

Career Impact

Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 1

Student learns the skills
to help his country rebuild

Meet WITC's 2013
Student Ambassadors

'PINK' SUPERHERO

How Jenny Bannink
succeeds in a man's world



WISCONSIN
INDIANHEAD
TECHNICAL
COLLEGE

Experience. Success.

AshlandNewRichmondRiceLakeSuperiorHaywardLadysmith

Golf

Fore Scholarships

2013

WITC-Ashland: Golf for Scholarships

The 14th annual Golf for Scholarships event raises money for scholarships for WITC-Ashland students. The four-person scramble will be held Monday, June 10, at 11 a.m. at the Chequamegon Bay Golf Course in Ashland. Cost is \$75 per golfer/\$300 per foursome. To sign up or for more information, contact Robyn Lulich at 715.682.4591, ext. 3113.

WITC-New Richmond: Fun-Driver Golf Benefit

The 18th annual four-person scramble will be held Monday, June 17, at 12:30 p.m. at Bristol Ridge Golf Course in Somerset. Money raised from this event goes toward scholarships and other Foundation programs at WITC-New Richmond. Cost for the event is \$320 per team (\$80 individual) or \$280 per team (\$70 individual) for Bristol Ridge Members. Fee includes 18 holes of golf, cart, registration packet, dinner, prizes and team photo. For registration or more information, contact Natalie Landgreen at 715.246.6561, ext. 4217.

WITC-Rice Lake: Fish & Chips Classic

The second-annual Fish & Chips Classic will be held Friday, June 7, and will include both golfing and fishing as events. Participants will have the opportunity to fish for the day on Red Cedar Lake, golf the beautiful 18-hole course at Tagalong Golf Resort or both. Cost is \$60 per angler, \$320 per foursome - \$125 per person if fishing and golfing. For more information or to register, contact Lori Bowman at 715.234.7082, ext. 5335.

WITC-Superior: Alumni/Foundation Golf Tournament

This five-person scramble will take place Friday, August 2, at 11:30 a.m. at the Nemadji Golf Course. The event is sponsored by the WITC-Superior Alumni Association and raises money for scholarships and other programs. Registration fee is \$35 per person or \$175 per team, not including green fee and cart rental. For registration or more information, contact Meghan Hall at 715.394.6677, ext. 6323.

Career Impact

Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College

Career Impact is published for the community, alumni and friends of Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College.

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WITC is part of the Wisconsin Technical College System, with four campus locations (Ashland, New Richmond, Rice Lake and Superior), two outreach centers (Hayward and Ladysmith), a learning center in Spooner, and an administrative office in Shell Lake.

Visit our Web site at witic.edu.

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MISSION STATEMENT
Learning is our passion. As Northwest Wisconsin's leader in technical education, WITC creates dynamic opportunities for career preparation and personal effectiveness. We are committed to making each and every experience with us meaningful and professional.



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Do you have news or information about an alumni, program or event at WITC? Contact witic.news@witic.edu

Proving His Dad RIGHT

How Stew Melander exceeded even his own expectations

Story and Photos by Jena Vogtman

Call it the cliché “American Dream” if you want, but it’s an accomplishment to many to have a well-paying job, own their own home and be married with two children. Stewart (Stew) Melander did this before age 24.

“I honestly didn’t expect I’d be here,” he says. What Melander did know is that his career would be very different than his father’s.

While his father, Doug, suits-up local businessmen in custom-fit, crisp clothes at Mainstream Fashions for Men in downtown Duluth, Melander and his brother, Phillip, chose careers requiring a lot of grease – and not the kind you put in your hair – not to mention the other accessories: hard hats, coveralls, steel-toe boots, goggles and earplugs.



“He always knew that we were a little different from him, and he embraced what we wanted to do,” says Melander.

Doug was on board because he says his sons are in a hot industry, adding he finds it amazing high school counselors are pushing four-year degrees to the masses, when more and more jobs are opening up in technical, two-year degree fields.

Today, Melander and his brother both work for Cliffs Natural Resources in Silver Bay, Minn., at the Northshore Mining facility. His duties involve maintaining the concentrator, which pulverizes rock, separates out the iron and turns it into slurry.

Getting there started in the family’s Duluth garage.

“I always had a bunch of lawn mowers and dirt bikes at home,” says Melander, describing how he taught himself about small engines, spending hours tinkering around with parts.

He excelled in automotive classes in high school through the Secondary Technical Center, graduating from Central in 2007, but it was while applying those skills he had a realization.

“Working on cars is not where I wanted to be,” says Melander, noting he personally wanted something else out of his career.

Melander turned to the Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College industrial maintenance technician program in Superior under instructor Steve Miller with an idea of the size of paycheck he could get after completing it.

