

TRiO

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

January
&
February
2017

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE VISIONS AND RX PROGRAMS

IN THIS ISSUE

Ready to *Spring Forward*?

by Gaurav Khanna,
Director of the Visions and Rx Programs

Welcome back! I know it doesn't feel like it right now but the days are already getting longer and we're excited to have you back on campus and moving towards your academic goals. Some things to keep in mind as we get started on a new semester:

Check-in

Come do your check-in right away! We want to touch base with you to see how things are going and get you set up for success this spring!

FAFSA

Complete your 2017-2018 FAFSA today! If you haven't heard, you can now file your FAFSA for next year using your 2015 taxes.

Share the Knowledge

Do you know a friend who could use some help with school and is eligible for TRIO? Refer them to Rx/Visions! We have a few spots open for the spring semester and would love to discuss the program with students interested in our services.

Transfer

For those of you thinking about transferring to a four-year school after this semester, now is the time to get going with the process. We have several transfer visits planned to popular transfer schools in New England. See Lisa or Tasia to sign up. Don't see your school on the list? Let us know, and we'll set something up for you!

We're looking forward to seeing you with a spring in your step and ready to succeed. Let's make this your best semester ever!



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



New Year- New You!

The Visions and Rx staff provide advice to help you rejuvenate your educational enthusiasm!



We Celebrate Student Success

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



AA/EEO Institution

New Year- New Habits

by Tasia Cerezo

Visions Transfer Counselor

We have all heard it before. In fact, some of us have even said it before: new year, new me. Truth is, a new "you" is a major overhaul and could cause more stress than taking a step back and focusing on the areas where you would benefit from new habits instead. Here are a few tips to build some new habits into your old routine to get you going in the new year:

Personally:

Generally, having a healthy life balance will help in all areas of your life but this can sometimes be easier said than done. To start, the best thing you can do for yourself is think positively, limit unnecessary stressors, find someone who supports and believes in you, and be patient with yourself. Self-care is at the root of everything that helps you sustain yourself and reduce stress. Taking a look back at the fall semester, were there times when your to-do list didn't get done because you went home and, despite your best efforts, crashed? Consider that a reminder from your body that, sometimes, you have to slow down to get everything done.

Academically:

Take a second and think about the overall feel of the fall semester. Were there points in the semester where you realized you could have benefited from more time, better organization and time management? Listen to yourself. Before the start of the spring semester, take some time to organize or get a planner set up, even if it's the calendar on your cell phone. Give yourself a visual of your day and responsibilities. If your work schedule is pretty consistent, include that too, and don't forget study time! Knowing where and when you are expected to be somewhere could alleviate some stress and provide you with an idea of where you have free time.

Financially:

When does it rain money? (When there's *change* in the weather!)

A little humor for a serious issue! Whether we like it or not, money is a big part of our lives and it becomes bigger when we find we're a little short. Not only is money hard to talk about, it's hard to maintain without a plan or a budget. If you've never created a budget before, try it. Knowing how much money you have coming in and going out allows you to make a plan and create a safety net for yourself. When thinking about how much money you have coming in and a safety net, consider the benefits of paying **YOURSELF** in that budget even if you're only calculating



scholarship money or your refund check from school or taxes. Being sure you put a little money aside whenever you have money come in is a great way to ensure a bit of security.

Remember, even if you're planning for a complete overhaul, Rome wasn't built in a day, and change takes time. Be kind to yourself as you work towards accomplishing your goals.

Start Smart with Your

Check-In

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

The Benefits of Involvement

by Catherine Maddox-Wiley

Rx Retention Counselor

Thinking about joining a student club or volunteering at a community agency? Great idea! The benefits of participating in co-curricular activities are immeasurable! Think of these experiences as expanding your education outside of the classroom. You only need to look in MWCC's backyard for opportunities.

Did you know there are a number of student clubs, ranging from academic to service to distinct interests and social clubs? Have you ever heard of MWCC's Center for Civic and Community Engagement? This program helps students provide service to those in need by working with such programs as local public schools and national organizations like Habitat for Humanity and United Way.

Why use your valuable time to get involved? Let us count the ways!

"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." - Winston Churchill

Building community is one of the best ways to impact people's lives. Students who are active change the world.

