

TRiO

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

October 2018

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE VISIONS AND RX PROGRAMS

IN THIS ISSUE

October Edition

by Sara Williams

Program Manager, TRIO SSS Programs

October is full of festive fall activities and events with friends and families. It is also a prime time to take advantage of the many resources and opportunities available through the Visions and Rx Programs and at MWCC.

Four-Week Assessments:

During the fourth week of classes, the Visions and Rx staff send out assessments to MWCC faculty. Once the faculty return these assessments, we'll invite you to come to discuss this feedback. The assessments help us connect you with tutoring and discuss study habits. They also provide opportunities to learn that you are excelling in your classes. Be sure to watch your MWCC email or stop by the TRIO Complex to ask if your four-week assessments have been returned.

MWCC Financial Literacy Fair:

On Tuesday, October 16 from 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. in the MWCC Commons Area, MWCC will offer a series of workshops of building good credit habits.

Representatives from local banks and financial institutions will also be present. Students who attend the fair will be entered to win a free three-credit course or a \$75 MWCC scholarship.

MWCC Transfer Fair:

Representatives from four-year colleges and universities will be visiting MWCC on October 18 from 10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. in the South Café. This will be an occasion to learn more about the transfer process. Visit page 5 to learn more about the transfer fair and how to make the most of this great opportunity!

FAFSA:

It is time to file your FAFSA for the 2019-2020 academic year. Beginning October 1, you are able to complete this form, thus maximizing your financial aid opportunities. This year, FAFSA is also offering an app so you can complete your FAFSA from your phone. If you have questions or need assistance, don't hesitate to see us!



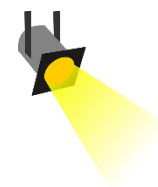
Steps to Success

Dawn provides an overview of the ways the programs support students.



Waiting until the Last Minute

Catherine shares how early actions will maximize opportunities on pg. 3.



Student Spotlight

Read Brittany's story and why she is a super hero.



**Mount Wachusett
Community College**

Taking Your Steps to Success

by Dawn Babineau

Visions Learning Specialist

It's that time of the semester when we welcome our new students and reconnect with our returning folks. As we fast and furiously try to "intake" and "acclimate" our new additions, it dawned (no pun) on me that everyone could probably use a refresher of the valuable information we provide when a new student joins us. So here are a few reminders of what it means to be really involved with our TRIO programs.

Semester Check-Ins: In case you are thinking, *Did I do that yet?*, this is what happens at a check-in. At the start of **every semester** we have you drop by the office. We probably talked about your classes, made changes to your schedule and planned for your future goals. We also coordinated those valuable tutoring supports. If you forgot to stop by, check your emails, we are probably still trying to connect with you!

Then, other than the semester Kick-Off Event, we leave you alone for a while. **Ok, nobody believes that's true.** We hope to see you at least at one (invited to all) of the interesting activities, seminars, boot camps and 4-year college tours

throughout the semester. You can also stop by the office to use the computers and printer and to borrow electronics. Remember to check for Joyce's and Catherine's weekly emails of upcoming events. Also, chances are good some form of bake goods will be available for the taking. **WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO DROP IN OFTEN!**

Four week check-in: Four weeks or so into **every** semester, we check in with your instructors to see how things are going. This is a great time to catch areas that require some strategies and also to give you the positive feedback if your instructors think you are doing well.

****Please remember to always consult with a TRIO staff before withdrawing from classes.**

Financial Aid: In October, we can start working on your financial aid for next year. Yes, next year's before this year has even ended.

Registration: In early November, we will start our registration blitz. You can have individual appointments, group appointments, in class registrations or

can contact us for verification of your self-registration selections. The most important point is to register early for the best course selection!

In case you have not had enough pizza at the various events so far, you can get your fill by attending the Mid-Semester Gathering- offered in both fall and spring. The spring event is usually hosted by the folks involved with the Leader in Me Series- another valuable TRIO offering in which you can involve yourself.

More seminars, activities, boot camps and campus tours to attend.

Fuel for Finals: Stop in to feed your caffeine and snack fix. We are your cheerleaders for the final stretch.