“Stew Melander was a great team member, who enjoyed putting his hands to work on all the mechanical and electrical projects he has encountered in the two years at WITC,” says Miller.

For Melander, it paid off.

“The skills he mastered helped jumpstart his career at Northshore Mining,” says Miller.

Melander says it was Miller who mentioned Cliffs Natural Resources might be a good fit, because it’s an industry where positions are opening up due to an aging workforce. Melander had to go through testing to get into the company.

“I felt that I was a little more prepared on the technical side than the others,” said Melander. “Now, about 90 percent of

the program, I’m using in my day-to-day work.”

He quickly gained a reputation.

“Stew is an awesome, hardworking problem solver,” says Ryan Christianson, Melander’s supervisor.

Melander acknowledges he’s in a good position for his age, already making enough to allow his wife to stay home with their kids, and his student loans are taken care of, a feat many of his peers are just beginning.

“A lot of people I know are still working mid-level jobs and paying off huge loans,” he says. “What I got out of my education was well worth it.”

His dad says he’s proud watching his sons excel and move up the ranks. For Melander, his success is a simple equation.

“If you find something you really like, you’re going to strive to excel at it,” says Melander. “A solid two years is going to take you pretty far.” ■

LEARN MORE

Industrial Maintenance Technician

Offered at WITC’s Superior campus, the industrial maintenance technician program has everything under one degree. This two-year technical program offers broad-based skills and practical hands-on experience in welding, hydraulics, electricity, mechanical maintenance, maintenance machining and programmable logic controller (PLC) maintenance. Students will learn how to troubleshoot, repair, install, and maintain industrial systems to engineering and industry standards. For more information, visit witc.edu/programs.

Get Your Future Started

WITC offers a variety of ways to find the right career path

By Shawnda Schelinder, photo by Artful Eye

“Choosing the right career is like finding a good-fitting pair of shoes,” according to Career Specialist Dan Miller. You might try on many pairs in your life. Some fit at first, but you might outgrow them as your journey progresses. Other shoes are too tight the second you put them on, but you know you have to wear them for a bit until you can find the right ones. The perfect shoe might be a work boot, a comfy sneaker, a stylish pump, a sensible loafer or even flip flops.

Not everyone can enjoy that Cinderella moment where they find the perfect fit, but you don't have to go through the search alone. Miller and his colleagues at Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College offer several no- or low-cost services to help you find the right career fit. And these services are available to all members of the community – regardless of their intention to enroll at WITC or another college.

Career Seminars

Each campus hosts free monthly career seminars. The resident career specialists, like Miller, host the seminars within a group setting to help individuals evaluate their career options.



“We start with a What Color is Your Career? personality assessment and the online career assessment,” Miller says. The assessments help identify one's personal qualities and preferences, which Miller ties into career choices.

For some individuals, the experience is an eye-opener, revealing undiscovered career paths. For others, like Rachel Lee, the results are a sound confirmation of the career path she had chosen.

“When I was 16, I started working at the Vaughn Public Library, here in Ashland. I have been for over three years now,” Lee says. Although the 19-year-old enjoys her job, she feels “you get to a point where you've learned all you can and it's time to start a new chapter in your life.”

Lee had read about the career seminars in the local newspaper and felt it would be a good way to check out the programs WITC has to offer, as well as get a feel for the campus. Through the Career Clusters Interest Inventory, Lee learned the top two clusters that might appeal to her were education and business – no surprises there.

“They [the results] seemed to fit with my personality and I have always known that I have liked being in the office setting. It helped cement that this is what I want to do,” Lee says.

And for those who don't know what they want to do? “If you don't know what your strengths are – and some people don't – you take that test and it tells you your strengths and what you might be good at,” Lee says.

For Lee, not only was the program a good fit, but the college was as well. “I love it. I think that it's really great,” she says. “The course instructors really know what they are talking about and you feel like you can trust them. Like even beyond school things, that they really care about you.”

The seminar closes with a review of career outlooks nationally and statewide, which Lee says was very interesting.

Career Counseling

For those who would like more in-depth and one-on-one advice, WITC offers career counseling with its Student Services counselors. There is a fee of \$23 to cover the cost of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and Strong Interest Inventory assessments.

“The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and Strong Interest Inventory are great tools for individuals who want to find a career that fits with their personality and interests,” according to Dean of Students Benita Allen. “They help the student determine where their strengths lie and provide some guidance on different career options. In some cases, people just really want reassurance that they're on the right path. In other instances, they have no idea where to begin. Talking about these assessments with our counselors is very helpful.”

Counselor Scott Leonard agrees, saying that the assessments provide a broad overview of an individual's personality type and preferences. “These assessments help people learn about careers that they might find rewarding,” Leonard says. “But they don't measure an individual's skills or abilities.”

