



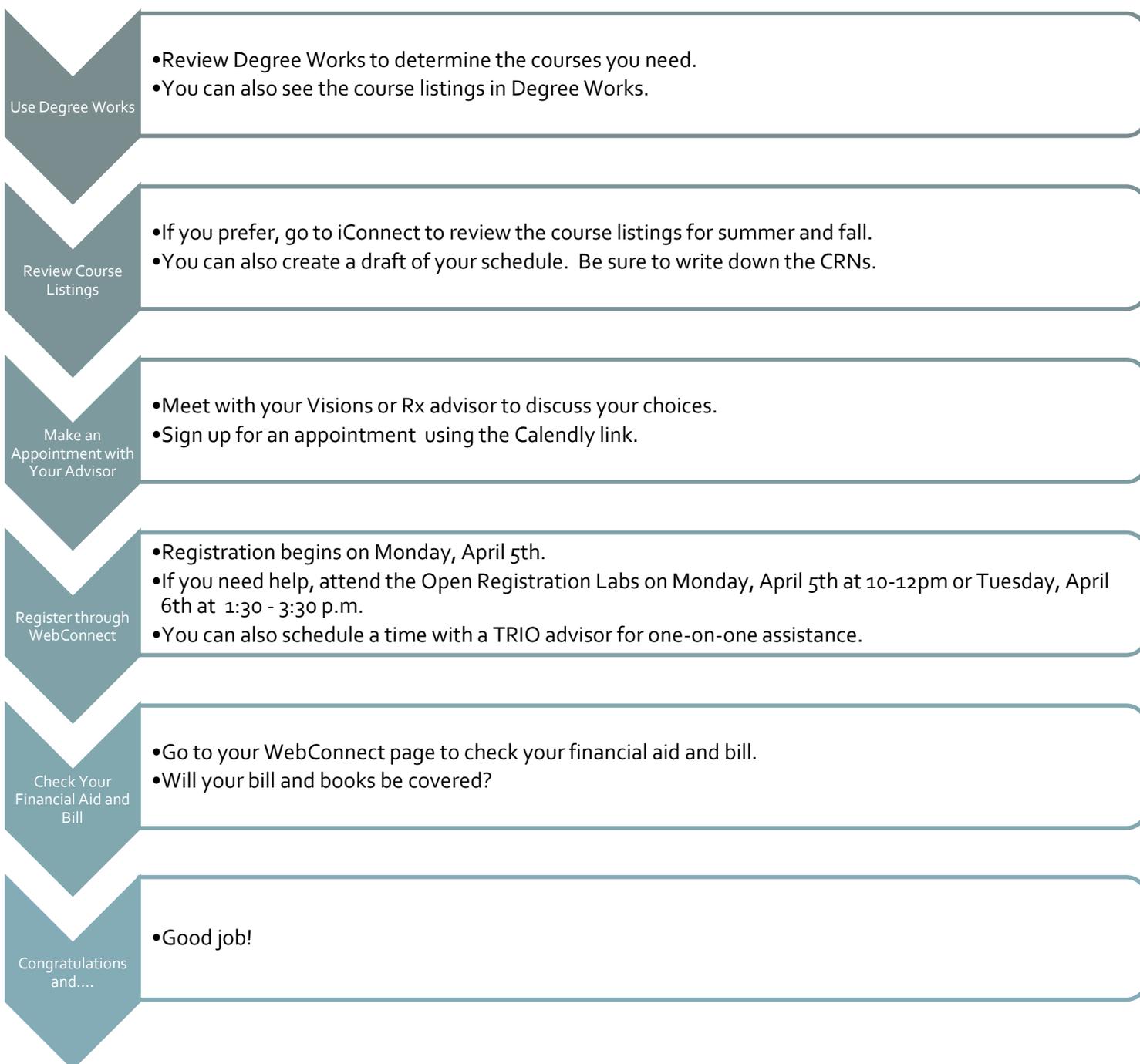
# Like the spring season, registration for summer *and* fall semesters has arrived!

by Alaina Lucchetti  
Rx Transfer Counselor

**When:** Current, continuing students have registration priority starting **April 5th**—new students have to wait! You can register after current student priority registration, but beware, you may not get all the classes you need at the times you want.