At the end of the spring semester, we honor all your hard work with a celebration of achievement event. Pizza turns to pasta for this special gathering.

Summer Time: We are here for you! Need advising – You got it. Interested in going on trips? We plan them. Free classes? Possibly.

Bottom line: *We are dedicated to serving your needs and helping you access the resources you need to thrive in college. We are coaches and mentors for your academic career at MWCC.*

We look forward to seeing you!



Kicking-off the Fall Semester

Visions and Rx students kicked off the fall semester with fun activities and new friends! Todd led the Visions students in writing and performing their own raps. Catherine directed an icebreaker shuffle as Rx students learned more about their peers and welcomed new Rx'ers!

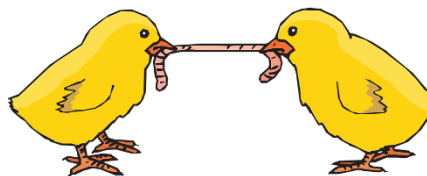
Early Birds and Worms

by Catherine Maddox-Wiley
Rx Retention Specialist

Worms! To us, yuck! To a bird, yum! A bird's view is that worms are a delicacy, a tasty change from seeds. As humans, we may not be eating the squiggly creatures, but we certainly have our own versions of "worms." Thus, we should follow the example of our fine, feathered friends and catch our "worms" while they are widely available. . . and catch them before they get away. This conversation is about timely action.

How often do we put off tasks and responsibilities? What have been the outcomes? Do we honestly appreciate the consequences? If we have been successful in our procrastination, we may have developed a false sense of security, believing that things will always work out. Sorry to say, but there comes a time when things won't go our way. Are we, therefore, prepared and willing to accept full responsibility for failing to take appropriate action in a timely manner? Are we willing to accept the consequences? Let's use some examples for this discussion.

In the next couple of months, you will have some opportunities to catch a few "worms." In early October, you can file the 2019 – 2020 FAFSA. Can't be bothered with that right now? If you've ever started the school year with your financial aid up in the air, then you know the pain of trying to stay enrolled in classes, get books and sort out the money. Who needs that kind of stress and uncertainty? Do yourself a favor: Catch the worm!



In early November, current students can register for spring semester classes. Can't make up your mind about courses? Guess what? Other students can and are snagging the best days and times for classes. You may find yourself with course schedules that aren't to your liking. Do yourself a favor: Catch the worm!

Healthcare students applying to selective programs are expected to pay attention to strict deadlines. A missed application date can mean waiting an entire year for the next application

date. Who has that kind of time to wait? Do yourself a favor: Catch the worm!

In your everyday academic routines, are you rushing at the last minute to work on assignments? Ever had a computer go kaput on you in the middle of the assignment or test? When you wait until the last minute, are you really learning or just going through the motions? Do yourself a favor: Catch the worm!

To finish up this conversation, it's important to mention that if you don't take timely action, not only are you negatively impacted but you've placed significant weights on others, i.e. your family, agency resources, etc. MWCC staff are always willing to go the extra miles to help you set things right, but there are some things that are out of their hands, especially when deadlines are missed. Do yourself and others a favor: Catch the worm!

In the words of the very wise Eileen Costello, Dean of Health Professions, Public Service Programs and Social Sciences, "If you're on time, you're late." Sounds like her type of early bird will catch a couple of worms!

MWCC Financial Literacy Fair:

Taking Credit for Your Future

Tuesday, October 16, 2018

11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

MWCC Gardner Campus Commons
Area

Attend a Workshop held in RM 115

Top Scams to Watch for

11:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Credit Scores & Establishing Credit

12:15 - 12:45 p.m.

Credit Cards

1:00 - 1:30 p.m.

Door Prize: Free 3-credit course

Attend a workshop and be entered to win a **\$75 MWCC Scholarship**

What do *you* want to read?

We love student input so let us know what you want to read in the monthly newsletter. What topics do you want to learn about?

Have an interest in journalism or writing? Be a student contributor and build your portfolio.

