Partnership creates Health Education Center

By any other definition, the building looks like a medical clinic. But upon closer examination one discovers it’s a thriving, true-to-life learning facility – a place where students learn how to be the real thing: top notch health providers.

It’s the brainchild of two collaborating entities: Marshfield Clinic and Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College, with the product being the Health Education Center (HEC) located in the former Marshfield Clinic building on north Main Street in Rice Lake, Wis.

There was an agreement to make it work for the benefit of both institutions and the remodeling of the building started last fall. The total cost of the project was $60,000, of which Marshfield Clinic covered 90 percent of the expenses. Jolene Anderson, administrator of Marshfield Clinic – Rice Lake Center, called it an “ideal partnership” in providing a local, highly trained workforce in the health-care fields.

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Covenant Day brings 75 students to WITC-Ashland

Wisconsin Covenant Days are an opportunity for eighth grade students to get an idea of what life is like on a college campus.

At the events, students participate in activities such as campus tours, discussions with current students, faculty presentations, program explorations and lunch on campus.

On April 30, Secretary Reggie Bicha and Covenant Director Amy Bechtum spoke to 75 Ashland and Drummond eighth graders regarding the Wisconsin Covenant.

Eighth grade students who choose to
Conroy wins C.I. Greiber Award of Merit

Dan Conroy, operations manager for the Nexen Group, a Minnesota-based manufacturing company with a facility in Webster, Wis., has recently been awarded the C.I Greiber Award of Merit.

Each year the Wisconsin Association for Career and Technical Education (WACTE) recognizes individuals outside the field of career and technical education for their outstanding contributions to the improvement, promotion and development of career, technical and adult education in Wisconsin. Individuals recognized must have demonstrated a concern for career and technical education as evidenced through activities such as sponsored programs, personal services, supportive publications, financial support, or meritorious activities.

Conroy has been actively involved in helping to promote the manufacturing industry and the many high-paying jobs it offers. This has made him a prefect representative of Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College and the many manufacturing-based career options it provides.

Through his involvement with Manufacturing Works, an organization that promotes jobs in manufacturing, Conroy has helped to raise awareness for the role the industry plays in our country’s economic growth and ability to compete in a global marketplace. Manufacturing Works represents a partnership of Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College, Chippewa Valley Technical College and the University of Wisconsin-Stout. Conroy has also been active in Gold Collar Careers, a grassroots organization with membership from both the manufacturing community and the public sector, that promotes manufacturing.

In an effort to promote career paths in the manufacturing industry, Conroy has worked with middle and high schools sharing information about manufacturing related careers, and providing presentations at community and professional events. This information promotes an understanding of the impact manufacturing has on Wisconsin, and the significant number of jobs the industry offers.

“Dan is a difference maker and believes in the value of career and technical education,” said Bob Meyer, Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College president. “Often single-handedly, he has changed the hearts and minds of young people aspiring for such careers or changed the thinking of decision makers who can help strengthen and promote these career paths.”

His hard work has paid off. WITC’s manufacturing programs are attracting increasing numbers of students – from recent high school graduates who are eager to enter a field that offers stability and high wages to working adults in search of new and better career options.

“We have seen people’s lives transformed by this,” Conroy said. “Maybe they’ve gone from one dead-end job to another. It’s hard to go back to school, but the potential is so grand. They suddenly have good jobs, jobs they like. It’s hard to take that first step, but it’s more than worth it. It’s a great investment.”
The Board of Directors of the American Occupational Therapy Foundation (AOTF) is pleased to announce that the Carlotta Welles Scholarship has been awarded to WITC-Ashland student Kathy Rickman. She will graduate with honors from the occupational therapy assistant program in May.

The AOTF has awarded scholarships to more than 40 occupational therapy students around the country for 2009. Scholarships are awarded based on selection criteria that include academic achievement, service and written recommendations. The AOTF administers funds for scholarships provided through endowments and partnerships with 22 state occupational therapy associations and the Assembly of Student Delegates (ASD) of the American Occupational Therapy Association. The foundation also administers and awards several scholarships established in memory of prominent occupational therapy practitioners, as well as scholarships sponsored by corporate and non-profit supporters. Corporate sponsors North Coast Medical and Progressus Therapy each provided generous scholarships for two students, and for the 33rd consecutive year, Kappa Delta Phi Sorority has funded generous scholarships for two students.

