

TRiO

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

April & May 2017

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE VISIONS AND RX PROGRAMS

IN THIS ISSUE

Keeping TRIO Strong

by Gaurav Khanna,

Director of the Visions and Rx Programs

For most of our students, TRIO begins and ends with their interaction with the Visions and Rx Program staff at Mount Wachusett Community College. Some of you are alumni of other TRIO programs like Talent Search or Upward Bound or have used the TRIO Educational Opportunity Center at the Leominster campus, but did you know that there is an organization that is continuously working to keep the dream of opportunity alive for students from first generation and low income backgrounds and students with disabilities?

The Council for Opportunity in Education (COE) is the national advocacy organization for TRIO in Washington D.C. Colleges that host TRIO programs across the country joined together to create COE because they realized that without a unified voice, TRIO programs were at risk of losing funding with changes in political priorities. COE supports TRIO programs through professional development and by working with the Department of Education and Congress to advocate for funding for TRIO programs.

A major part of this advocacy is the annual Policy Seminar in Washington D.C. In the spring, TRIO staff and alumni from all over the

country travel to D.C. on their own time to meet with their representatives in Congress. This year more than 600 people traveled to Washington. The main focus was the proposed 10% cut to TRIO funding in the 2018-2019 budget. This would result in a loss of services for 92,000 students nationwide. Seminar attendees worked to educate congressional staff about the important role of TRIO and alumni shared how TRIO programs made a difference in their lives.

This year, Massachusetts had three TRIO alumni and fourteen staff who met with all eleven congressional offices. We are fortunate that all our representatives are supportive of TRIO. However, it is important to maintain this visibility and awareness of our programs. As someone said in D.C. "If you are not at the table when funding for your programs is being discussed, then your programs are on the menu."

If your TRIO programs are important to you, make sure to talk about them to your friends and family. Personal stories are the most powerful way to help people understand the importance of services and programs that benefit more than 800,000 students across the country.



Maximize Your Summer

The Visions and Rx staff share strategies to maximize your summer.



We Celebrate Student Success

We know how hard you work and we like to brag about our student successes!

Rx Program

VISIONS Program

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



Mount Wachusett
Community College

AA/EEO Institution

TCB: Taking Care of Business

By Catherine Maddox-Wiley
Rx Retention Counselor

Bachman Turner Overdrive sang a song about it, and popular culture turned it into a catchy slang term, but the taking care of business concept is as important today as it was in 1973. Here's why:

As a student, you may feel that your primary responsibility is to go to class and study, but you know you can't do that unless you pay attention to a few other details. To help you take care of business, use your iConnect / WebConnect account, which is a great TCB tool, and meet with your Visions and Rx advisors for additional guidance.

We encourage you to take care of business earlier rather than later. If you can find an hour to TCB in August, you can certainly find an hour in June. You'll be glad you did!

Your TCB list:

- 1. FAFSA:** If you haven't completed your financial aid application for 2017 - 18, put this newsletter down and do it now! Use your 2015 tax return and call it a day!
- 2. Register Early:** You know the courses you need, the professors you want, and the days and times you can take classes. So why worry in August, when you can be happy in April?
- 3. College Health Insurance:** Waive this insurance in June if you have your own. Don't spend an extra \$1,600+ to cover this second insurance plan if you don't need it. You'll have to use financial aid and your personal funds to cover the cost.
- 4. Financial Aid Award / Student Bill:** Begin checking your financial records in June for accuracy. Did you receive financial aid? How much is the bill? Did you receive enough aid to cover the bill? Do you have money for books? If you were offered a loan, did you decide to accept all of it or just some of it? Did

you go through the acceptance process? Hopefully, you know the answer to these questions no later than July.

5. TEAS for Nursing and Rad Tech: Create your own TEAS course and commit to a study and practice schedule in May, June and July. PN applicants should take the exam for the first time no later than early July. RN and Rad Tech applicants should take the exam for the first time no later than August. Depending on your preparation, it may take two attempts to pass.

6. Summer Courses: If you register for a summer course, remember to either attend the course or drop it. Failure to officially drop will result in you owing the money for the course.

There's nothing left to it, but to do it!

Do you have a catchy phrase that motivates you to get a job done? Share it with the Visions and Rx Staff!

Career Advice

by Mary Roth
Visions Professional Writing Tutor

No matter where you are on your academic journey, summer offers ample opportunities to develop your career path. Here are some tips for each stage of your journey.

If you are new to college and not sure if you are in the right major, invest time in learning about yourself and researching careers that are a good fit for your personality, interests and skills.

The Visions and Rx staff can assist you with career exploration, interest assessments and developing next steps, including choosing a major and selecting courses. Stop by the TRIO Complex or call 978-630-9297 to schedule your one-on-one appointment.