**Where:** Schedule your registration appointment using the individual advisor Calendly links provided in your email. For scheduling assistance, you can call 978-630-9297 or visit the Virtual Office  
<http://bit.ly/rxvisionsonline>.

**How to prepare:** Please see the graphic below for helpful information on how to make the most of your registration appointment.



# Tips for Summer Courses

By Catherine Maddox-Wiley  
Rx Retention Specialist

A summer course can benefit students in several ways, but is it the right choice for you? Are you prepared to take a fast-paced course in an online format? Summer courses can either go very well, very poorly or somewhere in the middle, so it is important that you make good choices when deciding to take summer courses. Below are information and recommendations to keep in mind.

## Dates to Know

- a. Registration for summer and fall begins April 5. Register early to get courses and professors you want.
- b. Full summer and Cycle 1 courses begin May 24.
- c. Cycle 2 courses begin July 12.
- d. Note: Selective Program students should consult with their professors or the Health Professions Division regarding start dates.

## Your Purpose and Readiness

Your reasons for taking a summer course may have an impact on how well you do. If you are required to be enrolled, the decision for summer courses has been made for you. If you choose, summer courses can help you accelerate completion of your certificates or degrees or make up for lighter loads that you may have taken in the fall and spring semesters. While some students prefer to keep their academic “chops” active, others may need a break. To make a sound decision, assess your reasons for taking summer courses and evaluate your level of motivation.

## Money

If you received financial aid in the fall and spring, you are likely eligible for aid in the summer. For summer aid, students typically need to enroll in two courses, especially if they take a loan. Most of you

have probably completed the 2020 – 2021 FAFSA. If not, do it ASAP. You are encouraged to have also completed the 2021 – 2022 FAFSA. Additionally, you may be eligible for free courses, so read your emails to ensure you don’t miss out! One last consideration: Are you paying out-of-pocket? You can sign up for the payment plan. Just be sure to sign up in time to make the first payment before summer courses start.

## Course Selection and Textbooks

Choose wisely! If you struggle with certain subjects, summer may not be the best time to take those courses. If possible, choose courses that you enjoy and that play to your strengths. You must also consider how many courses to take. Balance is key here. Students have found that one course during Cycle 1 and one during Cycle 2 have been manageable. Don’t forget your textbooks! It is crucial that you have them on time, so order early.

## Pace and Attendance

Summer Cycle 1 and Summer Cycle 2 courses run for four or five weeks, and full summer courses run for eight to ten weeks. In any case, the courses are expected to cover 14 weeks of full semester content. You should be prepared to study and do homework every day! Because of the pace of the courses, extensions on assignments and exams aren’t really a “thing” during the summer. Your professors will expect you to keep up with the work and to attend every in-person and online class session. If you have vacation plans, you will need access to a computer. If you work, make sure to create a time management schedule that accounts for daily coursework.

## Time Management: Homework/Study Time

To ensure your success, create a study plan and stick to it. To help you stay on track, write assignments and due dates on a to-do list or on a calendar. Take note: Most assignments are listed on the syllabus, but professors may also assign other homework that is unlisted. Build time into your week to accommodate for the unexpected.

## Tutoring

Tutoring will be available in the summer and is worth the investment of time! To access the Academic Support Center for information about tutoring, go to: <https://mwcc.edu/academics/library-academic-support-center/free-tutoring/>

## Breaks

It will be summer, and the weather will be great! To boost your mood, schedule time to enjoy some free time. Yes, you’re busy, but 10 minutes here or an hour there can help you recharge and focus better.

## TRIO Advisor Assistance

Your Visions and Rx advisors can help you decide if summer courses are right for you and help you determine if you have the financial means to cover the courses. Schedule your appointment using one of the following methods:

- a. Use the advisors’ Calendly schedule links which have been emailed to you and included in the weekly E-Letters.
- b. Call the TRIO office number: 978-630-9297 or 978-630-9453
- c. Visit TRIO’s Virtual Office, Monday – Thursday, 9:00am – 6:00pm and Friday, 8:00am – 4:00pm:

<http://bit.ly/rxvisionsonline>

# Finals Countdown

By Lauren Clifford

Visions Retention Specialist

The end of the semester is going to be a busy time, and you will probably feel some stress during the last few weeks. These tips will help you manage your work better and not only produce your best work, but feel less stressed in the process.