Studies indicate that students who have a lot of free time may develop better time management skills if they participate in campus activities. Because these students fill their schedules with out-of-class

responsibilities, they are more aware of how they utilize their time.

Students who are involved in their college communities are more likely to graduate. A group of people and a purpose that reflect your values and goals will not only improve your satisfaction with campus life but motivate you to give others and to yourself.

Employers appreciate students who have done more than just their academics. Involvement demonstrates that you are a doer and that you have experience working with others. They are looking for that well-rounded, knowledgeable employee.

Not sure how to add an activity to your schedule? Consult with the TRIO advisors. They can offer several recommendations on how to enrich your college experience.

Frequently Asked Questions to College Professors

by Lisa Naze

Rx Transfer Counselor

As an adjunct science instructor, I get many of the same questions from semester-to-semester. Here are some of the most common questions I have received from students and the answers and advice I give. Communication is key, so don't be afraid to ask questions. There is a good chance other students have the same question.

Do I need to know this for the test?

Grades are important, so of course you want to do your best and be prepared for an exam. Exams are a common way to measure knowledge. However, there are other ways to assess learning, i.e. assignments, projects, papers and labs. Instructors are looking for application of knowledge to large concepts so they will use a variety of methods to assess understanding. Just because a detail isn't on a test doesn't mean it's not important in the learning process.

Can I make up the lab?

Labs reinforce concepts learned in class and are key in hands-on learning, so it's important to attend every lab. Due to the tight scheduling of rooms and materials, the breakdown and set up of labs happens in a very short window of time, so they cannot be made up. It is also a safety concern to have students in the lab by themselves. If an instructor is teaching multiple sections of a class, they may allow you to attend another one of their lab sessions if space is available, but be sure to gain permission before showing up. Always communicate with your professors ahead of time if you need to miss a class or lab.

How am I doing in your class?

This question arises most often about 3/4 of the way through the semester. Many instructors use Blackboard so students can calculate their grades. Refer to your syllabus to find out how many points or percentage items are worth in the final grade. Save your assignments, quizzes and tests so that you can monitor your grade throughout the semester rather than just when grades are due.

Do I need to buy the book?

Departments and instructors will require certain materials and textbooks for a course. Reference materials are chosen to aid the student in understanding. However, text books can be expensive, so look into buying a used textbook, renting, or asking a friend who has taken the class if you can borrow the book. I also encourage my students to gather information outside of class and the assigned textbook to enhance understanding. There may be an online video, diagram or other text book that explains the concept in a way you understand.

I'm not ready for the test. Can I take it at another time?

We all lead busy lives and managing our time can be difficult. Incorporate good time management skills so that time to prepare for an exam is not an issue. Make a study schedule and stick to it. In my experience, I've found that students who delay taking a test never do well. Students lose focus on new material and have difficulty building on concepts which further delays the learning process. Check your syllabus for exam dates and plan accordingly so you are prepared.

Are you an ACTIVE TRIO Student?

by Dawn Babineau

Visions Learning Specialist

Recently I was charged with monitoring an assignment where Visions students were asked to list "all the program activities you have attended this semester." Some students struggled with this question. Some commented that because of schedule conflicts and other responsibilities, they were not able to attend our gatherings and seminars.

To these comments I said, "Think bigger." Seminars and gatherings are important and required, and we highly encourage attendance, but being part of the larger Visions community is even more critical.

Do you use tutoring?

Do you use technology?

Are you in our FYE or TRIO supported classrooms?

Do you come in for advising and four-week assessments?

Do you stop by the office to just say hello and join in on our often lively conversations?

Are you present?

All of these activities count. These all make you a valued member of the TRIO community. So even if you only have a few minutes to spare as you are running by the office, please stop in and say hello. You never know what might be going on!



*Have you completed your
2017-2018 FAFSA?*

**Did you know you can use your
2015 tax information?**

This means that you don't need to wait to file your FAFSA! This allows you to maximize your opportunities for in-state and college assistance.

Need help?

Call the Rx and Visions Program office at 978-630-9297 to schedule a one-on-one appointment.