Explore careers from the comfort of your computer by visiting the Massachusetts Career Information Systems or MassCIS website. This free, comprehensive website includes online interest assessments, current information about careers and their employment outlooks within Massachusetts and across the United States. Visit www.intocareers.org for more information.

MWCC also offers the Career Coach website, which gives detailed information about jobs that match MWCC majors. For more

information, please visit the website <https://mwcc.emsicareercoach.com>.

The North Central Career Center is another great resource. Located next to MWCC's Leominster Campus at 100 Erdman Way, the Center offers free workshops that can assist you in finding a career. Contact them at 978-534-1481 or www.ccnm.com.

If you are partway through college and need experience, summer is a great time to complete some volunteer work or find a summer job in your field.

MWCC's Job Opportunities for Students and Alums webpage lists job openings, as well as volunteer opportunities for students and alumni seeking part-time, full-time and volunteer work. Coordinated by MWCC's Career Planning and Placement Office, this page lists a wide range of job openings in our region. For more information, visit <http://mwcc.edu/career/career/jobs/>.

North Central Career Center also offers weekly job listings on their Hot Jobs Listing and on the Massachusetts JobQuest site. For the local jobs listings, visit www.ccnm.com and click on the link under the Hot Jobs heading. To access the JobQuest site, visit <https://jobquest.detma.org/jobquest>. This helpful site gives you the option to create a profile and to search for jobs based on region or skills, as well as containing up-to-date information on job fairs and other opportunities.

If you are interested in volunteer opportunities, the United Way of North Central Massachusetts Volunteer Center webpage lists many positions with regional agencies in need of caring volunteers. This site is easy to use and lists positions with graphics identifying the skills or interests that are the best fit for each position. For more information, visit the website <http://volunteer.uwnm.org/need/>.

If you have just graduated and are about to enter the workforce, summer is a good time to begin your job search.

For help with resumes and cover letters, visit MWCC's Career Planning and Placement Coordinator, Patricia Brewerton. Located in Room 135 on the Gardner campus, Pat can review your resume and assist you in revising it to catch prospective employers' attention. You can also reach her at 978-630-9254 or pbrewerton@mwcc.mass.edu.

Lastly, some online resources to consider when searching for jobs include:

www.indeed.com
www.careerbuilder.com
<https://jobquest.detma.org/jobquest>

So, what are you waiting for? Get out there and start building that career!

The Signs and Sounds of Spring

by Lisa Naze
Rx Transfer Counselor

After a long winter, there is nothing better than experiencing longer days, warmer temperatures, the smell of fresh air and the sounds of spring. The world has once again sprung to life as plants start to bud and the sounds of peepers and birds chirping fill the air where snow once blanketed the earth with cold and silence. As a graduate student in Western New York, my roommate and I would walk the campus in search of signs of spring. Spring meant warmer weather, new beginnings, the end of a long winter and the end of the semester! As a wild life biologist, my roommate worked with notable ornithologists and naturalists and she taught me about birding which has become a hobby of mine over the years. As the birds begin their migration, it is a wonderful opportunity to observe the diversity of nature. I'd like to share with you some of my favorite feathered friends you can look for in the coming weeks.

Black Capped Chickadee:

Although native year round, the chickadee is one of my favorite birds to look for throughout the year. It is also the Massachusetts state bird. With its black cap and big, white cheeks it has an over-sized head for such a small bird. It's easy to pick out its call of hello: *chickadee-dee-dee*.



Red Winged Blackbird:

This bird is a familiar sight among cattails, roadsides and marshy areas. It is usually one of the first birds that makes its way back to Massachusetts during migration. Making their appearance in mid to late March, look for the scarlet and yellow shoulder patches that adorn the black feathers. Listen for the call of *conk-a-ree* which is one of my favorite calls to imitate.



White Throated Sparrow:

This small bird is noted by its facial markings of black eye strip, white crown and yellow spot above the eye. Sometimes difficult to spot, the call of *Poor Sam Peabody, Peabody, Peabody* is unmistakable.



Wood Thrush:

The haunting call of the wood thrush, *eee-oh-lay*, that is heard usually in early morning and dusk is a sure sign that spring has sprung. Related to the robin, this reclusive bird is cinnamon in color with a spotted white breast. You can find them in forests answering each other in harmony.



Join me for bird watching walk on April 21 at 9:00 a.m. We'll meet at the TRIO Complex

Getting Outside this Summer

by Dawn Babineau
Visions Learning Specialist

Visions and Rx students who attended the recent trip to the Boston Museum of Science viewed an IMAX production highlighting our National Parks system. It's been a while since I attended an IMAX feature, but one word sticks in my mind as I think of the experience—Amazing. We felt like we were actually visiting each location. One moment we were soaring over canyons, then we were bouncing over raging water rapids and at one point found ourselves in a hidden snow crystalized cave I can only imagine that the filmmakers must have strapped a camera onto a drone to get such amazing footage. It definitely helps that the IMAX theatre stimulates your senses by sight, sound and maybe smell on a large screen dwarfing your peripheral vision limits.