If you are interested, contact Sara by stopping by the TRIO Complex, emailing swilliams@mwcc.mass.edu or calling 978-630-9297.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Steps to Filing your FASA

1. Go to **FAFSA.ED.GOV**
2. Enter **FSA ID and Password**
3. Click on **2019-2020 FAFSA**
4. Answer questions
5. Use **IRS Retrieval Tool** (if you filed taxes) by entering the address as written on your tax returns
6. Review and submit!

If you have questions or would like assistance, please stop by the TRIO Complex or call 978-630-9297 to schedule a one-on-one appointment

**Filing for 2019-2020 opened
October 1**

Student Spotlight: Brittany Gale

by Catherine Maddox-Wiley
Rx Retention Specialist

Brittany Gale has super powers. She did not gain them from a spider bite or from contact with a foreign object that fell out of the sky. Rather, she developed them as she overcame many obstacles in her personal life. As a youngster, she took on care-giving roles for her mother and brother who were acutely ill. After losing them both, she struggled through her teenage years as well, not having the guidance that young people need as they grow into adulthood.

It is incredible that Brittany has become the person, parent and college student that she is today. Having learned from the school of hard knocks, Brittany is a positive, levelheaded, and motivated individual. Her siblings inspire her, and she is humbled by their tough life journeys. Brittany strengthens her powers everyday as the mother of two daughters and as a second-year nursing student.

What are Brittany's unique qualities? First is her laser focus. Once Brittany decided to attend MWCC, she never lost sight of her goals. With clear vision, Brittany looked at her goals: short-term, intermediary, and long-term. Despite the challenges of pre-requisite courses and the nursing program itself, Brittany never wavered from her path. She is on her way to graduating in May and ultimately continuing her education to become a nurse

practitioner, possibly in maternity or pediatrics.

Strength of determination is Brittany's second power. She uses this energy to do what she enjoys and to give back. Despite having limited time, Brittany loves being a dance mom to her daughters who are competitive dancers, and she ensures that they have opportunities and experiences that she did not have growing up. She also wants them to enjoy the simple things in life. Since 2015, Brittany has been committed to CCAMPIS and has linked that involvement with her daughter's preschool by founding a collaborative between the Parents' Committee at Busy Bee Preschool and Shining Star Studio of Dance. Brittany's focus has been on dance studio events and helping raise funds for Busy Bee's educational field trips. Brittany's new role as president of the Student Nursing Association involves coordinating student volunteers for the RN pinning ceremony as well as arranging NCLEX review courses and other class activities. On top of all this, Brittany continues to work more than the recommended hours for a nursing student. Because of her strength of character and searing grit, all of this works for her!

Brittany Gale soars! This third power encompasses the confidence that she demonstrates. In this past year, Brittany was a guest speaker and



panelist for two Rx Program events: a Meet and Greet for new nursing students and the First Year Experience Orientation. At both events, she offered sound, sage advice. To the first year RN students, she described the expectations of the program to help them understand the changes they will have to make in their personal and academic routines. To the first year students, she recommended study strategies and encouraged them to do their best. Brittany's poise, self-assurance and leadership make you believe there isn't anything she can't do.

Even with all these wonderful traits, Brittany has one quality that matters most to her: honesty. She is truthful about her life and her origins, choosing not to hide herself or worry about her humble life. She encourages us to learn to be happy with life and not spend time worrying or being embarrassed about where we come from. Brittany says, "We're all broken, but we can turn it around to be something great." Spoken like a true super person.

Visions Mid-Semester Gathering

Monday, October 22, 2018
12 :30-1 :30 p.m.
North Café



Rx Mid-Semester Gathering

Wednesday, October 24, 2018
12 :30 p.m.- 1 :30 p.m.
Multipurpose RM 115

MWCC Transfer Fair: What you need to know

by Todd Bennett

Visions Transfer Counselor

On October 18, you will see tables set up all around the South café with signs and representatives from more than 30 colleges.

Why are these colleges visiting MWCC? They are here to recruit you for transfer to their schools. Here is some advice for the event.

Who should attend? All students who are even remotely considering transfer.