Here are my **top tips** for having a smooth end of the semester:

- Start preparing for finals earlier than you think you need to (I recommend April 19th this semester)
- Make sure you have all important dates written down in one place (planner, calendar, or check out the link below)
- In addition to due dates, give yourself a start date and a half-way done date for large projects
- Take into account the time you'll need to access resources (tutoring, getting the needed books, finding sources, etc.)
- Review assignments earlier than you think you'll want to start them. That way on the day you actually want to begin working you won't be thrown off by realizing you're missing a key piece.
- Don't forget to set aside time for life events. You may have important, non-academic commitments during these

*Don't let the end of the semester sneak up on you!*

last couple of weeks, make sure you plan for them.

- Ask for help when you need it! The earlier, the better!

**Check out our FINALS COUNTDOWN PRINTABLE PLANNER:**

[LINK HERE](#)

**Want more information? Attend one of our live sessions:**

Thursday, April 15 at 12:30pm

Tuesday, April 20 at 5:30pm

<http://bit.ly/rxvisionsonline>

# Making the Most of Your Summer

By Rachel Davis

Staff Assistant

The last day of classes is Monday May 10<sup>th</sup>, but who is counting? The end of the semester is on the horizon and things are changing. Now that you aren't going to be in class, how will you spend your time?

Looking back over the past year, we have seen our lifestyles change. Restrictions and guidelines have changed how we socialize, travel, and more. But one thing that hasn't changed and is more important now than ever is the opportunity to spend your time working on yourself. 2021 is about YOU and achieving your goals! This includes activities that promote growth and learning.

## Internship and Volunteer Opportunities

Learning from a mentor and gaining practical experience is valuable in

establishing connections and building a career. There are various employers and companies that offer summer internships for college students. Volunteering at local organizations and community partners is another way of gaining hands-on experience while also helping others.

## Career Planning

Explore career options and think about what want to do with your education and experience. This can help identify courses that would be related to your field of interest. Websites like Career Step and Mind Edge are useful resources accessible online. Scheduling a meeting with your advisor is another resource available.

## Financial Literacy

Knowledge on basic money management and budgeting is beneficial to learn and helps you make financial

decisions. Also, finding ways to lower the cost of your education can save you money. College Net and College Board are valuable resources when researching scholarships. The Visions Program offers advising and seminars/workshops for financial literacy, we can help you navigate scholarships, grant aid, and FASFA applications!



# Four Ways to Adapt to Change and This “New Normal”

By Kayla Coates  
Staff Assistant

With the one year anniversary of the pandemic behind us, it's a lot to take in. We all have many feelings on how this past year was for each of us. It's safe to say that for everyone, we are happy that this anniversary and year are in the past. But you might be asking yourself, what's the best way to move on from this? Here are some tips on how to move forward in the right direction from this anniversary and how to make this year a more positive one.

## Take some time to reflect on this past year for you.

In order to move on from our past, sometimes we need to reflect on our past in order to get on the right path for our future. This of course is not always easy but my best advice is don't be too hard on yourself! You made it through a challenging year and you should be proud of that!

## After reflecting on the past year, what would you like to focus on accomplishing this year?

Being able to focus on goals and aspirations is a positive way to move forward in this process. Dwelling on things that you couldn't accomplish in 2020 won't help you complete them in 2021. Reflection is great in order to move forward but don't stay stuck in the past. You can't change what happened but you can take steps and have an action plan for right now which will help you complete your goals.

## Recognizing Changes

This past year has changed our lives in so many ways. When moving on from 2020, it's important to recognize that things have changed. Ignoring this will make adapting to this new year and “new normal” more of a challenge. By recognizing these changes that have

happened in your own life, whether that's in your everyday routine, steps for your future or your goals, that doesn't mean that you can't pursue them or that they won't change for the better. It means that you acknowledge these changes, adapt the best way to these changes possible, and make a new plan on how you want to accomplish your goals.

## Asking for Advice

When it comes to a time like this, asking for advice never hurts. Having that second or multiple opinions can help you see a situation in a different light. Different perspectives can help you learn an effective and maybe even a new way to complete a goal. You could also learn new steps to help you make some changes in your life for the better and overall, give you some clarity.