Student Spotlight: Kimberly Cook

by Catherine Maddox-Wiley

Rx Retention Counselor

If you've ever had a chance to chat with Kimberly Cook, you probably know that she is a mom of three and that she started the RN program in September. What you probably don't know is that Kimberly suffered from debilitating Crohn's disease at the age of eleven, has undergone fifteen surgeries in her lifetime, and lost her one-week old daughter due to malpractice sixteen years ago.

How does a woman with this much pain and heartbreak end up at Mount Wachusett in the nursing program? The decision came out of that grief.

Five years ago, Kimberly's doctor told her she was in remission from the Crohn's, explaining that it could last for a day or until she's seventy. He encouraged her to take advantage of the time she had. As Kimberly regained her energy, she felt she was meant to go to school. Given how sick she was growing up and the loss she experienced, she was ready to do something for herself and to make the best of everyday.

Her family weighed in on this decision as well. Her six-year old was starting school, and her eleven- and twelve-year olds were also on board with her plan. The only request that her supportive husband made was that she keep her stress levels down to manage the Crohn's.

Kimberly began making life choices and decided to become more active. She became a strong time-manager and organizer. Because of that excellent planning, she is able to be a football, track and baseball mom – times three! Though she prefers to be in control of her household, she has learned that delegating and being satisfied with her husband and children's handling of the chores is essential to her success and to their growth. Kimberly sees that her children are learning good life skills and are becoming more independent and inquisitive. In addition to getting her own three children to and from school, Kimberly is part of a carpool, taking responsibility for additional children. Kimberly believes when it comes to figuring things out, "You just make it happen. Nature unfolds."

Once Kimberly was accepted into the RN program, she changed some of her tactics in



order to get more sleep and ensure her well-being, vital ingredients for learning: She sets a bedtime, gets up earlier, eats regular meals, stays hydrated, keeps four calendars, and sets alarms for every activity on her plate. The RN Program requires a unique set of study, test-taking and critical thinking skills. When Kimberly is doubting herself, she receives words of encouragement from her husband. He roots for her more than she does for herself and reminds her that she can do it, that she has been through worse.

Kimberly's goal to be active has been evident in her work with several MWCC organizations, including SGA, PTK, Parent Support Group and CCAMPIS, with her favorite MWCC event being the Day of Caring. Though she is involved with several Chair City organizations and committees in Gardner, Kimberly wishes she had more time to volunteer, preferably with soup kitchens. She says that if nursing doesn't work out, she would be a chef to feed people. Taking care of others is what she loves.

Kimberly is a first generation student, and so it is natural that her parents and sister were a bit doubtful about whether she would have the time, the money and the good health to go to college. Now that Kimberly has accomplished much in her academic and co-academic careers, her parents have been known to gloat and brag about their daughter. The TRIO Program lends its voice to that praise. Well-deserved, Kimberly! Well-deserved!

SHOUT OUTS!

Congratulations to the following students who will begin a Selective Healthcare program in January, 2017! Great job!

Practical Nursing

Madeline Allard
Annastasia Anderson
Allison Aucoin
Erin Burns
Elizabeth Fowler
Marissa Mitchell
Bryan Rios
Amy Rogers
Naomi Wood

Advanced Standing Registered Nurse

Sadiya Clark
Kiana Delgado
Ashley Ferris
Julie Holden
Hannah Woodward

Dental Assisting

Savannah LaRoche
Renee Tenney

*This was the information available to us at the time of printing.

We know that you work really hard!

Make sure that you stop by the TRIO office and share your successes with us!

Meet Mary Roth

Visions Program Professional Writing Tutor

A native of Gardner, Mary Roth has spent most of her professional career helping others find success through education. Mary holds a BA in English with a minor in Classics from the UMASS Amherst and has completed courses toward a Master's degree in English Education at Fitchburg State University.

She began her career working with special education students at Leominster High School and then served as the professional writing tutor for the Visions Program from 1992 to 1999. Mary later returned to work in the public schools and served as a volunteer at the House of Peace & Education in Gardner. After serving in a variety of volunteer positions with HOPE, Mary went on to serve as the program director for the HOPE for Women Program from 2005 to 2012, where she assisted women in learning job readiness and computer skills. More recently, she served as the first college & career navigator at Mount Wachusett Community College from 2012-2014 under the Massachusetts Community Colleges Workforce Development Transformation Agenda.

