

TRiO

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

September 2017

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE VISIONS AND RX PROGRAMS

IN THIS ISSUE

Welcome Back!

by Gaurav Khanna,
Director of the Visions and Rx Programs

It's great to have all of you back for a new semester. We've had a busy summer. A group of TRIO students visited Washington D.C. and toured many educational and cultural attractions. They also met with Senator Warren and discussed TRIO programs. More than 200 students took summer classes and it was great to see students in the TRIO Complex and on campus. With so many students around, we were able to organize regular events, such as breakfast check-ins for summer students and lunch at the Taste of Vietnam. In addition, the Visions and Rx staff have been busy getting ready for the fall semester.

Staff Changes

We have had some changes over the summer. Tasia Cerezo, the Visions Program transfer counselor, accepted a position closer to the Boston area. Heidi Cruz, our writing learning specialist, has also moved to other opportunities. Todd Bennett, who worked in the office previously, has returned to resume his role as the Visions Program transfer counselor. Our new writing learning specialist will be also starting in September. Stop by the TRIO Complex to say hi and introduce yourself!

AA/EEO Institution

Check-ins

Let us know how your summer went and your plans for the fall. We love seeing you and all the energy you bring to the office as you head back to classes. A quick conversation can help us connect you with the resources and strategies you need to be successful this year.

Refer-a-friend

If you have a friend or classmate you think would benefit from the services of the Visions and Rx Programs and meets eligibility criteria (first generation, limited income, or documented disability), feel free to bring them to the TRIO Complex. Although 75% of MWCC students are eligible for TRIO services, it is hard for many students to ask for help and discuss their backgrounds. Walking them down and connecting them to TRIO in person will make the process easier and help them achieve success.

Tutors

If you need help with specific subjects, now is the time to sign up for tutoring appointments. Tutor schedules open at the beginning of the semester, and you can lock-in a weekly appointment that works for your schedule.

Every semester is a fresh chance to do well. We are ready to support you in your academic dreams with all the services we offer. Let us be your guides and cheerleaders. Let's make this your best semester yet!



Fall Success Strategies

The Visions and Rx staff share their strategies for success!



We Are Active!

We had a busy summer. Turn to page 5 to learn about our adventures!



New Extended Hours!

8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

978-630-9297
TRIO Complex
Room 134
mwcc.edu/trioss



Time Saving Tips to help you Start the Semester Right!

by Mary Roth

Visions Professional Writing Tutor

Welcome! Whether you are a returning student or a new college student, the fall semester offers many opportunities for learning and preparing for your future. Along with these opportunities come many demands on your time, so these tips can help you manage your time and stay organized both for school and the other aspects of your life.

Create a master calendar for yourself and your family.

Use a large block calendar and color code appointments, sports practices, and social events for each family member. Use your phone's camera to take a photo of your master calendar, so it is accessible to you when you are on the go. And, you can use the clock function on your phone to save appointments and set reminders, so you are not late for your appointments.

Get organized.

Do as many things ahead as possible. This might include packing your backpack the

night before class to ensure that you have all your books, handouts, notes, pens and highlighters. It could also include setting up your coffee maker using its timer feature or laying out your clothes for the next day or even taking time on the weekend to prepare and freeze meals for the week ahead. Take a good look at your daily routine and pay attention to the things that frustrate you or slow you down when you need to get out the door in the morning. Then look for ways you can be better prepared by doing things ahead.

Have a plan for the week.

Using your master calendar, plan ahead for the week. This might include setting aside time for errands, grocery shopping, school events for children or appointments. Make sure you set aside enough time to take care of yourself, too, especially making certain that you include enough sleep and exercise in your schedule. Both of these will help to keep you healthy and manage your stress throughout the busy semester.

Set aside time to study.

Make sure you leave enough time to study or access resources on campus, such as the library, printers or computers. To stay on track with this committed time, make sure to write it into your schedule. Then, be sure to follow through and study. Regular review of your class materials each day will make preparing for quizzes and exams much easier and will reduce your stress when exam time arrives.