# Career Conference Recap

By Mary Roth  
Professional Writing Tutor

When people think of college students and spring break, they automatically think of the beach, fun and more fun. However, for the Visions and Rx students who attended the Third Annual TRIO Spring Break Career Conference, spring break provided an opportunity to prepare for job searching and upcoming career events. This one day event kicked off with an hour of virtual networking where participants had an opportunity to practice introducing themselves, giving elevator speeches and meet staff, other students and guest panelists from community agencies. Following this, students listened to Dean Cycon, the

founder and president of Dean's Beans Organic Coffee, relate his journey from working as a corporate environmental lawyer to founding his company and discussing his company's role in promoting self-sufficiency, sustainable organic agriculture and preserving cultures in developing nations. The remainder of the day was filled with a panel discussion with local workforce development representatives on the regional employment outlook and resources for job seekers, presentations on résumé writing, the role of community engagement in gaining experience, how participating in campus activities

promote job skills and the opportunity for individual résumé review, mock interviews and to meet with a vocational rehabilitation counselor from the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission. The day concluded with additional workshops on career exploration tools, personality and career choices, résumé and cover letter writing, preparing for interviews and how to handle illegal interview questions.

If you missed the Spring Break Career Conference, you can visit the Rx & Visions Programs' Blackboard page to view videos and materials to help you with your job search.

# Let's Celebrate Our Graduates

The following students are December 2020, May 2021 and August 2021 graduates

In total, these students have earned **32 certificates** and **88 associate degrees**

Visions Students		Rx Students
Jonathan Acevedo	Paige Landry	Marlene Boucher-Ripley
Melody Bovino	Kristopher Madden	Yvone Brown
Cameron Breault	James Mahoney	Ellie Burton
Shane Brennan	John Maron	Brianna Cauley
Dawn Bucchiere	Clairet Martinez	Cassandra Conrad
Tavish Burns	Sherrri Martinez	Rebecca DeMarco
Jovonn Calhoun	Connor Martino	Christabel Erhagbai
Megan Cammuso	Arthur McDonald	Rylie Faulkner
Helena Carter	Taylor McLellan	Lindsey Healy
Rachel Cieslik	Erik McMaster	Jacqueline Hobbs
Rebecca Cormier	Julianna Melko	Jamie Howson
Lisa Daniel	Chenell Morris	Irene Jimenez
Suelita Delorme	Hannah Morse	Alison Mayorga
Anna Dexter	Tazia Newton	Alexis McClure
Alice Dower	Joseph Noe	Lisa McMaster
Jayson Drop	Christopher Ouellet	Bailey Newell-McCart
David Duprey	Amy Page	Diana Okongo
John Dutting	Jeremy Parker	Heather Palmer
Katelyn Easler	Emily Payson	Amanda Parra
Diana Fage	April Pellegrino	Chelsea Pritchett
Jennifer Fitzpatrick	Brendan Pilkington	Trisha Race
Taylor Fitzpatrick	Rechell Reinoso Sanchez	Taylor Rautiola
David Fortin	Nadja Rivera-Derr	Tracey Redkey
Matthew Frappier	Guadalupe Ruiz	Dianna Szabo
Rosangel Frias	Denise Seminoff	Cassandra Tessier
Jennifer Gariepy	Hanna Shailer	Eric Weeks-Paige
William Gerlach	Tricia Sicard	Sophy Yim
Samantha Giblin	Clarissa Simmers-Swanson	
Anthony Haimila	Alaisha Spofford	
Drew Hallisey	Charlie Stellato	
Brendan Harrington	Kathryn Surett	
Robert Howard	Tiana Taylor	
Celeste Infantino	Justin Tralongo	
Krystina Johnson	Haley Vaillancourt	
Joseph Johnston	Kyle Vaillancourt	
Felix Jordan	Scott Walters	
Nicholas Kugel	Kaitlyn Winsper	
Wilfred Lambert		

\*\*This list is based on information available at the time of distribution.