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator establishes a profile of an individual's personality within four different categories – how individuals focus their attention, how they take in information, the way they make decisions and how they deal with the world around them. WITC's counselors interpret these results with the individual and suggest careers based on the personality type.

The Strong Interest Inventory measures broad interests within general occupational themes (GOT). Basic interest scales also point to work that the individual may find rewarding, and it also provides the top 10 occupations that are most closely aligned with the individual's interests.

While most individuals are aware of their interests, Leonard enjoys helping students figure out how to translate that into a rewarding career. “I enjoy helping people explore in more detail who they are, what their interests are and how this can help them succeed,” Leonard says. “And it's also rewarding helping folks see that their occupational opportunities are much broader than they thought they could be.”

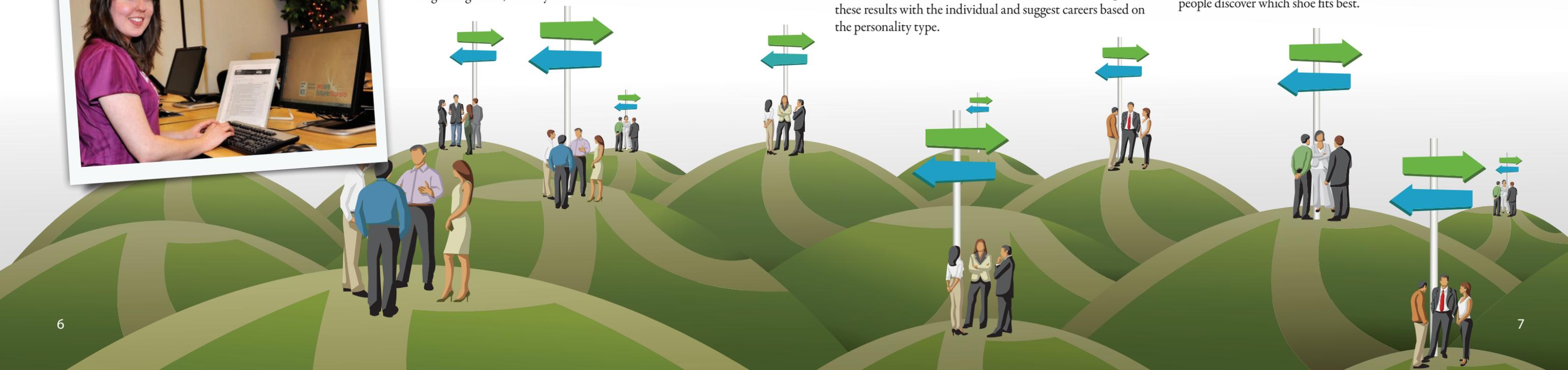
Career Cluster Assessment

For those who want to identify some areas of interest, but don't need the wealth of information from a career seminar or in-depth career counseling, there is the career cluster questionnaire that people can access for free at witic.edu/careerplanning.

Participants answer 16 questions regarding academic subjects enjoyed or at which they excelled, personal qualities and preferred activities. The assessment uses these responses to rank the career clusters according to what the respondent might find most fulfilling. Participants can then browse through WITC's corresponding programs.

The career cluster assessment is free. Respondents may have the results emailed to them, but registration with an email address is not necessary to complete the assessment.

Regardless of one's preference to learn about career choices in a group setting, one-on-one or completely solo, WITC can help people discover which shoe fits best.





No Distance Too Great

Holgen Guerisma came to WITC to learn the skills to help his country rebuild

By Deborah Anderson
Photos by Greg Dahl

There are more than 2,000 miles between Haiti and northern Wisconsin, but Holgen Guerisma considers no distance too great in pursuing his dream.

The earthquake that hit Haiti in January 2010 heaped devastation on the already poor country. Holgen Guerisma, who not only speaks the native Creole, but French and English as well, worked as a driver and translator for the volunteers who arrived to provide aid.

Guerisma became close to an American couple, Brian and Enid Johnson, as he escorted them around the island. Brian Johnson, touched by the unemployment and poverty they saw asked, "Holgen, do you have any dreams?"



"Sure, I do," he answered without hesitation. "I would like to go to the U.S. to get an education and come back to Haiti to find a job in the telecom industry."

Even before the earthquake, Haiti's telecommunications infrastructure was undeveloped and the service sporadic, but there was no training for telecommunication technicians in Haiti. A degree from an American school with its advanced technology would make him much more employable. Guerisma told the Johnsons that he had checked into scholarships, but had no luck. That was as far as the conversation went, and Guerisma put it out of his mind.

