prompt and then take some time to think about and craft your response.

The two essay prompts for this year's application are: *"Please tell us about the challenges that you have overcome to be successful in your college career."* and *"Please write an essay addressing the question "What does Mount Wachusett*

*Community College mean to me?"* To begin your essay, think about the question and brainstorm or list as many ideas as you can to include in your essay. You may want to think about what you were doing before you came to college and how college has changed your life. Think big about your future and how you have moved forward in spite of the challenges you may have faced. Remember to be honest about your challenges, but to write positively about your future.

## Extracurricular Activities

When writing about your extracurricular and volunteer activities, make sure to include any volunteer work that you have done, leadership positions you have held, and clubs or honor societies that you may belong to. Don't overlook things like volunteering for Little League, Boy and Girl Scouts, or your child's school.

## Deadlines

Lastly, make sure to meet all deadlines. The early deadline for several scholarships is March 16. The deadline for all others is May 23.

## Transfer Trip Preview

The snow is melting and we are just about to hit the road to visit some great colleges around the state. We are going to:

|   |   |   |  |                         |                            |
|---|---|---|--|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>UMASS Amherst</b><br>Friday, March 2<br>9 :00 a.m.- 4 :00 p.m. | <b>Worcester State University</b><br>Friday, March 9<br>11 :15 a.m.- 4 :30 p.m. | <b>Fitchburg State University</b><br>Friday, March 30<br>9 :00 a.m.- 3 :00 p.m. | <b>Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts</b><br>Monday, April 16<br>(Patriots' Day : No MWCC Classes)<br>8 :00 a.m. – 5 :00 p.m. | <b>Wellesley</b><br>TBD | <b>UMASS Lowell</b><br>TBD |
|---|---|---|--|-------------------------|----------------------------|

It is not too late to sign up. Sign-up sheets are on Todd's door. During each visit, we will take a campus tour, meet with a representative from admissions, have lunch in the dining hall, and catch up with a former Visions or Rx student to get the inside scoop when possible. As always, transportation and lunch are provided.

# Student Spotlight: Kaitlyn Tanner

By Lisa Naze

Rx Transfer Counselor

If you haven't met Kaitlyn Tanner yet, it's probably because she is so busy running to classes and work. Kaitlyn is part of the Rx program and aspires to be a surgical nurse. She is also part of the TRIO Leaders program. Kaitlyn was interested in the Leaders program because she wanted to meet more people and learn from others. She said, "Everyone has different skills and ways of dealing with people." Kaitlyn is always looking for ways to learn from people, and she's always willing to help others.

## About Kaitlyn

Kaitlyn grew up in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Her parents divorced when she was three and she has a brother and three step-siblings. She attended five different high schools. "I was always getting into trouble and was bored with school." Kaitlyn skipped the 5<sup>th</sup> grade so being one of the youngest kids in the class was difficult. It wasn't until she went to Great Bay Elearning Charter School in her senior year that school finally clicked. Kaitlyn attributes her change in attitude towards school to smaller class sizes and doing projects that allowed for different learning styles.

## Why Nursing?

Kaitlyn has always been intrigued by the medical field. She enjoys a fast-paced environment and finds the human body fascinating. She always wanted to be a surgeon but did not

want to spend sixteen years in school. She hopes to become an RN and then eventually earn her BSN and work as a surgical nurse. Her job at the Stetson School in Barre, MA made her realize she wanted to be part of the front-line staff that works with people. She works with students from ages 9 -22 who have behavioral issues. She enjoys working with the nurses daily. The toughest part of her job is knowing she can't fix everything. She says, "All you can help them do is move forward," noting that it's hard for someone to change the only behavior they have ever known.

## Her Education at MWCC

Juggling a work schedule of 40-50 hours per week and school is difficult. Although she quit her full-time job to work per diem to accommodate her school schedule, she says making her own schedule means she also has to be self-disciplined. She said it's hard to put school first when she has to work to pay for school. She chose MWCC because it is only a mile away from where she lives, is affordable, and allows her to pursue her goals. She has always been a goal-oriented person and is motivated by her future. She found that since starting at MWCC in the fall, the workload and class sizes were what she expected but she did not expect there to be so much support from faculty, new friends, and TRIO staff.