As I watched, I thought, I want to go there and there and there! Then I thought, why not? Why not visit some of the local National Parks?

Did you know that the US has thousands of state and federal parks—many of them right here on the East Coast? In Maine,

only a few states over, Acadia State Park awaits your visit. I have visited the Everglades in Florida and I can tell you riding an open airboat over alligator infested waters is very exciting.

An annual season pass for entrance to over 2,000 National Parks and recreation sites is available for \$80 per car. The National Parks webpage lists over 45 pages of places to visit. If you are a member of the military, disabled or a senior citizen, the passes may be free or at a reduced rate. Park volunteers receive a free annual pass to all locations. Also, don't forget to check with your local library and recreation center for free passes



Students and staff enjoyed their trip to the Museum of Science on March 15.

to Massachusetts state parks and museums.

To find out more information about the National parks, visit the web site <https://www.nps.gov/playourvisit/passes.htm>.

Free, Fun Fridays!

by Paula Clapp
Visions Learning Specialist- Math

Highland Street Foundation's Free Fun Fridays offer visitors no-cost admission to many of the most treasured cultural venues in Massachusetts. This program was created to increase access and enrichment opportunities for children and families throughout Massachusetts during the summer months. Every Friday, from the end of June through the end of August, multiple sites are open for free. The 2017 schedule has not been posted yet, but check here to see last summer's venues. The new ones should be posted around the end of May. <http://highlandstreet.org/programs/free-fun-fridays>

Student Spotlight: Elizabeth LaPan

by Heidi Cruz

Visions Learning Specialist- Writing

Elizabeth LaPan grew up in Gardner, but has lived in several different towns. She always ends up back in her home town. Several years ago, Elizabeth realized that she no longer wanted to work in Human Services or in a factory because she did not truly enjoy the work. Elizabeth decided to attend MWCC because it was local and convenient for her lifestyle and offered the opportunity for her to prepare for a career in a field she would actually enjoy.

Elizabeth chose to major in Accounting because she enjoys the work and wanted something with career flexibility, such as telecommuting, which would allow her to spend more time with her four-year-old son. Elizabeth is actively involved in campus life. She is a full-time student, President of the Parent Support Group (PSG), Secretary of the Alpha Beta Gamma International Honor Society and has a work-study position in the Academic Advising Center.

Elizabeth is proud of her ability to network within her community to provide services for her peers. She recently arranged a large donation from Ginny's Helping Hands for the PSG's Dress for Success event: "I think it's a wonderful thing, the College is able to put on a job fair for the students but a major part of being present at the event is being

able to present yourself professionally. I'm so glad I am able to help the students "Dress for Success".

Outside of her busy campus life, Elizabeth is also an active member of a non-profit astronomy club, Aldrich Astronomy Society, Inc. She enjoys participating in STEM outreach events the club provides to communities across the state. She believes it's important to expose young minds to science and encourage imagination in engineering. Her father is the president of Aldrich. She has been a member since she was a child and can't wait to get her son involved as well.

Elizabeth's ultimate goal with her education is to achieve a career that she enjoys and will provide financial security for herself and her family. She will be graduating with a certificate in Accounting this spring and will continue on to her Associate's in Accounting in the fall. She is looking forward to graduating and starting the next chapter of her life.



TRANSFER STUDENTS

Our students have been accepted to a number of great schools. Here are some of the institutions:

BENTLEY UNIVERSITY
BOSTON UNIVERSITY
FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY
MOUNT IDA COLLEGE
NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY
NICHOLS COLLEGE
UMASS AMHERST
UMASS AMHERST'S UNIVERSITY
WITHOUT WALLS
UMASS BOSTON
UMASS DARTMOUTH
UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAVEN

If you are transferring this fall, please contact Lisa or Tasia. They can help you transition from MWCC to your four-year institution.



Courtney Wentz poses with UMASS Dartmouth mascot, Arnie

TRIO
 STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Annual Awards Ceremony

Monday, May 15, 2017

12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

South Café

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 mail for your invitation and join us for this great event as we celebrate student success.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEW RN STUDENTS!

Eva Beland

Priscilla dePaula

Brittany Gale

Gabrielle Gendron

Kelly Gorham

Jessica Guyer

Daniel Ho

Erin Jones

Jammie Mascitti

Felisha Martin

Tatiana Mesa

Brittany Orsalock

Renee Tenney

Let's Celebrate Our Graduates

The following students are December 2016, May 2017 and August 2017 graduates.