The Board of Directors of the American Occupational Therapy Foundation congratulates all scholarship winners and extends its appreciation to all students who applied. The work of the Scholarship Selection Committee in reviewing nearly 200 applications is acknowledged with gratitude.

Kathy Rickman
In March, Dee Barabe, of Mellen, was appointed the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) advisory committee. Barabe works in the Learning Resource Center at Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College in Ashland and formerly worked for the Northern Waters Library Service in Ashland.

The LSTA program awards grants in order to expand and improve library services in the state of Wisconsin. According to the LSTA, the program is designed to ensure that everyone can have the information resources needed for daily living and lifelong learning.

The primary responsibilities of the committee are to advise the State Superintendent and the Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning on the development of the long-range plan for LSTA; establishment of the annual grant criteria, priorities, and categories; grant applications and grant awards; and evaluation of the LSTA grant program.

“I'm very honored to be selected to the LSTA committee,” Barabe said. “I believe in their mission to provide library services for all of Wisconsin. LSTA is responsible for many improvements in state library systems and services. I’m proud to be a part of that.”

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participate in the Wisconsin Covenant will have an opportunity to sign a pledge affirming that they will meet certain requirements in high school.

In return for fulfilling the Wisconsin Covenant Pledge, students will be recognized as a Wisconsin Covenant Scholar and earn a spot at a Wisconsin university, college, or technical college. Students can also expect a financial aid package based on their family’s financial need.

Students were encouraged to think about college and careers and to discuss the pledge with their families. Students finished their day by creating Facebook pages based on various career programs.

Career Impact online

The latest issue of Career Impact magazine is available online. Follow this link to find out what career options await WITC graduates.
Technical college graduate salaries grow despite recession

Despite a slow economy, last year’s technical college graduates report salaries that are nearly four percent higher than graduates from one year earlier.

A survey of 2008 technical colleges graduates concluded a median salary of $32,000 approximately six months after graduation, compared with $30,782 one year earlier.

The data is from the annual Graduate Follow-up Report by Wisconsin’s Technical Colleges, which examines graduates’ progress in all types of degrees six months out of college. Associate degree salaries were highest with a median of $36,192, up 3.6 percent from $34,944 the previous year. However, the biggest gains were experienced in two-year technical diploma fields, with graduates reporting a median salary of $33,570, a jump of nearly 15 percent from 2007 graduates ($29,248).

“It’s great to see the salaries of our graduates continue to rise during these tough economic times,” said Dan Clancy, president of the Wisconsin Technical College System. “No occupations are recession proof, but demand for highly-skilled employees in high-tech fields, including health care and advanced manufacturing can pump up salaries, even during a recession.”

Clancy attributes the colleges’ ability to rapidly add or drop programming to meet the needs of employers. This allows the colleges to closely align education to areas of need so graduates meet employers’ needs.

According to the report, the number of occupations where new graduates’ median salaries are above the $40,000 threshold is now at 40, up from 26 the previous year. The study also found 91 percent of the graduates were employed within six months of graduation and 97 percent of respondents said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the education they received from their local technical college. The study showed that Wisconsin only loses seven percent of its technical college graduates to other states.

The Graduate Follow-up Report was sent to 23,085 graduates from 2008 and had a 72-percent response rate. It examines employment status, earnings, and other factors approximately six months after graduation. The report is available at www.wtcsystem.edu/reports/data/graduate/index.htm.

WITC commencement ceremonies to take place Friday, May 15

On Friday, May 15, Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College will hold simultaneous commencement ceremonies for its Ashland, New Richmond, Rice Lake and Superior campuses.

- **WITC-Ashland** – 7 p.m. at the Ashland High School. A reception will take place from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the WITC-Ashland student lounge.
- **WITC-New Richmond** – 7:15 p.m. at the Somerset High School. A reception will take place at 4:30 p.m. on the WITC-New Richmond campus.
- **WITC-Rice Lake** – 7 p.m. at the University of Wisconsin-Barron County gymnasium. A reception will follow at the UW-BC Student Center.
- **WITC-Superior** – 7 p.m. at the Superior Middle School.