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College-wide in-service a success

More than 400 full-time and regular part-time faculty and staff attended the WITC College-wide In-service and Expo held Feb. 18 at the WITC-Rice Lake Conference Center.

“This in-service is a tremendous professional development opportunity for our faculty and staff,” said Bob Meyer, president of Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College. “With February being Career and Technical Education Month, this event allows faculty and staff to celebrate what it is, the benefits and opportunities it provides students and the impact it has on the community.”

The day included discussion of WITC’s current strategic directions and strategic plan. Scott Stariha, a WITC Distinguished Alumnus served as the event’s keynote speaker.

The in-service also featured a WITC Expo designed to highlight just a few of the many ways WITC is striving to meet the changing needs of its students, business and industry.

WITC President Bob Meyer tries his hand at Wii bowling. In the Wii-habilitation Expo, it was shown how the gaming system is used for rehabilitation purposes.

Expo topics included how the sim-man is used to simulate medical and trauma scenarios in a realistic environment; how the Nintendo Wii gaming system is used for rehabilitation from chronic and acute physical, cognitive and emotional disabilities; and how the driving simulator allows students to experience situations and hazards in a controlled environment.

Faculty and staff were also able to listen to presentation on a wide range of topics from WITC’s strategic Directions to Facebook and from creating a virtual world to making a Podcast, along with many others.
Meet your 2009 Student Ambassadors

Hattie Bollom, Leslie Borchers, Aaron Martineau and Sarah Miller have been named WITC’s 2009 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.”

Hattie Bollom
Architecture and Commercial Design and Accounting
Rice Lake

After attending a four-year college for a year, “it just did not feel like the right fit for me,” Bollom said. She decided that architecture, which “combines both logic and art,” was what she had a passion for.

Leslie Borchers
Medical Administrative Specialist
Ashland

“I chose a technical college because of the learning environment,” Borchers said. “The staff at WITC-Ashland is student-success oriented and is motivated in helping students realize their full potential.”

Aaron Martineau
Accounting and Finance
Superior

Aaron realized that without an education, he wasn’t going to have the life he wanted. With hard work and dedication, Aaron will soon graduate with two degrees earned in two years.

Sarah Miller
Criminal Justice
New Richmond

“I wanted to go to WITC because I heard how intimate of a place it is,” Miller said. “When you go to WITC, not only do you form bonds with people for the rest of your life, but they become your friends and your family.”

More than 20 years ago, the Wisconsin Technical College System started the Ambassador program, a unique initiative that recognizes outstanding student achievement.
Scholarship provides opportunity for high-demand trade

Despite hard economic times in some trades, the machine tool industry is projected to grow in the region, offering high-paying jobs to skilled workers. The problem? There simply aren't enough qualified individuals to fill the positions.

Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College's machine tool operation program has the training required for many of the open positions in the region, and now C.G. Bretting Manufacturing has stepped up to help prospective students make education a reality.

“We've received a $10,500 endowed scholarship for high school students entering the machine tool operation program,” said Deb Ellefson, college advancement associate at WITC-Ashland. “That means we’ll be able award a $500 scholarship this spring for a student starting in fall. It is extremely rewarding to receive this gift from Bretting Manufacturing during a time when students need financial support more than ever before.”

The $500 scholarship is primarily aimed at high school students in the region, and applications will be available online March 1 and at high schools in the region.

The need for a scholarship was identified through the program’s advisory committee, according to MTO instructor Paul Kalin.

“We wanted to be able to express the need for good machinists in the area – Bretting Manufacturing is definitely willing to do that,” Kalin said. “It’s a nice thing for parents and students to hear there’s a company that’s willing to support education.”

Kalin is quick to point out that many of the businesses represented on the advisory committee are also generous, from donating used equipment to materials to their time. In fact, the advisory committee offers guidance regarding the curriculum of the program and helps Kalin identify equipment needs, including the recent purchase of a Haas VF1 Vertical machining center.

