The Tools to Teach
Recent grants acquired by WITC covered the cost of providing a state-of-the-art lab and equipment

By Shawnda Schelinder, Photos by Artful Eye

What does a medical manikin that costs as much as a new car have in common with a $2 hotdog? Both are used by WITC medical assistant (MA) and associate degree nursing (ADN) students practicing proper injection procedures. But thanks to a grant, WITC students get the latest high-tech SimMan in addition to low-tech pork products. Recent grants acquired by the college also covered the cost of providing iPads for student use, as well as a state-of-the-art lab and equipment at the Ashland campus.

The SimMan grant was shy of $110,000 and provided benefits to each of WITC’s four campuses and the Ashland campus was the benefactor of a $191,000 grant that brought the MA program back after a five-year hiatus. That grant funded the faculty position for the Ashland program, as well as the equipment.

“One grant was for both the nursing and medical assistant program for simulation equipment. It purchased a new SimMan for each campus and some of the remodeling that we had to do with each of those rooms,” says Academic Dean of Allied Health Kate Siegler.

“We also purchased iPads for all of the MA students to use.”

SimMan is a medical manikin that simulates many of the medical symptoms and situations students will face in a clinical setting. From tears to heart murmurs and even blue fingernails and groans of pain and distress, SimMan responds to how student treat his symptoms.

“The SimMan is such a powerful teaching tool,” says Tina Hagemann, ADN instructor. “Our students can learn about almost every medical situation they may encounter before they even enter their clinicals. SimMan builds not only skill, but confidence levels as well when working with those new situations.”

MA instructor Melissa Zeien is excited to introduce the iPads to the students. “Ideally, those will be incorporated in the business portion of the class, like insurance and administration,” says Zeien.

Students still learn how to chart on paper documents, but being familiar with electronic methods will give them an advantage as many facilities phase out paper charts. The medical assistant program is held on the Ashland campus every other year, (every year at Rice Lake) but the equipment won’t collect dust on the off years. This specific section alternates between Ashland and the Rice Lake campus every other year. So when the program is held on the Rice Lake campus next fall, those students will use the new equipment.

Architectural commercial design program grad found a wealth of possibilities

Why did you choose architecture?
Because it is the balance of logic/math and creativity/art. I love the creative aspects of my job, but I also love the linear process of construction.

Do you feel your WITC degree in architectural commercial design helped you get where you are today?
Definitely. I apply my degree to almost every aspect of my job. My knowledge of construction documents and the design/drafting/construction process assists me every day. I work with architects, specifications and critique drawings to help project managers so employees in the field have correct drawings.

What should new students consider before choosing an architecture degree?
It’s a lot more than drawing. A person should enjoy art and math, geometry and should have high attention to detail. They should also like working in a team environment, but also be a self-starter and complete tasks individually.

Do you think grades will find the architecture employment atmosphere hospitable?
Because of the latest versions of software the architectural commercial design program works with, employers will be excited to put graduates straight to work without a lot of additional training. Our homes, offices and places of recreation are possible because of architecture and construction. It is gratifying to drive by a six-story building that, because you did your job well, was possible to complete.

What advice do you offer?
Any career program requires commitment and hard work to get the most out of it. As a WITC student, you will be ready for a job in half the time as a university student. That is a short time to mentally and educationally prepare for the work force, so take everything you can from your education and apply it to your career and life.

Are You a WITC Alumn? Then we want to hear from you! Tell us what’s new.
Go to witc.edu/alumnupdate and send us your information!