Be accountable.

If you find that your intentions are good, but your follow through is not as strong, find someone to hold you accountable. Encourage that person to ask you if you are following through with your assignments and your other commitments.

Seek assistance.

If managing your time is challenging you, ask for help. The Visions Program offers seminars throughout the semester to help you with time management and other study skills. In addition, the Visions staff is always available to listen to your individual concerns and help you develop a plan to manage your time well.

Engage In Your Education & Invest In Your Future

by Joyce Kulig

Visions Retention Counselor

SEPTEMBER BOOT CAMP	Computers 101	Navigating Blackboard for WEB and in-class work	How to Ace English 101	Math Study Skills and Much More
The week of September 18 -21, we are asking students to commit to attending at least one workshop that will get your semester off to a great start by building a good foundation.	Monday, September 18 Room 240	Tuesday, September 19 Room 240	Wednesday, September 20 Room 202	Thursday, September 21 Room 240
All seminars will meet from 12:30 -1:30 p.m.	Build a foundation with Google Docs. Gaurav will provide strategies for maximizing these tools.	Most instructors at MWCC incorporate a Blackboard component. Lisa and Dawn will discuss an overview of this resource.	English 101 is an important foundation for college success. Mary will provide skills and tools for building a strong academic foundation.	Math skills are necessary in the professional world. Paula and Margaret will discuss key math skills that mean academic success.

Life is Full of If's

by Catherine Maddox-Wiley
Rx Retention Counselor

Most of us have heard of fear of failure and have perhaps admitted to feeling afraid of not doing well. What may be less obvious to us is the fear of success. While fear of failure has us worried about today, fear of success has us anxious about tomorrow. We may question what will happen to us in the future if we are successful today. Have you ever been concerned about moving to a new environment, such as the next college or a new job? Are you afraid of moving out of your hometown because you're already familiar with the people and the places? There's no doubt: It's great knowing where to go and who to see. You know what works and what doesn't. You're used to shining in your current existence. You're comfortable!

The thought of moving on raises concerns: What if I get lost? What if I don't get along with the new people I meet? What if I can't keep up at my next college? What if the new job I accepted is more than I can handle? Will I have to become a different person? What if

my family doesn't like the person I become? I feel guilty that I'm doing well and my friends are not. What if I'm not as good as I'm expected to be? I said I could do it, but what if I can't? Will I be exposed as an imposter?

The MetLife commercial coined the phrase: *For the what ifs in life*. Because there are no guaranteed answers to the what ifs, we sometimes get in our own way, oftentimes to the point of self-sabotage. We make choices that hold us back rather than promote us, such as delaying that last course needed for graduation, taking on multiple certificates and associates degrees to avoid going to a four-year college, declining great job offers for a reason that can potentially be resolved, i.e. commute, relocation, personal responsibilities.

If we get in our own way by fearing the possibilities, we miss the chance for growth and opportunities which may not come around in the future or when we want or need them. This is not to say that we should jump into every situation that comes our way. Each event requires thoughtful and honest consideration. When we can reach our decisions, knowing that we didn't run to something or away from something, we can

live with our decisions and not second guess them.

Ask any student, or staff member for that matter, about coming to MWCC. Chances are none of them was 100% sure how things would go, but with patience, effort and motivation, they manage to achieve a level of comfort that enables them to get the job done to the satisfaction of themselves and others. Students and staff have reached successes that enable them to maintain themselves and to guide, coach, and advise others, especially those for whom they care. There is a great gift in having the knowledge and skills to broaden someone else's possibilities.

Sometimes moving on will be great, and sometimes it will be disappointing. As grown-ups, our role is to cope, flip the switch, reframe, solve, give it time, and regroup as necessary. In essence, we're expected to do all that we can and the best that we can. We can't ask more of ourselves than that.

*If you'd like to share your fear of success, stop by and visit with a TRIO advisor in Room 134. If you'd like to hear Catherine's fear of success story, stop by to chat with her.