About two weeks after the Johnsons went back to the U.S., Guerisma was surprised to get a call from Brian saying that he and Enid had talked and prayed, and he said "We got the green light from God to help make your dream come true." They offered to sponsor his education, and he could live with them in Frederic, Wis., while he went to school.

"I could have had a heart attack from joy that day," Guerisma says.

After much research and communication back and forth with the Johnsons, they selected the telecommunication technologies program at WITC-Rice Lake.

"Not only was the program perfect for my needs, we also found out WITC was the sixth top two-year college in the entire nation," Guerisma says. After 18 months of Visa paperwork, college registration, e-mails, letters, phone calls and interviews – and even a quick wedding with his fiancé, Marjolein – he arrived in time to start school at WITC in August 2011.

"When I first read about the telecommunication technologies program, I said, 'Wow! Can I really learn all that in two years?' But every day has been an adventure for me.

"Because English is my third language, I had to get used to some different technical terms, especially in mathematics," he says.

But after just a few weeks of help from the staff in the Learning Resource Center, he was able to adapt quickly.

Guerisma has maintained a 4.0 GPA and his instructors are impressed with his "thirst for knowledge."

"Holgen has a passion and a vision to learn as much possible and bring his skills and education back to his home country," said telecommunications instructor, Paul Kostner.

Guerisma has come to think of the Johnsons and all of the students in the telecommunications program as his second family. His fellow students even organized an ice fishing tournament last winter and raised \$750 for a Haitian charity.

After graduation this May, Guerisma is hoping to stay and work for a year in the industry to get the experience that will ensure him a job when he gets back to Haiti. ■

"I realize WITC not only has prepared me for a career, but for a better way of living."

Telecommunication Technologies

The future of telecommunications is changing. Technologies, including wireless technology, fiber optic technology, high speed internet, IP video security systems and video over Internet are advancing rapidly.

To successfully enter today's innovative field of telecommunications, graduates need a foundation in merging technologies – as the traditional areas of telephone and cable television rely more and more on computer information systems and wireless communications.

WITC will make sure graduates have the hands-on skills, computer background, and interpersonal skills to excel in your career.

For more information about the telecommunication technologies program, visit witc.edu/programs.





How a 'PINK' SUPERHERO Succeeds in a Man's World

By Elizabeth Whitchurch • Photos by Tom Lindfors

Across the stage clomps a woman in untied work boots that have seen the better side of being new; her unmistakable red hair in braids. Tattoos peek out from under the sleeves of her blue graduation gown where golden honors cords swing as she walks. She reaches the microphone, turns and beams at the audience. She's to deliver the student speech at WITC's 2009 commencement. Then Jenny Bannink begins to speak and eloquent, passionate words about the excellent education she found at WITC flow forth.

She speaks of trying a four-year college, a variety of jobs and of finally realizing the need to do what she loves.

Though Bannink attended a four-year college, she found the coursework "bland," and her grades suffered and her exceptional writing skills faded.

Bannink now realizes her passion began as a child with tinkering and repairing the engines at home.

"I would hold my breath as I waited for that spark that

created combustion and the purr that indicated I was truly brilliant," Bannink says. "I was missing that spark. And I didn't want to spend tens of thousands of dollars in tuition to figure out what I wanted to do with my life."

Bannink left the university after the first year and pursued a few temp jobs "trying out careers." In one position, she was an operator at a laser machine job shop. There she learned auto-CAD, beam and optic adjustments and machine repair; but she didn't realize how much she enjoyed the position until she'd moved on to find success and prestige as an office contractor.

"I realized there was no happiness for me in a cubical," Bannink says. "I yearned to work behind a toolbox again."

A few years later, a new opportunity arose in a metal fabrication shop as a laser tech. "I did not have the education, but I had the experience." Unfortunately the place was dimly lit, loud and filthy, and she experienced gender bias. After several surgeries caused by lifting excessive weight and a shop slowdown, she was laid off.



"No matter where I go from where I'm at, manufacturing has helped me find my capabilities and develop into who I am now and in the future."

"That was my golden ticket – it guided me to the doors of WITC-New Richmond," she

says. So she painted her old toolbox pink "as a wink and a nod to the old notion that women do not belong in the trades," and enrolled in the machine tooling technics program. The 'spark' was back.

Initially concerned, she found paying for college was not as fearsome as she expected. She applied for scholarships and received awards from local businesses, WITC, the Surgeons of Steel, and the Minnesota Tool Builders Association, and she worked a tool shop she enjoyed. Bannink learned how to process plastic, so she took a plastic injection molding set-up class at WITC.

Freshly graduated with honors from WITC with both a technical diploma in machine tooling technics and a plastic injection molding certificate, Bannink's world was set – for a while. But then the tool shop experienced a slowdown, and she had to find another job to meet her financial responsibilities. She found one, but it wasn't a good fit. Her health suffered, and she was job seeking again.

