

Something's **DIFFERENT** on Campus

By Elizabeth Whitchurch
Photos by WITC Staff

Times keep a-changing. And likewise, a college must adapt accordingly to thrive. Subtle in some ways, dramatic in others, each WITC campus stretches and improves as it grows to sustain its award-winning education for people in its district.

COLLEGEWIDE

The college redesigned the concept of student academic support to better serve students and faculty by bringing together many resources under one umbrella, called the Learning Commons.

The Learning Commons provides the full breadth of support that students may need outside of the classroom: Student Success Center, Learning Resource Center and Educational Technology Center. Ultimately, on each campus, these areas will be in proximity of each other for easy access.

RICE LAKE CAMPUS



Although the Student Success Centers and the Learning Resource Centers have long supported students' academic needs outside of the classroom, they will now work together in a new partnership. It developed in response to surveys and other feedback from students and faculty indicating a need for on-site help with the nuts and bolts of academics – thus the Educational Technology Center, or ETC, was born. On-site teaching assistants in the ETCs will help students with computer software issues and other obstacles to an effective learning environment.

“The Learning Commons combines the resources and services students need to interact with technology, collaborate with one another, and find support for their academic efforts,” says Matt Rosendahl, WITC’s director of learning resources.

RICE LAKE CAMPUS

The new Health Education Center (HEC) recently celebrated its grand opening with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. The addition includes room for WITC’s new dental assistant program. In addition information technology classrooms, faculty offices, and heating/ventilation and utility upgrades were remodeled.

SDS Architects designed the addition and remodeling of a large part of the existing space, featuring large windows, sky lights, high efficiency “cloud” lights and a modern multi-colored décor.

The new HEC provides updated labs and classrooms for associate degree nursing, dental assistant, certified nursing assistant, medical assistant, occupational therapy assistant and therapeutic massage. Mary Ann Pebler, WITC divisional dean, Allied Health, says, “The new classrooms and labs provide the latest technology and spaces designed specifically for health instruction, preparing students for health careers in the real world.”

The \$1.5 million expansion to the campus



shows “a commitment to Northwestern Wisconsin, educating and re-educating the work force for available jobs,” says Dave Minor, WITC board chair.

A recent survey of graduates shows 91 percent of graduates get jobs within six months, and 72 percent of them stay in the WITC district.

NEW RICHMOND CAMPUS

At WITC-New Richmond, many program students can take a deeper breath due to expanded space at New Richmond Community Commons (former New Richmond middle school). The new human services program, the early childhood education (traditional and accelerated) program, the occupational therapy assistant (OTA) program, the judicial reporting program, certified nursing assistant (CNA) classes, and continued education insurance and real estate classes take place in the “new” but “old” location.

Located about eight blocks from the main campus, class schedules are arranged to minimize running back and forth between the two campuses. And while the Commons location doesn’t offer the amenities found on the main campus,

students appreciate the increase in space.

“It’s great to be in a larger room and not a ‘closet’ anymore,” says one judicial reporting student. Until this fall, the program’s classes were held in a small conference room. The students now have a wall of windows and new technology to aid in their learning, which is distance-based.

The early childhood education space more than doubled; they now have a separate room for their lab work. Before all was tucked into one classroom, which made things rather cozy, according to early childhood instructor Vicki Harmon. “We have room for all our equipment, and students have elbow room to work on their projects,” she said.

Many eyes in the city focus on the New Richmond Community Commons (NRCC) as it is an effort by the city to make good use of existing property. The city and school district take the lead and lease space to WITC, the city’s food pantry, VFW, New Richmond Community Education and the Head Start Program. Having WITC’s early childhood education program and the Head Start Program located in the same hallway offers many motivating benefits to all.



SUPERIOR CAMPUS

As a group of students enter, it's easy to get their impression.

"This store is so cool!" "This is the best thing that has ever happened to this campus!"

A college bookstore by any other name is just that until you add jazzy lighting, a cool checkout counter and a redesigned floor plan that bring a palpable energy to the overall WITC-Superior campus.

Originally, WITC students had to get their books from UW-Superior next door.

"It is so nice to have a store on campus, and we don't have to go to UWS to get our books."

A small pseudo-bookstore was crunched into the back of student services, with limited choices. But now the bookstore asserts itself as its own entity with merchandise and the room to accommodate books for students.

"It is nice to have the books and clothing all in one place."

"The students now come in on a regular basis just to see if we have anything new in the store since the last time they stopped in," says bookstore supervisor Diane Schmitt. "It sure is nice to see the students excited about the bookstore. Now we are right off of the Atrium accessible to everyone. It is good."