Hello from Your New (Old) Transfer Counselor

by Todd Bennett
Visions Transfer Counselor

I was recently hired as your new Visions Program transfer counselor. I know many of you well from my time previously working for the Visions Program. For our newer students, I am a completely new face. Please stop by the TRIO Complex and let me know what you have been up to over the past year or if we have never met, please stop in and say hello.

Most importantly, let's talk about transfer. One of the greatest benefits of the Visions Program is having a dedicated counselor who will support your successful transfer. I am here to help explain and facilitate the transfer process from the initial step of exploring options to filling out applications and ultimately reviewing acceptances and financial aid awards. We have had many highly successful Visions students who have been accepted and transferred to colleges across the country. I am here to help you reach your goals and look forward to working together.

Soon Lisa Naze, the Rx Transfer counselor, and I will be scheduling college tours for the fall term. Visiting four-year schools is a great way to gain a sense of the culture of a four-year campus, while learning about the differences between colleges. It is also a good way to start to get comfortable with another campus.

I will be scheduling our visits based on the requests of students. If there is a four-year school you would like to visit, please let me know in the next couple weeks and I will organize a trip. I post sign-up sheets for all of our trips on my door and announce them on Facebook and at our events. If you have never been on a campus tour before, it is something to try. During our visits we usually take a campus tour, meet with an admissions representative, have lunch in the dining hall, and often sit in on a class.



Student Spotlight: Nick Coddington

by Mary Roth

Visions Writing Tutor

Nick Coddington is a second-year student at Mount Wachusett Community College, majoring in Criminal Justice. He is the first member of his family to attend college. Nick's career goal is to work in the Criminal Justice profession and to help people in need. He recently shared his experiences and insights into being a first-generation college student with the Visions staff.

What has it been like for you to attend college?

I am the first person in my family to attend college, so I look at it like another challenge that I have to conquer. I see college as a way to improve myself and to build a future for myself.

What has surprised you most about being a college student?

I was surprised by how easy it has been to build relationships with my professors, other students and especially the Visions staff. I am excited to go to school every day because school is relevant to my goals.

What is the most helpful or interesting thing you have learned? In school or about yourself?

The most important thing I have learned is that when you learn something about what you want to do, learning is fun. I have also learned that I am smart. In high school, my GPA was only about a 2.8, but in college, I have about a 3.5 or 3.6 GPA. I have also learned that I can be proactive and work toward my goals.

What are the kinds of challenges you have faced as a college student?

Overcoming procrastination and trying to become motivated to do the work have challenged me, but I have been working hard on both.

How do you keep yourself motivated toward your goals?

The thought of becoming successful and helping others keeps me motivated. I realize that college is an investment in my future.

How has the Visions Program helped you?

The Visions Program's tutoring has helped me to pass English 102. They have also helped me to become a better student by showing me learning strategies and how to become a more responsible student by sharing information on how to handle money and make wise decisions. They have helped me learn life skills that everyone needs to know.

How do you balance work and school work?

My employers have been really great to me. I work for a small, family-owned (not my family) business, so they have given me lots of flexibility to attend classes and seminars. My co-workers have encouraged me to keep up a positive attitude and to always ask myself how I can do my job better. This encourages me to keep the same attitude toward my school work.

What advice do you have for students who are just beginning their college experience?

The best strategy is to ask for help. Don't keep struggling and trying to figure things out on your own. Ask for help and make sure to stick things out. Don't give up, just keep working to complete your goal.

What are your plans for the future?

My plans are to become successful in the Criminal Justice field, work on being a better person and to help other people as much as I can.

Hobbies:

In his free time, Nick enjoys disc golf, hiking, bowling, working out at the gym, playing pool and watching sports.



Transfer Fast Facts

9

Number of transfer visits in 2016-2017

24

Number of TRIO students who transferred to four-year colleges and universities.

October 2, 2017

Date of Healthcare Transfer Seminar. This seminar will be held in room 204 from 12:30-1:30 p.m.