This time, however, she had options. "I realized everyone seems to need a skilled tradesman, be it welders, machinists, programmers, toolmakers or CNC operators.

"After checking out a few places, I found the place I wanted to park my pink toolbox for good," Bannink says with a smile. "I accepted a job at SMC Ltd. in Somerset, [Wis.]

"It's a clean, well-lit facility with top-of-the-line technology. They've been growing rapidly – even during the rough patches in the economy. They're innovation-built around integrity, and I have respect for their practices and vision," Bannink explains.

Pink toolbox in tow, Bannink now happily works at SMC with a team of "unique men, superbly intelligent, impressively resourceful, tremendously empathetic, unbelievably patient and always willing to help in the best interest of advancing the team and protecting the future of our trade.

"You need to love what you do," Bannink says, an engaging smile brightening her face. She describes herself as "a toolmaker, a machinist, a programmer, a CNC set-up

operator, a tool repair technician, a precision engineer, a lifelong student, a mentor and an elite member of a group of superheroes in the tool room who wear their capes backwards.

"I appreciate the vast opportunities that my career at SMC Ltd. affords me, and I take pride in my work," she explains. "The feeling of accomplishment associated with repairing a mold brings me great joy."

Looking ahead, Bannink says a "tradesman is a permanent student." She learns every day and adds to her superhero list: design, engineering, automation, supervision, estimation, management.

"No matter where I go from where I'm at, manufacturing has helped me find my capabilities and develop into who I am now and in the future."

For more information about WITC's machine tooling technics program, visit witc.edu/programs. ■

Preventing a Skills Gap

[New and Expanded WITC Programs offered]



WITC INSTRUCTOR, TIM WRIGHT
HAS BEEN WORKING WITH AEROSPACE COMPOSITES FOR 14
YEARS AS A TECHNICIAN AND TECHNICAL TRAINER



NEW Composite Technology Program

A skills gap is never good for business. In fact it is that shortage of skilled workers for growing careers that economists point to as a reason economic recovery has been slow.

That's why when Kestrel Aircraft decided it would call Superior home; Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College asked what it could do to equip residents with the skills to fill positions in manufacturing those aircrafts.

"From the outset of our move, WITC and Kestrel began working together to ensure that an educated workforce is available locally as we grow the business and start production of the Kestrel aircraft," Alan Klapmeier, CEO of Kestrel Aircraft says.

It took only two years to go from a mere idea, to a \$600,000 Wisconsin Covenant Grant, to the recent announcement

of the fall 2013 start of WITC-Superior's aviation-based composite technology* program.

"One of the strengths that WITC has is the flexibility and nimbleness to react to the business community's needs in the time frame that they need the help," says Superior Chamber president and WITC board member Dave Minor.

While the composite technology program is the first of its kind in Wisconsin, the use of the material in modern aircrafts is only expected to grow, according to the National Institute of Aviation Research. In the program, students will learn how to work with and layer carbon fiber and introduce resin to create a solid, strong product used to manufacture the body of the aircraft. A composite technician must be meticulous because no mistakes can be made.

"One of the key things that the students will learn at these basic levels is to respect the material," says Steve Serfling, COO/EVP of product development of Kestrel Aircraft.

Besides helping to mold the program, Kestrel will also be providing internships for composite technology students. It makes the overall project a prime example of what businesses and educational institutions are capable of when working together to establish opportunities for careers in the community.

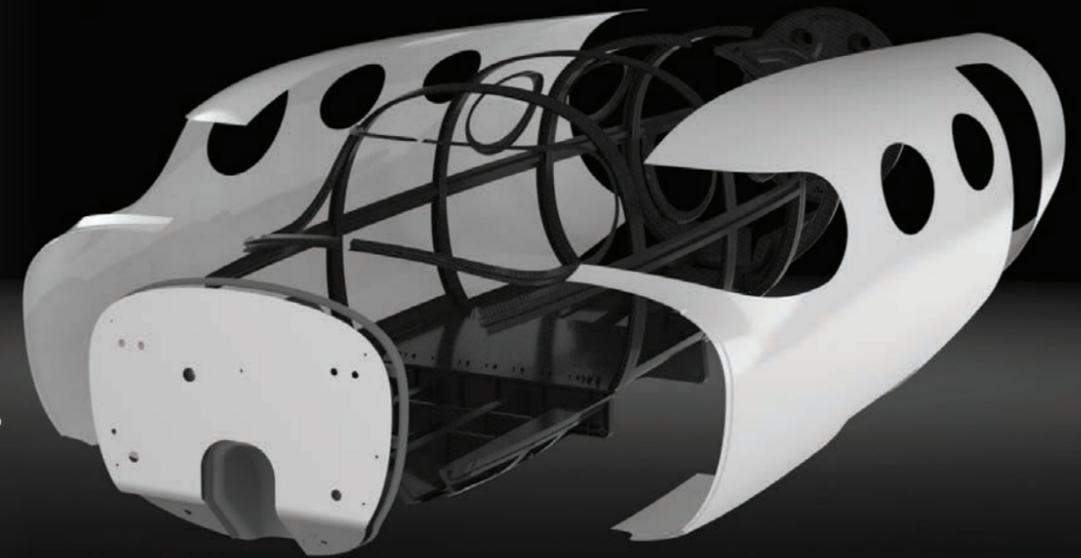
"WITC and Kestrel have developed a strong partnership and are working closely and collaboratively to ensure that WITC is providing a quality program, one that is accessible and affordable to students," says Diane Vertin, vice president, academic affairs and campus administrator at WITC- Superior.