# Transfer-Out Panel Discussion and Seminar

By Sarah Pingeton

Visions Transfer Counselor

For all students transferring to 4-year schools in the fall of 2021, keep your eyes on your email for an invitation to this virtual event on Tuesday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, at 12:00. Sarah P. and Alaina will be there to give you expert tips on the process of enrolling and registering at your next school and there will be a panel of recent Visions and Rx graduates who have transferred available to tell you about their experiences and the things to watch out for. This event will be both informative and a celebration of your great accomplishments!



## Leading in a Virtual World

By Sara Williams

Program Manager

This semester, Sarah P. and I led a group of seven Visions and Rx students through the TRIO Leaders Program. As I reflect on this experience, I am most drawn to the profound insight and personal growth we witnessed.

During the orientation, when asked why they were interested in leadership training now, a commitment to weekly hour-long Zoom meetings for eight weeks and hosting both Mid-Semester Gatherings, they replied that they knew they were entering a virtual world and would need to be comfortable leading in a virtual space. A year into the pandemic, these leaders understood that being able to lead virtually would help them in both their personal and professional goals.

We focused our session on navigating change, communicating effectively and managing group dynamics. We discussed conflict, problem solving and creative thinking within our Zoom sessions. As we touched on the various themes of

leadership, students also took turns leading warm-up activities related to the topic of the day. Between insightful discussion questions and fun activities, each leader had the opportunity to plan an activity and was provided feedback from the group.

Throughout these weeks, we also shared our personal challenges with leadership, the responsibility of the role and how our image of a leader has changed. This level of commitment, collaboration and respect from this group of students demonstrated the very best in leadership. Their supportive nature and eagerness to encourage each other reflects their core values, something that cannot be trained in an eight week program.

As I reflect on this experience, I can see the growth of personal confidence in each of these leaders and I will carry their insights for years to come.

## Where are our students going?

The following list includes colleges and universities who have received transfer applications from Visions and Rx students

Anna Maria College  
Assumption University  
Bentley University  
Boston College  
Boston University  
Bridgewater State University  
College of the Atlantic  
Evergreen State College  
Fine Mortuary College  
Fitchburg State University  
Granite State College  
Keene State College  
Northeastern University  
Salem State University  
UMass Amherst  
UMass Boston  
UMass Lowell  
Unity College  
University of Maine Machias  
University of Maine Orono  
University of Michigan  
Westfield State University  
Worcester State University

Don't see your college on the list? Make sure to connect with Sarah P. and Alaina who will help you navigate a smooth transfer to your next college or university!

# Curious about Investing?

By Angela Snyder

Visions Academic Advisor

So you've gotten your stimulus check, now what? After you've taken care of any immediate needs, you might be looking for some creative ways to make this money work for you. When considering investing you should first think about your long term goals. College is a great time to tuck some money away and let it grow for the next 30+ years. In fact, time is your greatest wealth-building asset right now.

If you're looking to "invest it and forget it" a smart option would be to consider common stock and real estate, as they are the only two asset classes that have grown faster than the rate of inflation over time. Therefore, equities, such as individual common stocks and stock mutual funds are a fiscally sound idea. Real estate has also shown to be a solid long term investment. Real estate investment can be done in one of two ways, either in the form of a personal residence (you can usually get a solid return on your investment if you stay there for 5 years or more), or a mutual fund that invests in real estate holdings, called a REIT.

A REIT is a company that owns and operates income producing real estate property. REITs allow individual investors to enjoy the benefit of owning equity stakes in large scale real estate companies while avoiding the troubles of property management. Because of the strict tax rules for REITs, they don't have to pay tax at the corporate level which allows them to take advantage of cheaper financing and eventually allowing them to grow bigger and pay out larger dividends.

There are three types of REITs with specific classifications at each level. You

must take the time to understand each type and their specific parameters before deciding which is best for you.

While common stock and Real Estate are dependable investments, there are other options. Have you heard of the micro-investing apps like [Acorns](#) and [Stash](#)? They allow you to begin investing with relatively small amounts of money. Acorns in fact, works by using your spare change to begin your investment portfolio. Acorns connects to your credit card and rounds up your purchases to the next dollar and uses that spare change to build your investments. Stash also offers the ability to round up your purchase amounts and uses that additional change to build your investment account. These accounts typically require a minimum investment of **\$5 or less** and you can open the account right away.

