New Ambassadors announced

Kim Boman, Lisa Paff, Stephanie Perry and Lisa Roberts have been named WITC’s 2008 Student Ambassadors. “The Ambassador program is an excellent way for the college to recognize some of our most highly motivated students, such as these four individuals,” said Craig Fowler, vice president, continuing education/executive director, foundation and campus administrator. “The program also allows the students to develop their leadership skills while they represent WITC in our communities.”

Boman, a student in the Nursing – Associate Degree program at the Superior campus, was led to WITC by the recommendation of a former ambassador.

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Teri Schult receives award from council

Gov. Jim Doyle’s Council on Financial Literacy recently announced five individuals and 10 organizations as recipients of its 2008 awards for excellence in promoting personal finance and economic know-how in Wisconsin.

Among the individual winners was Teri Schult of WITC’s Washburn County Learning Center.

“The Governor’s Council Award will have my name on it, but really reflects the work of the team of people who worked to create opportunities for people in a number of communities in northwest Wisconsin to access information about money management during Money Smart Week 2007,” Schult said.

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Polaris donates Victory ‘Jackpot’ motorcycle

When it comes to hands-on learning, there's nothing like having a hot yellow motorcycle detailed with flames as part of the curriculum. But that is exactly what awaits students in the Motorcycle, Marine and Outdoor Power Products program at WITC.

The Victory “Jackpot” motorcycle, donated by Polaris, Inc. of Osceola, is a teaching tool, tethered to the classroom for current and future students. The $21,000 motorcycle is hooked up to a computer and software system that allow the instructor to simulate different types of mechanical symptoms. The students run a “digital wrench” computer program – electronic engine diagnostic system – to determine the problem.

“It’s an excellent teaching tool,” said Dave Brown, WITC instructor. “It expands the learning possibilities for our students and gives them the hands-on experience and knowledge they’ll need in the workplace. The hardest part for students is probably the fact that the cycle can never be driven. It’s strictly a classroom teaching tool.”

Eric Christensen, domestic project lead at Polaris, is on the WITC advisory committee for the WITC engine repair program.

Last spring, he and Brown discussed the program's needs and the benefits of having such a tool. “The school needs the technology to teach digital diagnostics – this is the right vehicle to achieve that goal,” Christensen says. When Christensen saw an opportunity to secure a Polaris motorcycle that would make an excellent training tool, he requested it for WITC. Polaris then donated both the motorcycle and the diagnostic software.
WITC Rice Lake to host Leadership Conference

Green Bay Packers’ head athletic trainer Pepper Burruss and author Michael Perry will be the keynote speakers at WITC Rice Lake’s Leadership Conference, March 28, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The sixth annual conference provides an opportunity for enhancing the qualities of good leadership in you and in your team. Topics will include creating a positive workplace, performance management, dealing with violence in the workplace, and managing conflict.

Burruss recently completed his 15th season as Green Bay’s head trainer and his 31st in the NFL overall. Overseer of the team’s medical care on a daily basis, Burruss, a certified athletic trainer and physical therapist, joined Green Bay in 1993 following 16 seasons with the New York Jets as an assistant athletic trainer. A gifted public speaker, Burruss has lectured at seven National Athletic Trainers’ Association Clinical Symposia, multiple state, district and college meetings, as well as numerous service organizations throughout Wisconsin. His lectures are supplemented with an extensive collection of photos that has recently grown with the addition of more than 5,000 images of the progression of Lambeau Field’s redevelopment.

Perry is a humorist and author of the bestselling memoir “Population 485: Meeting Your Neighbors One Siren at a Time,” and the essay collection “Off Main Street.” Perry has written for Esquire, The New York Times Magazine, Outside, Backpacker, Orion and Salon.com, and is a contributing editor to Men’s Health. His essays have been heard on NPR’s “All Things Considered” and he has performed and produced two live audience recordings, “I Got It From the Cows” and “Never Stand Behind a Sneezing Cow.” Perry lives in Wisconsin, where he remains active as a volunteer firefighter and emergency medical responder.

Also scheduled to speak will be WITC instructors Kerm Morgan and Pete Ptacek; Linc Duncanson, chief operating officer, Northwire, Inc.; Sally Field, coach and consultant, Sky’s the Limit; Joan Runnheim Olson, M.S.-certified leadership and talent management coach; and Officer Mark Kelsey from Sawyer County.

For more information, contact Margie Ince, academic affairs assistant, at 715.234.7082, Extension 5257.

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Other individual winners included: Janet Bewley, WHEDA representative and tribal liaison, Ashland; Donna Kennedy, La Follette High School, Madison; Stephanie Pelliterri, Wausau East High School, Tomahawk; and Fay Wagner, Lakeshore Technical College, Manitowoc.