Students will have the option of earning a two-year associate degree, a technical diploma or possibly an embedded composite certificate. The composite technology program will start this fall with a capacity of 20 students with another 20 students starting in January.

**Pending final WTCS approval*

In the composite technology program, students will learn how to layer carbon fiber and introduce resin to create a solid, strong product used to manufacture the body of the aircraft.

Image courtesy of Kestrel Aircraft



Human Resource Management

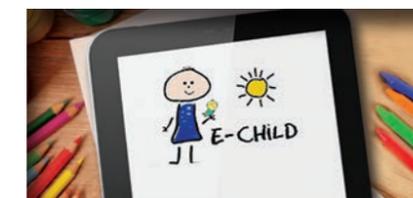
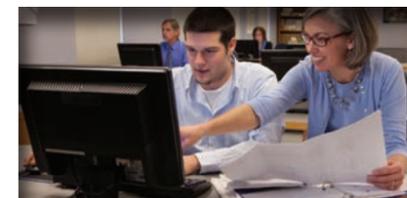
WITC will offer its human resource management collegewide via Interactive television (ITV) or online. The associate degree human resource management program prepares students to assist organizations in effectively recruiting, developing, and utilizing their human resources. This field of employment requires knowledge and skills in the following areas: occupational job analysis, compensation, benefits, training, staffing, employee relations, workers compensation, budgeting, labor relations, performance

management and coaching, safety, and human resources information systems.

Careers such as human resource assistant or human resource specialist can be found in all sizes of non-profit, service or manufacturing organizations. Human resource specialists focus on areas such as employee recruitment/interviewing, employee training and development, wages and compensation, benefits, employee wellness, and occupational analysis.



Other Expanded Programs



Also new for the fall, WITC is expanding its architectural commercial design program to include both the Rice Lake and New Richmond campuses. The E-CHiLD program – an innovative early childhood education associate degree program – also gets its start, along with the Ashland-and Rice Lake-based information technology – computer systems administration specialist program.



Story and photos by Shawnda Schelinder, Elizabeth Whitchurch, Deborah Anderson, Greg Dahl, and Jena Vogtman

MEET WITC'S 2013 STUDENT AMBASSADORS

More than 20 years ago, the Wisconsin Technical College System started the Student Ambassador program, a unique initiative that recognizes outstanding student achievement.

WITC's 2013 ambassadors, Melissa Clevette, WITC-Ashland; Kevin Peterson, WITC-New Richmond; Dale Shultz, WITC-Rice Lake; and Tarissa Deragon, WITC-Superior; have distinguished themselves through community involvement, leadership qualities and a commitment to higher education.

"The Foundation is proud to support the Ambassador program for WITC," says Craig Fowler, vice president, continuing education/executive director, foundation and campus administrator. "The program not only recognizes some of the college's top students, such as these four individuals, but also gives them the opportunity to develop their leadership skills by representing WITC in our communities."

WITC-ASHLAND MELISSA CLEVETTE



When Melissa Clevette lost her job after the business changed ownership, she recognized the hardship as an opportunity to do something she had always wanted to do – return to college for a degree.

Clevette wanted to stay close to home, and she was also looking for a degree that was affordable and appealed to her desire to help people. Finally, Clevette knew it was important to learn skills that would make her employable. Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College fit the bill.

"I knew I wanted to stay close to home, and that I wanted a career where I could help people," Clevette says of her choice to study

the occupational therapy assistant program (OTA) at WITC. "And I needed to be employable after graduation."

Clevette made the right call. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the job outlook for OTAs is expected to grow 41 percent by the year 2020. And 92 percent of WITC's OTA graduates were hired within six months of graduation, according to the college's 2010 Graduate Follow-up Survey.