Acorns and Stash are examples of robo-advisor solutions. Robo-advisors, build and manage portfolios for you so you don't have to choose any investments yourself. It's far easier and less time consuming to go with a robo-advisor solution as long as you're not particular about the type of stock you're investing in. These accounts offer instant diversification because they contain shares of multiple companies like a mutual fund, but trade like individual stocks. So, if you're thinking you're more interested in buying individual shares of *specific* stocks, these options might not be the best fit for you. You'll probably want to learn more about how to buy/trade individual stocks.

The good news about these micro-investing apps is that your money is insured by the SIPC. Even though your investments are insured, be aware your

*investment* losses are NOT covered by any type of insurance. Micro-investing apps are a great way to get started in the investment habit without too large a risk and without having to do a lot of preparatory research.

The decision to invest is one of the most important decisions you can make. The earlier you decide to begin investing, the better off your long term results will be. If you're reading this article, you're already heading in the right direction, because you're at least *thinking* of potentially investing. Now you just have to decide which investment tool is right for you. You'll need to consider risk preference, your desired level of involvement in the trading process, term of the investment and of course initial investment amount. There is certainly a lot to consider, but with an unexpected stimulus check burning a hole in your pocket, it might be the perfect time to get started on the road to investing in your future!



## Original sources:

<https://www.nerdwallet.com/best/investing/investment-apps>

<https://www.investopedia.com/articles/younginvestors/12/best-investments-for-young-people.asp>

# Student Spotlight: Paige Landry

By Dawn Babineau

Visions Learning Specialist

Paige Landry is the focus of this edition's student spotlight. Paige is a student that has realized the importance of making a commitment to herself, her studies, and her community.

Paige has completed a certificate and is in the final stretch of completing an Associate Degree in Human Services. In the fall she intends to continue her Human Services/Interdisciplinary studies at UMASS Amherst's University without Walls. Every semester with MWCC she has consistently made either the Dean's or President's lists. She is an active member of multiple honor and leadership societies and social groups on campus. At graduation she is in line to receive several recognitions including the prestigious 29 That Shine Scholarship and a Newman Civic Fellowship. As part of the legacy, she will leave for the college, her final semester practicum has focused on the launching of a Diversity and Inclusion Center on campus. Paige has also recently become engaged, is planning her wedding and in search of her first home purchase.

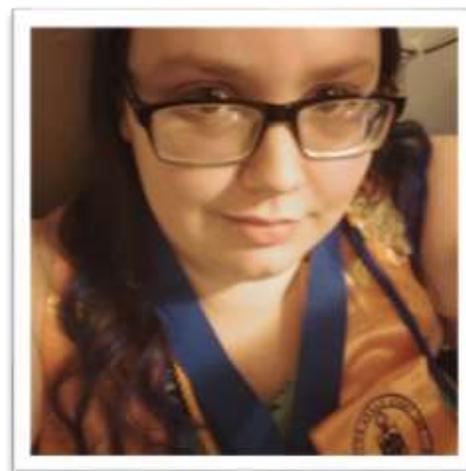
While all the aforementioned accomplishments are immensely impressive, Paige has also achieved this level of success while also overcoming some obstacles in her learning pathway. Paige has had vision challenges her entire life, and at the age of nineteen, she was diagnosed with Retinitis Pigmentosa, a rare genetic condition. She says that Retinitis Pigmentosa is a newer, progressive disease that affects everyone differently. In Paige's case, some symptoms include contrast and light sensitivity, night blindness, limited peripheral vision and color blindness. At the age of 24 she was deemed legally blind.

Prior to attending college, Paige spent some time as a student at the Carroll Center for the Blind. At this center she learned about adaptive equipment and strategies to prepare herself for her future in a primarily sighted world.

As someone with so much academic success, Paige was asked to share some insights and recommendations for exceeding in college with a visual impairment. She shared that while she has tried many different forms of adaptive equipment, her software of preference is included right on her home computer. She shared that Windows has a built-in magnifier component, has a reader component called Narrator, and affords ease of access to options such as changing contrast, and changing color scheme including those for pointer and text size. She said that Windows even has a night light which dims the screen for light sensitivity. According to Paige, the best feature is that the system provides automatic updates. Many other systems she has used fall short with maintenance of updates. Her second favorite software is called Natural Reader. Paige says sometimes readers stumble over pictures and words in charts and graphs. Natural Reader provides the option to copy and paste words into other formats for easier recognition.