## Advice to New Students

Kaitlyn was amazed at the support she receives and says she would encourage others to take advantage of the support systems in place. She would advise students not to fall behind, stay organized, and don't stress about the small stuff. "Reach out. Everybody is going through it too." She said you have to remember that you aren't alone.

## All Work and No Play

Kaitlyn doesn't have time for much in her private life, but she does enjoy spending time with her fiancé and her dog Gemma. She also enjoys playing *Overwatch* in her free time and watching *Grey's Anatomy* and *The Fosters*. Someday, she would love to travel more, possibly to Europe, so that she can see how other people live. With her willingness to help others and positive attitude, there is no doubt when you meet Kaitlyn that you realize she is in this journey with you and you're not alone.

## Financial Tips

by Joyce Kulig

Visions Retention Counselor

The key to financial success is a positive mindset:

- set realistic goals,
- be positive about reaching these goals,
- learn from the mistakes you will make along the way and move forward.

## Tips:

1. Don't spend more than you make.
2. Learn to live frugally and evaluate your wants vs needs.
3. Make a budget and stick to it.
4. Use credit cards sparingly and pay off credit card debt.
5. Contribute to a retirement plan.
6. Have a savings plan.
7. Review your insurance coverages.

Use this space to write down your personal financial goal(s)

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# How to Make the Most of Spring Break

by Ashley Dill

Visions Academic Advisor

For some, spring break is a time for catching up or getting ahead on homework. While that is important, it's also important to take advantage of this week-long break during the semester. Think of it as an intermission for your semester so that you can come back ready to finish out the second half successfully! Here are six ways you can take advantage of your week off:

## 1. Catch up on your sleep

A semester of classes is often so busy that you may not have had the chance to get enough sleep every night. Use this week off to rest and recharge. Not sleeping enough each night can build up a "sleep debt" that will eventually catch up with you. Take this time to sleep in and relax. You will find that with enough sleep, you will feel much better, both physically and mentally.

## 2. Cross something off your to-do list

Most people have things they want to or need to do that keep getting pushed to the back burner due to other commitments. This is a great time to get one or more of these things done! You'll feel a sense of accomplishment and ready to take on other future tasks.

## 3. Spend some time with family and/or friends

This is great time to catch up with the people whom you care most about and who you may not have had enough time for lately. Go take a walk together, if the weather is nice, or have a game night. Spending time with others is good for your health and will help you to have some fun.

## 4. Pamper yourself

You don't have to go to a spa for pampering, but it is beneficial to take some time for yourself! Do things that make you feel good: take a bubble bath,

meditate, listen to music, give yourself a manicure or pedicure, or spend some time doing whatever helps you feel recharged.

## 5. Read for fun

Students spend so much time reading what they have to for class that they forget it can also be a pleasurable experience. Pick up a book or magazine that you think would be fun and exciting to read. Reading for fun makes learning new things and new vocabulary interesting because you are the one choosing the story or information you want to learn.

## 6. Get outside

Get out of the confines of where you live or the library and make the most of the start of (hopefully) nice weather in New England. Getting some fresh air and being in nature is good for your mind and body. It is a way to refresh and rejuvenate you that gets you in a better mindset. Being outside can even help you sleep better! Take a walk through a park, hike up Mount Wachusett, go for a bike ride, or do whatever outdoor activity you find enjoyable.