She returned to the Visions Program as its professional writing tutor near the end of the fall 2016 semester. Mary believes that education is a powerful tool toward promoting self-sufficiency and that service to others, especially those trying to improve their lives, is the highest calling. Mary encourages students to visit her in the TRIO Complex for assistance with writing and study skills.

In her free time, Mary enjoys spending time with her family, gardening, canning, music, and reading.



Math and Writing Tutoring

Schedule your one-on-one weekly tutoring session the first two week of classes for the best spots!

WE HAVE A LOT PLANNED FOR SPRING 2017



Transfer Trips

Lisa and Tasia are taking students to visit **UMASS Amherst on February 10th**. Sign up with Tasia and Lisa for this great opportunity! We are also planning spring trips to Westfield State, Salem State, Worcester State and Smith College. Stop by the office for more information or to put your future institution on the list!

Boston

Spring Break Trip

We love to plan trips and we're planning one to Boston during Spring Break. Keep an eye on your email for more information.



Seminars, Activities and Events!

The Rx and Visions Programs plan seminars, activities, and events with you in mind! We plan seminars about time management, financial literacy, and goal setting. Make a commitment to yourself to make the most of your Rx and Visions Program membership!

Fun Facts about Our Students

15

Number of TRIO students who made the President's List. These students have completed at least 12 credits in one semester and have earned an overall GPA of 4.0.

64

Number of TRIO students who made the Dean's List. These students completed 12 credits in one semester and have earned an overall GPA between 3.3 and 3.99.

11

Number of students who graduated from the PN program in December 2016.

2 of 5

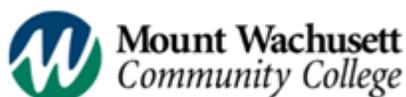
Number of finalists in the President's Commitment to Diversity Competition who are also TRIO students.

Visions Program Kick-Off Event

Thursday, January 19, 2017
12:30- 1:30 p.m.
North Café
Join us for
pizza, salad, fun and prizes!

Rx Program Kick-Off Event

Monday, January 23, 2017
12:30- 1:30 p.m.
North Café
Join us for
pizza, salad, fun and prizes!



444 Green Street, Gardner, MA 01440-1000

Free Passes to the MWCC Fitness Center!

The Rx and Visions Program 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 office by January 27th.

January/ February 2017 List of Important Dates

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

<i>Monday, January 16</i>	Martin Luther King Day: No Classes all campuses, day and evening	<i>Tuesday, February 7</i>	Writing the Dreadful Scholarship Essay: A Fresh Start Seminar 12:30-1:30 p.m. Room 345
<i>Tuesday, January 17</i>	Full Semester and Cycle 1: Classes begin	<i>Thursday, February 9</i>	Visions Program Transfer Seminar 12:30-1:30 p.m. W11
<i>Wednesday, January 19</i>	Visions Program Kick-Off Event 12:30-1:30 p.m. North Café	<i>Tuesday, February 14</i>	Health Ways to Conquer Stress: A Fresh Start Seminar 12:30-1:30 p.m. Room 345 Cycle 1: Last day to withdraw
<i>Monday, January 23</i>	Full Semester and Cycle 1: Last day to add classes and drop classes with 100% refund. Rx Program Kick-Off Event 12:30-1:30 p.m. North Cafe	<i>Thursday, February 16</i>	Signing Up for SALT: A Financial Literacy Seminar 12:30-1:30 p.m. Room 201
<i>Tuesday, January 24</i>	Getting Organized for the Semester: A Fresh Start Seminar 12:30-1:30 p.m. Room 202	<i>Monday, February 20</i>	President's Day: No classes all campuses, day and evening
<i>Thursday, January 26</i>	Home Ownership: A Financial Literacy Workshop 12:30-1:30 p.m. Room 201	<i>Tuesday, February 21</i>	Monday Schedule: All day classes, all campuses
<i>Monday, January 30</i>	Full Semester and Cycle 1: Last day to withdraw with a 50% refund	<i>Thursday, February 23</i>	Family Movie Night 5:30-7:30 p.m. Multipurpose Room
<i>Tuesday, January 31</i>	Multiplying Your Math Skills: A Fresh Start Seminar 12:30-1:30 p.m. Room 345	<i>Tuesday, February 28</i>	Rx Program Transfer Seminar 12:30-1:30 p.m. Room 345

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