Winners of the organizational awards include: Altra Federal Credit Union, La Crosse; Asset Builders of America Inc., Madison; Community First Credit Union, Appleton; CoVantage Credit Union, Antigo; M&I Bank, Milwaukee; Make a Difference-Wisconsin Inc., Milwaukee; Milwaukee Asset Building Coalition, Milwaukee; Wisconsin Credit Union League, Pewaukee; Wisconsin Family, Career, Community Leaders of America Foundation Inc., Madison; and Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corp., Milwaukee and Madison.

For WITC, this award could go a long way into creating additional momentum for the college.

“We hope that getting some information will cause people to want to know more. WITC’s Continuing Education offerings in Spooner include a basic investment class this spring and we plan to offer more in the future. Also, financial education is one part of the literacy plan in Wisconsin,” Schult said.
College takes next steps in AQIP process

On Feb. 21, staff members gathered for an all-college in-service at the Northwoods Crossing Event Center in Siren. The day was dedicated to defining the college’s implementation of AQIP.

“The day was successful thanks to the enthusiasm and participation of staff,” said Barb Williams, co-chair of the WITC Quality Improvement Steering Committee (QICS). The Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) infuses the principles and benefits of continuous improvement into the culture of colleges and universities by providing an alternative process through which an already-accredited institution can maintain its accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission. With AQIP, an institution demonstrates it meets accreditation standards and expectations through sequences of events that align with those ongoing activities that characterize organizations striving to improve their performance.

The purpose of this AQIP meeting was to gather input from all staff on specific action projects related to the four key areas chosen by staff in the all staff survey: assessment, communication, programming and technology. This event was also designed to give staff a feel of how the action project process works with AQIP, and to update staff in more detail of how the AQIP cycle works in comparison to the PEAQ process that WITC used previously. The Quality Improvement Steering Committee (QISC) met on December 6 and reviewed the list of Quick-Fix suggestions from the Vital Focus Conversation Day in September. To view the Quick-Fix updates that were posted at the in-service in Siren, click here. “The ideas and information from the in-service will be used as resources for the projects,” Williams said.

Connect with Trivia

Who of the following individuals attended a two-year college?

A. George Lucas, film director, writer, producer
B. R. Bruce Merrifield, winner of the 1984 Nobel Prize in Chemistry, Emeritus Professor of Biochemistry, Rockefeller University
C. Carol Browner, former administrator, Environmental Protection Agency
D. Kweisi Mfume, former president, NAACP
E. Brian Valentine, senior vice president, Windows Division, Microsoft Corp.

Answer: All of them. Leaders in fields including business, medicine, education, government, and the arts got their starts at two-year colleges. Source: http://www.aacc.nche.edu/Content/NavigationMenu/AboutCommunityColleges/OutstandingAlumni/Notable_Alumni.htm
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WITC’s acceptance of previously earned credits was another factor Boman appreciated.

“I like WITC because it is a small campus,” Boman said. “I really didn’t appreciate sitting in a classroom with 200 or 300 people getting lectured to. The atmosphere and student-to-teacher ratio is excellent at WITC. It allows me to interact with my instructors much better.”

In 2006, life changed for Paff. She was ready for a career change. She wanted excellent instruction and high job placement. After sharing with WITC staff what she liked and was good at, Paff was directed into the Occupational Therapy Assistant program at the Ashland Campus.

“WITC has built me up educationally and culturally and I know I’m ready to succeed with what I’ve received at WITC,” Paff said. “I love my college.”

For Perry, her path to WITC involved realizing that the four-year university she chose was not moving her toward her career goals or career path. With a desire to work with children, WITC’s Early Childhood Education program proved to be an attractive option. With a helpful dialog from WITC instructors, Perry soon transferred to the New Richmond campus to begin her studies.

“The program offered at WITC allowed for student-teaching experiences right away,” Perry said. “This is what I wanted. To immediately begin gaining valuable experiences in my chosen profession.”

After a series of injuries forced Roberts to change her career goals, she was directed to WITC on the advice of a job center counselor. Currently, she is in the Accounting program at the Rice Lake Campus. Roberts is also pursuing a Business Graphics and Computerized Accounting certificate 24 years after graduating from high school.

“WITC is the right choice for me because it has given me the tools I need to succeed – an education, self confidence and the resources I need to find a job,” Roberts said. “The partnership between the Job Center of Balsam Lake and WITC brought me to Rice Lake to begin my college career.”

More than 20 years ago, the Wisconsin Technical College System started the Ambassador program, a unique initiative that recognizes outstanding student achievement. WITC’s latest ambassadors have distinguished themselves through community involvement, leadership qualities, and a determined commitment to higher education.

Upcoming Events

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