“We train our students to use the same equipment they’ll be using out in the workforce. Our advisory committee helps to make sure our students are fully prepared for the workforce once they graduate,” Kalin said.

The MTO program is one of a handful of WITC programs that can boost a 100 percent placement rate for graduates. In fact, three of Kalin’s current students already have jobs lined up for spring. “That simply highlights the need for workers in this region,” Kalin said. “Employers are trying to scoop up the highest qualified students before they even get their diploma.”
Sisters team to find Sno-Week Medallion

The WITC-Superior Sno-Week medallion was found by sisters Trisha and Michelle Mattson. They found the medallion hidden in the crook of a tree in Billings Park. This is the fourth year in a row the sisters have teamed up to try and crack the clues and find the medallion.

“We’ve been so close before,” Trisha explains. “We actually walked next to it when it was hidden on Barker’s Island and stepped right on top of it when it was hidden in the parking lot behind the college.”

Michelle is a graduate of WITC’s Corrections program and Trisha is currently enrolled in WITC’s Nursing program. Because Trisha is currently a student, the two will split a $400 cash award for finding the medallion on the second day of the hunt.

Two clues were announced each day on radio stations as well as posted on campus and on WITC’s Web site.
Rice Lake students provide hurricane relief

Eighteen students traveled to the Houston, Texas, area to volunteer their services in the continued clean-up following Hurricane Ike

While most students spent winter break relaxing with family and friends, 18 students from the WITC-Rice Lake campus took part in a trip to the Galveston, Texas, area, to volunteer their services in the continued clean-up following Hurricane Ike. A Galveston church group, CORE Alliance (Christians Organized for Relief Efforts) provided the arrangements for food, shelter and work schedule for their stay.

Six WITC staff members accompanied the students on the trip. Together, the group assisted in the demolition and reconstruction of homes and property damaged during the storm this past September.

Mike Robert and Justin Candler use torn-out carpet to haul debris from a house. One of the challenges students faced was finding efficient ways of getting the torn out debris to the pile on the street curb. The students became creative in their solutions and used whatever materials were at hand.

“Looking back, it was a great experience,” says Deb Kuptrieb, architectural commercial design instructor. “Personally, it felt good to be helping others and to be creating an opportunity for students to do the same.”

The students, members of the Architectural Commercial Design, Mason and Bricklaying, Accounting, and Medical Administrative Specialist programs at WITC-Rice Lake, were able to take in a few of the tourist attractions the Houston area has to offer, like the Houston Space Center and trips to the beach, but such leisure activities were overshadowed by five days of hard work.

An image to the mess Hurricane Ike left behind. This kitchen has been abandoned for four months. It was the group’s job to remove all items from the home, take down drywall and then bleach the studs, exterior walls and floors twice.
Dani Duetsch stands in front of a huge debris pile created on the first day working. The pile includes everything from the house: clothing, carpet, furniture, dishes, cabinets, drywall and more. This house had not yet been emptied, so the student's task was to completely muck out things that have been flooded four months prior. "The smell cleaning out the house was horrible," Kutrieb says. "Think of a fully stocked refrigerator that has been doused in storm surge water and left open for four months."

"It was an awful lot of work, many aching muscles and some restless nights," Kutrieb said. "I think that we are very fortunate to have a group of 24 that were not only able to go, but who gave it their all when they were there. I know there were more who wanted to go, but couldn't."

The group was shocked by the amount of clean-up work left, the lack of clean-up done already and the lack of damage awareness. Several people from the group spoke with residents who thought that clean-up was over. This way of thinking can be contributed to the lack of debris on the street. However, a short distance away, finds sailboats in parking lots not near water, loads of debris across the roads from closed businesses and buildings that have been knocked off kilter.

The group's job was to 'muck out' homes and apartments. Mucking entails taking out all the furniture, clothing, carpeting, food. Everything. Then the drywall comes out. In many homes, all the drywall on the walls must come down. In addition, the flooring needs to be removed. Fortunately, with 24 people, this task happens quickly.