In total, these students earned **31 certificates** and **73 associate degrees!**

Visions Students			Rx Students		
Leslie Ackers	Sarah Clark	Kendyll Knight	Emily Seeley	Katherynn Alden	Cassandra Lavigne
Raina Aiello	Daniel Clifford	Stevie LaBelle	Carl Selmer	Madeline Allard	Aimee Matson
Jasson Alvarado	Michel Cocuzza	Elizabeth LaPan	Isadora Silva	Allison Aucoin	Megan McNeil
Gomez	Melanie Cranfill	Joseph LeBlanc	Andrade	Tiffany Barsamian	Kaitlyn Mearn
Anastasia Anderholm	Sherry Culter	Rafaella Lopes	Nicole Skinner	Eva Beland	Kimberly Mertell
Cassandra Anderson	Carrie DeCosta	Linda Maher	Ashley Thibault	Kayla Boutell	Paola Molina
Kahlil Beauregard	Ingrid Del Orbe	Tyana Maki	Nathan Thibault	Danyelle Bushee	Haley Mullen
Cynthia Bettencourt	Rebekkah Dietz	Ryan May	Skylyn Torres	Sadiya Clark	Danielle O'Brian
Christine Boisvert	Maria Ferreira	Bria Monette-Harris	Laurie Tucci	Harli Curtis	Lee Ann Orsalock
Jason Boski	Alex Garipey	Jana Murphy	Gordon Tuttle	Holly D'Angelo	Sarah Pierce-
Cynthia Boucher	Julia Griffin	Marymar Perez Cruz	Katrina Ung	Angelica De Los Rios	Legassey
Brianna Boulay	Katelin Griffin	Shannyn Pomeroy	Alejita Velez	Kiana Delgado	Justine Pottinger
Emily Bradshaw	Erika Holm	Courtney Roche	Scott Vieira	Ashley Ferris	Kari Quinlan
Chelsea Caron	MaRyee Jennings	Jose Saquich	Courtney Wentz	Faviola Flores	Sylvia Ramirez
Anthony Cintron	Latisha Johnson	Julia Scott		Anna Gamaya	Lani Scanlan
				Ann Giaquinto Scott	Deborah-Jean
				Jade Hill	Strachan
				Jocelyn Klein	Amy Tervo
				Lisa Kowalczyk	Paula Whitcomb
				Clayton Kuusisto	Eric Wilson
				Sarah Larson	

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

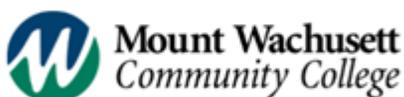
Rx and Visions Leaders Lead Mid-Semester Gatherings

by Tasia Cerezo

Visions Transfer Counselor

There were some new faces leading the Mid-Semester Gathering this time around. The event was led by students who over the course of eight-weeks worked with Catherine and Tasia to think about their leadership skills and the development of new skills through the Leaders Program. At the end of the eight-weeks, students were prepared to "run the show" from start to finish including the ice-breaker, announcements and raffles.





444 Green Street, Gardner, MA 01440-1000

Spring Checklist

Register for Classes: Summer and Fall Registration begins April 3rd.

Complete FAFSA: Maximize your financial aid eligibility by submitting your FAFSA before May 1st.

Apply for MWCC Scholarships: The deadline for transfer students has been extended to April 12th. The deadline for continuing students is May 24th.

April/ May 2017 List of Important Dates

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

<i>Monday, April 3– Friday, April 7</i>	Priority Registration Begins for Summer and Fall	<i>Wednesday, May 3</i>	Full Semester: Last day of classes for Gardner Day Classes
<i>Monday, April 3– Wednesday, April 5</i>	Open Lab Registration 12:30 – 1:30 p.m. RM 240	<i>Thursday, May 4– Monday, May 8</i>	Full Semester: Gardner Day Final Exams and all evening classes
<i>Monday, April 17</i>	Patriot's Day- No Classes all campuses, day and evening	<i>Monday, May 8</i>	Cycle 2: Last day of classes
<i>Wednesday, April 19</i>	Monday Schedule- All Day Classes, all campuses Cycle 2- Last day to withdraw TEAS Workshop 12:30- 1:30 p.m. RM 345	<i>Monday, May 15</i>	TRIO Student Support Services Annual Awards Ceremony 12:00 - 2:00 p.m. South Café
<i>Thursday, April 20</i>	Financial Literacy Series: Child Care 12:30- 1:30 p.m. RM 201	<i>Wednesday, May 17</i>	MWCC Graduation
<i>Friday, April 21</i>	Bird Watching 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Meet in TRIO Complex		

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