"I had no idea I would love the experience so much," Clevette says. Expecting to simply take classes and not become too involved on campus, Clevette now finds that she enjoys everything about the college experience at WITC.

Clevette's cohort is just now getting into the "nitty gritty" of all the career options available to OTA graduates, and she's unsure whether she wants to work in a school setting with children or a clinical setting with geriatric patients. "The field is just so vast," she says.

"Mel is a wonderful student and advocate for the college and profession of occupational therapy," says Mari Jo Ulrich, WITC's OTA program director. "I'm confident she'll find success no matter what path she chooses."

Other instructors agree. "In class, she was always positive and willing to help other students," Karyn Watters, general studies instructor, says of Clevette. It is that spirit of kindness and support that makes Clevette not only a good ambassador, but will make her a successful OTA as well. ■

WITC-NEW RICHMOND KEVIN PETERSON

It took more than his ready, winning smile, direct eye contact and firm handshake to make Kevin Peterson WITC-New Richmond's 2013 student ambassador. His steady plans for what he wants in life and his impressive articulation of that future cause one to pause and look beneath the well-worn baseball cap, behind the safety glasses, and past the sweatshirt smeared with tractor grease to discover a self-assured young man who knows what he wants, how to get it and where his future leads. He's a young man of integrity, who already understands and appreciates the value of an honest day's work.

Peterson was nominated by one of his instructors, Lee Fiedler, who describes Kevin aptly: "outgoing, well-spoken, highly intelligent and hardworking.

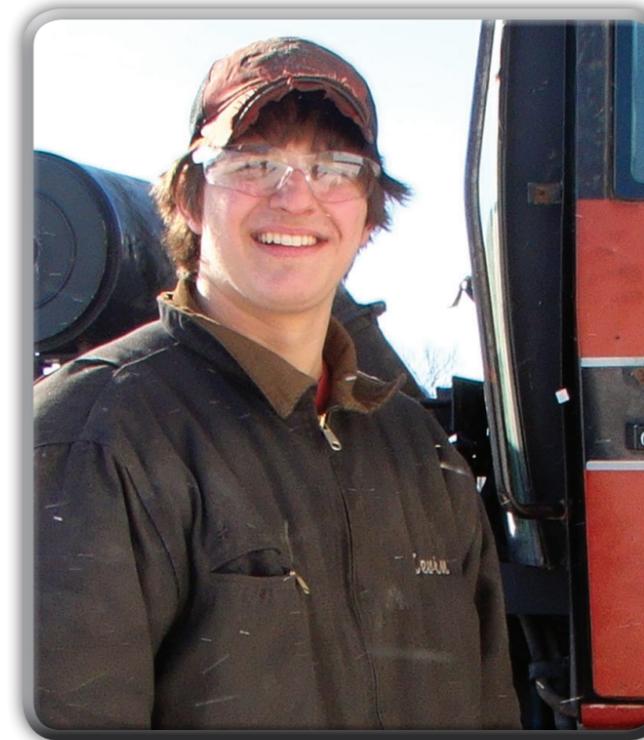
Kevin comes from a family that is

He was raised and lives on a large farm south of River Falls, Wis., with a state-of-the-art dairy parlor. They also raise beef cattle and farm a couple thousand acres. "I've worked at the family dairy since I was 10 years old – and I still do," Peterson says. He also spent last summer working at Minnesota Ag Group in Hastings, Minn.

"I heard WITC had a great agriculture (power) program. Being a two-year college, I can get a job sooner," he says. "It's also close to home."

Now the recipient of the WITC-New Richmond ambassador title for 2012-13, Peterson says he was surprised. "It's an honor just to be nominated. I didn't think I'd get it.

"I've already visited the tech ed classes in Hudson with Joanne (WITC career specialist) to tell them about my WITC



"WITC has definitely prepared me for my future"

accustomed to serving the community. His family hosted Farm Progress Days 2010, and they're always there whenever someone needs help."

The youngest of five and a 2011 graduate of River Falls High School, Peterson is no stranger to work.

experience, which has all been good," he says. "I like the hands-on learning opportunities."

Peterson will graduate in May with a technical diploma. He plans to work as a service technician at a dealership, and in about five years return full-time to the family farm and eventually run the entire operation.

"WITC has definitely prepared me for my future," Peterson says. ■

WITC-RICE LAKE DALE SHULTZ

Dale Shultz first attended WITC-Rice Lake as a high school student in the certified nursing assistant program. After high school, he attended a technical college in Minnesota, becoming a licensed practical nurse. His desire to help people and make an impact on their lives led him to be a prison nurse, a civilian nurse for the U.S. Army and, finally, a hospice nurse.