ASHLAND CAMPUS

The Ashland Campus celebrated some notoriety this year, when it received an Environmental Stewardship Award from the Lake Superior Binational Forum for its low-cost rain gardens. The WITC-Ashland campus is committed to considering and installing sustainable initiatives in all college operations whenever possible.

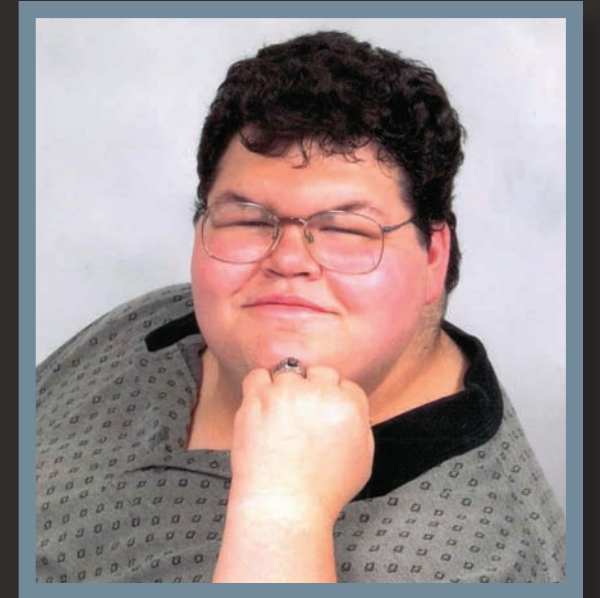
The gardens divert street and parking lot run-off before the soiled water washes into Lake Superior. Instead the polluted water flows into the native wildflower and shrub gardens, which filter the rainwater and provide wildlife habitat. Faculty, staff and the Ashland County Land and Water Conservation Department replaced large sections of campus lawn with three large rain gardens.



ASHLAND CAMPUS

Peers Honor Fellow Student with Memorial Scholarship

By Shawnda Schelinder



When Adam Laverseur was a student at WITC-Ashland, he was the guy everyone could count on for extra help or a good laugh. Sadly, just two weeks before the start of the fall semester, Adam was involved in a fatal car accident. He was just 27 years old, ready to enter this second and final year in WITC's accounting program.

"You missed out on something special if you didn't meet him," says Bryanna Young. "He was one of a kind. He would do anything and everything he could to help others."

"He would help out anyone. It didn't matter what program you were in," says Paul Frechette. "He was a big part of this school."

Indeed, Adam was a big part of the school who is still sorely missed. Almost daily, his friends post messages on his Facebook wall to say that they miss him, wish he were there to give advice or to let him know how his favorite sports teams, namely the Packers, are doing.

"I didn't know Adam before I started school with him," Frechette says. "But there was an instant connection. Within five minutes, I knew he was someone I would be friends with."

"His heart was the biggest thing about him," Alexys Lucius says. "Even if he was busy with his own personal things, he always made time for you."

Adam's friends are making sure his spirit of kindness and legacy of helping others lives on. A group of business students at WITC-Ashland have established the Adam Laverseur Memorial Scholarship. The scholarship in his honor has been designated for Ashland area students who are enrolled in a business program.

Already the group has collected enough funds to present a \$250 scholarship to a student this

spring, but they would like to raise enough money to create an endowed scholarship that will guarantee a \$250 scholarship on an annual basis.

In order to raise the \$5,000 required for an endowed scholarship, the group held a variety of fundraisers. Donations are gladly accepted at any time.

News of the scholarship has spread quickly among Adam's friends, and they know how honored he would be. "They named a scholarship after you big guy, you'd be so happy and embarrassed all at once," Ty Tutland posted to Adam's Facebook page.

Adam's parents have been incredibly moved by the outpouring of support. "We are totally astounded by how many lives Adam touched at WITC and elsewhere," Dale and Cheri Laverseur said.

Donations to the Adam Laverseur Memorial Scholarship can be sent to WITC-Ashland's College Advancement Associate Robyn Lulich, 2100 Beaser Avenue, Ashland, WI 54806. Information on fundraising events can be found on

WITC-Ashland's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/witc.ashland.



A group of business students at WITC-Ashland have established the Adam Laverseur Memorial Scholarship. The scholarship in his honor has been designated for Ashland area students who are enrolled in a business program. In the front, are Riley Shields and Paul Frechette. In the second row are Harold Shee, Alexys Lucius and Jeremy Larson. Not pictured are Bryanna Young and Cameron Wilcox.