October 3, 2017

Date of Transfer Seminar for All Majors. This seminar will be held in room 202 from 12:30-1:30 p.m.

If transfer is in your future, connect with Lisa Naze and Todd Bennett to discuss your career and educational goals. They are actively planning their fall transfer visit schedule. Schedule your appointment today by calling 978-630-9297.



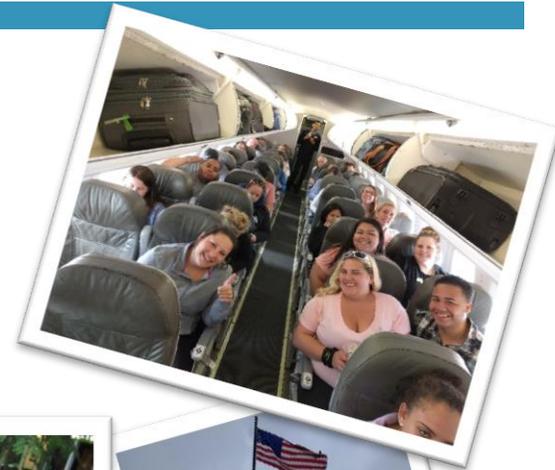
These students are continuing to reach for the stars at their new four-year institutions

Check your MWCC email for the most up-to-date information about program events and announcements



TRIO Takes D.C.

In May, seventeen students along with Gaurav, Paula and Sara visited Washington D.C. This trip included a college tour at George Washington University, a tour of the National Mall as well as a trip to the Capitol. During this four-day trip, not only did students and staff learn about the history and culture of Washington D.C. and its influence in modern-day America, but they also formed friendships that will last a lifetime.



Start Smart with Your Check-In

Complete your semester check-in during the first two weeks of the semester to maximize your success.

Meet Your TRIO Community at the Fall Kick-Off

Visions Program Kick-Off Event

Thursday, September 7, 2017
12:30-1:30 p.m.
North Café

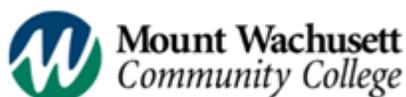
Rx Program Kick-Off Event

Tuesday, September 12, 2017
12:30-1:30 p.m.
North Café

Free Passes to the MWCC Fitness Center!

The Rx and Visions Programs have a limited number of free passes to the MWCC Fitness Center. These memberships include access to fitness equipment, classes and more!

If you are interested, please stop by the TRIO Complex by September 15th!



444 Green Street, Gardner, MA 01440-1000

Fall Semester Checklist

- ✓ **Buy/Rent textbooks** and gather school supplies
- ✓ Attend and **participate in classes**
- ✓ **Check-in with your Rx or Visions advisor**
- ✓ Attend your program **Kick-Off** Event
- ✓ **Schedule tutoring**
- ✓ Attend at least **one seminar**
- ✓ **Check your email daily**

September 2017 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	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				August 31 New Student Orientation	1	2							
3	4 Labor Day: No Classes All Campuses, day and evening	5 Full Semester & Cycle 1 Classes Begin	6	7 Visions Program Kick-Off 12:30-1:30 p.m. North Café	8	9							
10	11 Full Semester & Cycle 1 Last day to add classes and drop classes with 100% refund	12 Rx Program Kick-Off 12:30-1:30 p.m. North Café	13	14 TEAS Workshop 12:30-1:30 RM 205	15	16							
17	18 Computers 101 12:30-1:30 p.m. RM 240 Full Semester & Cycle 1 Last day to withdraw with a 50% refund	19 Blackboard Seminar 12:30-1:30 p.m. RM 249	20 How to Ace ENG 101 12:30-1:30 p.m. RM 202	21 Math & More 12:30- 1:30 p.m. RM 240	22	23							
24	25 Financial Literacy Basics 12:30 – 1:30 p.m. W11	26	27	28	29	30							
<p>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. Affirmative Action/ Equal Opportunity Institution</p>													