# Thoughts on Spring

by Lisa Naze

Rx Transfer Counselor

***Spring is just around the corner. Find out what TRIO students are looking forward to.***

What I love about spring are all the cute tree buds and flowers starting to bloom.  
- Maddy Quero

The smell in the air after a warm spring shower. ~ Marie Ewing

My favorite thing about spring is when it starts to get warmer and nature restores itself. Nature is a beautiful thing! Even through the cold and snow it can thrive once again. ~ Rebecca DeMarco

My favorite thing about spring is how the air smells when it rains, the sound of water droplets as they hit the river, and how it reminds me that cold doesn't last forever. ~Christina Bruce

Spring is when the weather starts to become warm, summer is near and winter is finally over. Spring is when the flowers bloom and the trees turn to color. Winter is always gloomy and when spring appears, everything starts to lighten up. The semester is half way over. Graduation is right around the corner! It's bitter sweet. ~ Racheal Walker

Spring is one step closer to summer! ~ Ayana Brodeur-Edmonds

My favorite thing about spring is the nice weather. ~ Denise Seminoff

Spring means warmer weather, the start to longer days with sunlight, I can sit out on my front porch watching the rain fall, the trees start budding, flowers start blooming. Spring is when life comes alive again and I can get out and go hiking and enjoy the sun, the mud, and walking around outside in bare feet again. I love everything about spring. ~ Meagan Lawn

Seeing the flowers start to come together just like my education. Seeing

my education coming together while I study harder and harder. The weather getting warmer and my attitude getting better. ~ Ema Perkins

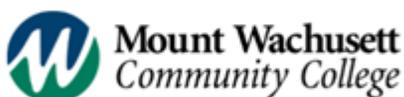
I love spring because everything is coming alive and it has this smell that is just so refreshing. My energy increases and I'm ready for anything that comes my way. ~ Sadiya Clark

I'm glad when it is spring because it means it will be daylight when I leave in the morning to catch the bus to school and not as dark when I come home. ~ Sean Krieger

My favorite thing about spring is the chance to start anew; fresh beginnings! The smell of blooming lily of the valley flowers and the songs of the beautiful cardinal pair that live in our berry brambles. ~ Donna Songer

The smell of the air! ~ Melissa Williams

The birds and the sun and the light green leaves! ~ Michael Niall



444 Green Street, Gardner, MA 01440-1000

Join us for a trip to the  
**Peabody Essex Museum**  
Wednesday, March 14  
8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Stop by the TRIO Complex  
for more information and  
to sign up!

| March 2018<br>Calendar of Events   |   |   |  |   |  |          | Check your email daily for the most up-to-date information on program events and campus news |
|--|---|---|--|---|--|----------|--|
| Sunday   | Monday  | Tuesday   | Wednesday  | Thursday  | Friday   | Saturday |  |
|  |   |   |  | 1<br><b>Travel Breakfast</b><br>8:15-9:15 a.m.<br>Murphy Room | 2<br><b>Transfer Trip to UMASS Amherst</b>               | 3        |  |
| 4  | 5   | 6<br><b>TEAS Exam Prep Workshop</b><br>12:30-1:30 p.m.<br>W11 | 7<br><b>Building Credit: Credit Score</b><br>12:30-1:30 p.m.<br>W11<br><b>Cycle 1: Last Day of Classes</b> | 8   | 9  | 10       |  |
| 11   | 12  | 13  | 14<br><b>Spring Break Trip to Peabody Essex Museum</b>   | 15  | 16   | 17       |  |
| <b>Spring Break: No Classes All Campuses</b>   |   |   |  |   |  |          |  |
| 18   | 19<br><b>Cycle 2: Classes Begin</b>   | 20  | 21<br><b>Visions Mid-Semester Gathering</b><br>12:30-1:30 p.m.<br>North Café                               | 22  | 23   | 24       |  |
| 25   | 26<br><b>Rx Mid-Semester Gathering</b><br>12:30-1:30 p.m.<br>North Café<br><b>Cycle 2: Last day to add classes and/or drop classes with 100% refund</b> | 27<br><b>Full Semester: Last day to withdraw</b>              | 28   | 29  | 30<br><b>Transfer Trip to Fitchburg State University</b> | 31       |  |
| If you have a disability and require accommodation in order to participate fully in Program activities, please contact the Program Director to discuss your specific needs.<br>Affirmative Action/ Equal Opportunity Institution |   |   |  |   |  |          |  |