What colleges should I visit at the fair? If you already have a college that you are interested in, definitely take this opportunity to speak to the representative from that college. Talk with them about your interest in the school. Share your goals and inquire about the program you are interested in. This is a great opportunity to build your first connection with a campus and to learn more about the college and the major that interests you.

What if I am unsure about my future plans or transfer? There are so many colleges attending the fair, so who should I speak with? Start by visiting with representatives from the state universities. This would include Fitchburg State, Worcester State, UMass-Lowell, and UMass Amherst. These institutions offer a quality education and are usually

the best value (lowest cost) so they make a lot of sense for most students.

Do I need to dress up? The admissions representatives are friendly and welcoming. You always want to present yourself professionally, but don't put too much pressure on yourself. This is a casual event. It is a chance to talk with someone without a lot of pressure, so go to the event and say hello to some of the admissions representatives.

Tidbits to consider

Many of the admissions representatives are graduates from the colleges they represent, so it can be nice to hear from someone about the specific attributes of the college that they enjoyed and found valuable.

All colleges have unique opportunities—these could include special scholarship programs, accelerated masters programs, internship opportunities, travel opportunities, or the ability to create your own major, etc. This is an opportunity to learn about some of the special opportunities at each school. The admissions representatives are a great way to learn about unique opportunities that you might not have found on a college's website.

Admissions representatives are here to recruit you so remember their job is to present their college in the most positive light possible.

What next?

As the TRIO transfer counselors, Alaina Lucchetti and I are happy to meet with you individually to discuss transfer. After the fair, we would be happy to talk with you about your experience. Which schools interested you and why? Do you have additional questions? Want to visit a college? Set up an appointment with us so we can discuss!

MWCC Transfer Fair

October 18, 2018
10-30a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
South Café

Talk to admissions representatives from:

Fitchburg State University
Nichols College
UMass Amherst
UMass Lowell
Worcester State University
Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI)
Keene State College
Emerson College
Elms College
Saint Joseph's College
Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (MCPHS)

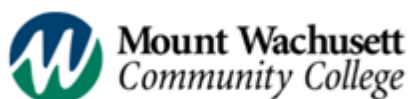
And many more!



Meet Alaina Lucchetti

Rx Transfer Counselor

As the newest member of the TRIO program, Alaina has enjoyed getting to know members of the MWCC staff and students over the past few weeks! Alaina received a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from UMass Amherst and a Master's degree in Education from Cambridge College. Before joining us at MWCC, Alaina worked in Special Education and School Guidance Counseling. When she's not at work, Alaina enjoys exploring New England and spending time with family and friends.



444 Green Street, Gardner, MA 01440-1000

Your October Checklist

- ✓ Stop by for your **four-week assessment**
- ✓ Attend and **participate in all classes**
- ✓ **Complete your 2019-2020 FAFSA**
- ✓ Attend your program's **Mid-Semester Gathering**
- ✓ Attend at least **one seminar**
- ✓ Read the weekly **eletter**
- ✓ **Check your email daily**
- ✓ Think about your **Spring 2019 Registration**, which begins Nov. 1

October 2018 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	2 TEAS Seminar 12:30-1:30 p.m. RM 202	3	4	5	6	
7	8 Columbus Day No Class All Campuses day and evening	9 Monday Schedule for all day classes all campuses Travel Breakfast 8:15 - 9:15 a.m. Murphy Room	10 Time Management 12:30 - 1:30 p.m. W11	11	12	13	
14	15	16 MWCC Financial Literacy Fair 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Commons	17	18 MWCC Transfer Fair 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. South Café	19 Transfer Trip to UMASS Amherst ** Sign up on Todd's Door**	20	
21	22 Visions Mid-Semester Gathering 12:30 - 1:30 p.m. North Café	23	24 Cycle 1: Last day of classes Rx Mid-Semester Gathering 12:30 - 1:30 p.m. RM 115	25	26	27	
28	29 Transfer Seminar: Healthcare Majors 12:30 - 1:30 p.m. RM W11	30	31 Cycle 2: First day of classes				
<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>							