

Commitment to Community

WITC graduate has devoted her career to providing women's health nursing

By Shawnda Schelinder

Because of her dedication to lifelong learning and serving her community, Erin Tenney has been selected as WITC-Ashland's Distinguished Alumni. She has also been selected to represent Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College for the state Outstanding Alumni Award.

A 2002 graduate of WITC's nursing-associate degree program, Tenney has devoted her career to providing women's health nursing in Red Cliff, where she has been the maternal and child health nurse. Tenney, who earned her bachelor's degree from Northland College in 2006, and she has recently completed a master's degree of nursing-midwifery from Frontier School of Midwifery and Family Practice Nursing.

"I knew since I was 17 that I wanted to be a midwife," Tenney says. "But when I became pregnant, I realized that I wanted to be a midwife nurse."

Frontier is the original midwifery school in the country, according to Tenney. She chose the school because their

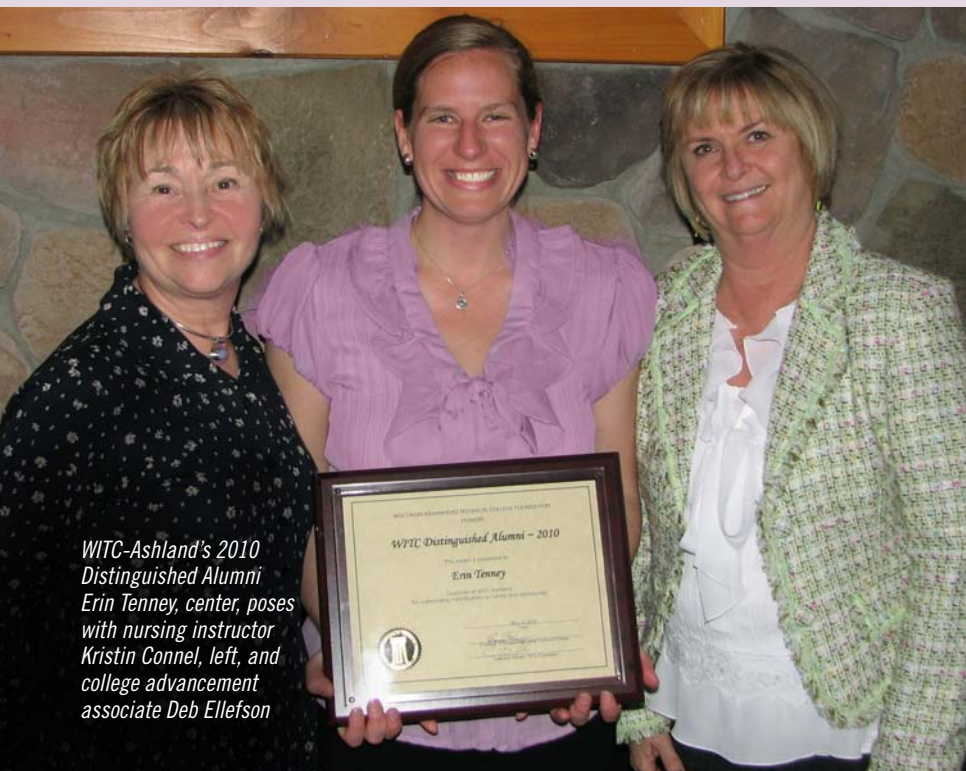
goal is to keep rural nurses in their rural communities. She's currently completing her clinical at LaCrosse. Since she completed her training in July, Tenney hopes to expand the Doula project in the Chequamegon Bay region.

Currently, Tenney is a certified nurse midwife and the director of the Bami-Ondaadiziike Birth Doula Program, a volunteer doula service at the Red Cliff Health Center providing education and support to families during pregnancy, childbirth and beyond. Tenney would like these services to be available to women throughout the region.

Tenney's tireless work has also included being the childbirth and breastfeeding educator for Memorial Medical Center and a clinical nursing instructor at WITC-Ashland. She's currently working on a post master's certification in women's health. She anticipates that she will be dual certified when she completes coursework in January.

Tenney also feels a commitment to serving the community. In addition Tenney's dedication to promoting women's and children's health, Tenney has served on a number of committees and is involved with the community gardening project.

As Tenney told the WITC-Ashland graduating class of 2010, we have a responsibility to the community. "The work I do and the way I do it springs out of a deep desire and belief that we are here to use our strengths, gifts and skills not just to help ourselves, but to really help each other," Tenney said at the May 14 commencement ceremony. "We share this place; this beautiful Chequamegon Bay community, and we are truly in it together."



WITC-Ashland's 2010 Distinguished Alumni Erin Tenney, center, poses with nursing instructor Kristin Connel, left, and college advancement associate Deb Ellefson

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