While adaptive equipment has been very helpful, Paige also says that the process is not flawless. Often when the text is enlarged, it does not align properly with the words and pictures on the page, or the image becomes distorted. Sometimes reading software misses fluctuations of print and fonts and may skip over text, especially within a picture. A challenge in the classroom is that the teacher might say to read certain pages and the enlarged text might format to a totally different rotation of pages.

The most important tip that Paige wants to share is to be mindful that each person's scope of visual impairments is unique. No two person's needs, even with the same diagnosis, are the same. Therefore, Paige is a strong advocate of having open communication with your instructors and with the Disability Support Services office. She feels it is



important to let others know what you need.

At MWCC and within our TRIO department we are grateful to Paige for sharing these insights and for all her contributions to the college.

## Paige's Roles and Accomplishments

### MWCC CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES:

President of Phi Theta Kappa  
 President Delta Alpha Pi  
 President SAGA (Sexuality and Gender Alliance)  
 Member of Sigma Alpha Pi (National Society of Leadership and Success)  
 Member of Civic Engagement  
 Member of Student Government  
 Participant in several donation drives and activities on campus such as Mask Project, Virtual Learning Survival guide, yoga events and fundraising for veteran's projects.  
 Co-Developing a new Diversity and Inclusion Center on campus

### IN THE COMMUNITY:

Volunteer at Lowell Alliance Diaper Bank (food pantry for diapers)  
 Multiple donations drives and community events

### AWARD NOMINATIONS:

29 That Shine award (Given to only 29 students in state of Massachusetts)  
 Newman Civic Fellowship Award (Only 212 recipients throughout US and Mexico)



## Annual Awards Ceremony

Monday, May 17, 2021

12:00 p.m.

On Zoom

Every year, we celebrate the end of the academic year and recognize students who have demonstrated both initiative and progress throughout the fall and spring semesters. We also recognize our graduates and transfer students.

Watch your email for more information and join us for this great event as we celebrate student success.

## April & May List of Important Dates

Check your email daily for the most up-to-date information on program events and campus news.

<i>Thursday, April 1</i>	TEAS Workshop 12:30-1:30 p.m. Zoom	<i>Monday, May 3- Thursday, May 6</i>	Fuel for Finals
<i>Monday, April 5- Friday April 16</i>	<b>Current Student Registration Begins for Summer and Fall</b>	<i>Monday, May 10</i>	Full Semester: Last day of classes
<i>Monday, April 5</i>	Open Lab Registration 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Zoom	<i>Monday, May 17</i>	<b>Annual TRIO Awards Ceremony</b> 12:00 p.m. Zoom
<i>Tuesday, April 6</i>	Open Lab Registration 1:30 --3:30 p.m. Zoom	<i>Tuesday, May 18</i>	<b>Transfer Out Seminar</b> 12:00-1:00 p.m. Zoom
<i>Thursday, April 15</i>	<b>Finals Countdown</b> 12:30 p.m. Zoom	<i>Wednesday, May 19</i>	<b>MWCC Graduation</b>
<i>Monday, April 19</i>	<b>Patriot's Day:</b> No classes all campuses, day & evening	<p>Did you miss a seminar or workshop? Log into the Rx &amp; Visions Programs' Blackboard for the recording and materials. Complete the survey to earn attendance credit!</p>	
<i>Tuesday, April 20</i>	Transfer Seminar Workshop 12:30 p.m. Transfer Seminar for Healthcare Majors 12:30 p.m. Finals Countdown 5:30 p.m. Zoom		
<i>Thursday, April 22</i>	Financial Literacy Seminar: Successful Goal Setting 12:30 p.m. Zoom		

If you have a disability and require accommodations in order to participate fully in program activities, please contact the program director to discuss your specific needs.  
Affirmative Action/ Equal Opportunity Institution

The Visions & Rx Programs at Mount Wachusett Community College are funded by TRIO Student Support Services grants through the U.S. Department of Education. For more information, please visit [mwcc.edu/trioss](http://mwcc.edu/trioss).