"Overall, I was hoping that we would be re-building instead of mucking out houses," Kutrieb says. "I think our talents as a group would have been put to use re-building. That said, everyone worked extremely well together and no one got hurt; bruises and bumps aside."

After mucking is completed, the next step for the home is sanitizing. The group had to bleach the studs, exterior walls and floors. Twice. The first time, the bleach is mixed 1:3 with water and little dishwashing soap. During the first bleach, one person has the sprayer and another person scrubs. The second time, the bleach is mixed 1:1 with water, no soap, and no scrubbing. The odor of this job is intense and the group took a lot of breaks to breathe and to stop their eyes from stinging.

"This was a really smelly job," Kutrieb says. "You could only be in the building for about five minutes before you started coughing and your eyes started watering."

Even in homes that had been previously emptied, the group found they still had work to do.

The group had to pull off chunks of drywall that were left on walls, remove bathroom tile, not to mention..."
RELIKE, from page 6

taring up five layers of flooring from
a kitchen. The layers were removed
in order: sheet vinyl, plywood, vinyl
tile, plywood, another layer of semi-
ceramic tile, and finally a hardwood
floor. The group also removed door
trim, shiplap, and then sanitized the
home.
Another group assisted an elderly
man by cleaning up his yard -- with a
word to be cautious of snakes. When
putting the debris on the side of
the road (as requested by CORE and
authorized by the City of Galveston),
they were accosted by not just one,
but two different people complain-
ing about the location of their pile,
one of which was a man in a Lexus
who wanted the debris away from
the sign for his new development.
Another person was concerned
about the debris pile because they
wanted the waterlife in the ditch to
be safe.
Despite the numerous difficulties of
the trip, members of the group have
no second thoughts.
“I'd do it again next year in a heart-
beat,” Kutrieb says. “I think this could
be the beginning of having students
do more of this type of volunteer
work in our area, regionally and
nationwide. The trick is finding
funding to be able to do this on an
annual basis.”

Above, students and staff from the WITC-Rice Lake pause for a group photo during their clean-up work following Hurricane Ike. A Galveston church group, CORE Alliance (Christians Organized for Relief Efforts) provided the arrangements for food, shelter and work schedule for their stay.

Brandon Bush sprays a bleach mixture to sanitize a house that has been mucked out. During the first round of sanitizing, one person sprays a bleach mixture on all exposed studs, exterior walls and floors. Another person follows with a scrub brush to make sure the bleach is spread. During the second round, all the materials are sprayed again with a stronger mixture and no scrubbing takes place.
February is Career and Tech Ed Month

February has been designated Career and Technical Education Month by the Association for Career and Technical Education. Governor Jim Doyle also recently recognized the event in Wisconsin. The month will be dedicated to celebrating career and technical education across the country. According to ACTE, the idea behind CTE Month is to spend some time celebrating what career and technical education is, the benefits and opportunities it provides students, and the impact it has on the community.

Students were invited to create video public service announcements. Visit www.actonline.org/ctemonth.aspx to watch the winning videos.

Check out WITC’s ‘Futuremakers’ videos

Five WITC “Futuremakers” entered three-minute videos in the recent Futurefest competition and shared their vision of the future.

Check them out at www.wearefuturemakers.com/futurefest/gallery?sort=WITC.

A panel of WITC judges will select a winner from the five entries to represent WITC in the statewide competition.

The WITC semifinalist will be eligible to win cash prizes, including a $5,000 grand prize, that will be awarded at a state ceremony in April.

Upcoming Events

February
Career and Technical Education Month

March
March 10 ................. Campus Exploration Day, New Richmond
March 10 ................. Spring Career Day, Superior

April
April 15 ..................... Spring Open House, Ashland
April 15 ..................... Bridges to the Future, Rice Lake
April 16 ..................... Spring Open House, New Richmond
April 22 ..................... Spring Open House, Superior