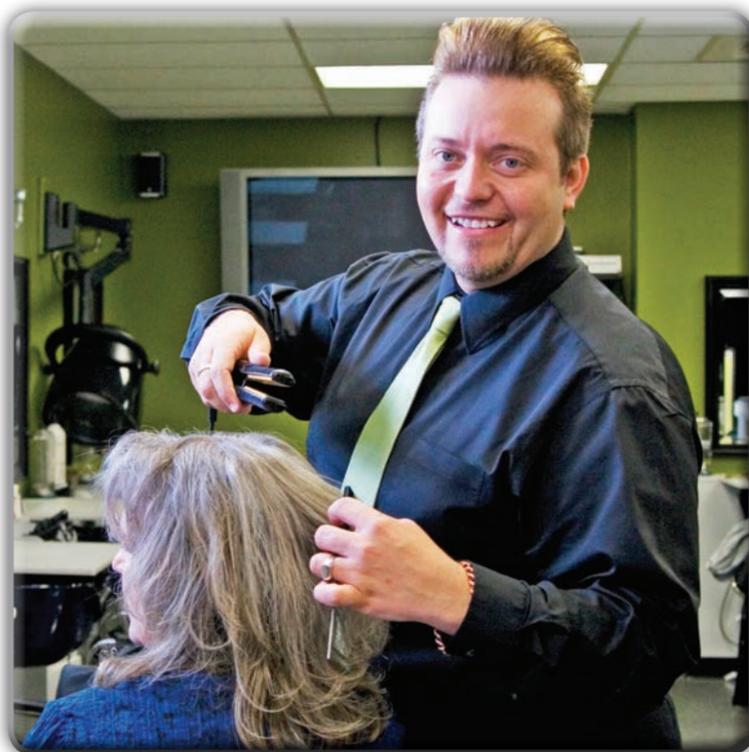
“After working nine years in the nursing field, I was looking for a more creative outlet, but still with people, helping to make people smile and feel happy,” he says.

Shultz, who will graduate from the barber/cosmetology program in May, feels it’s important to be invested in the college and local community. With his positive energy and large personality, he is a valued member of Student Senate, the International Education Club, Peer Mentorship organization, Gay Straight Alliance and SkillsUSA, as well as a volunteer for a local homeless shelter.

He is especially involved in the International Education group, inspiring other students to take advantage of the opportunities sponsored through WITC to experience the cultures of other countries and broaden their global perspectives.

“Learn every day.”

“Going to Japan was on my bucket list,” Shultz says, and describes last summer’s six weeks in the Guy Healy, Japan USA Summer program as “life changing.” He joined other American college students as camp counselors, teaching



English to Japanese children of all ages and as a result, he says “I felt my heart pushed to be an educator.”

Before going to Japan, Schultz thought he would be completing the barber/cosmetology program and start on his second career. But he will return to WITC fall semester to earn a degree in business management with the goal of owning his own salon and, ultimately, to become a cosmetology instructor.

Shultz says his lifelong motto is “Learn every day,” and he intends to expand his education through more world travel. Shultz will be taking a cultural exchange trip to Germany this spring, as well as a semester studying abroad in Scotland in 2014. He is also honored to have been selected to return to Japan for the Guy Healy program as the director of a team of counselors in the summer of 2014. ■

WITC-SUPERIOR TARISSA DERAGON

Nanny, student senate alternate, traveler, Red Cliff Band member, sister, adventurer, early childhood club member, helpful friend and volunteer are all accurate descriptions for Tarissa Deragon. What she says she’s not is a number.

Deragon graduated from a small high school in Bayfield, Wis., before heading off to a four-year university in Minnesota, undecided on her major. As a student who typically does it all, she was involved in intramural sports, worked in retail and kept up good grades, but she says she wasn’t as engaged as she thought she should be in the classroom and felt like a number competing with such a large student body. After taking classes to personally reflect on her career options, she left the university after two years to come to WITC.

“I know what I want to do in life now,” Deragon explains.

It was choice made with the help of supportive parents, who are both WITC alumni. Though she was not positive it was the perfect switch at first, she says once she got to know her instructors and how the early childhood education program at WITC worked, it stuck. Her engagement was back and her goals expanded.

“After WITC, I’d like to go to University of Wisconsin-Stout to finish my four-year for sure, and then I’d like to do my masters, and eventually open up my own childcare center,” Deragon says.

Besides being a first-year student, Deragon works as a nanny for a Duluth family, has pursued and taken on leadership roles on campus, is involved in volleyball and CAB activities and plans to travel to Scotland in May on a WITC study abroad trip to explore nature-based kindergartens and childcare centers.

“I’m trying to better myself here and on the Scotland trip, so I can go back home and help my community,” Deragon said. Community, she says, has played a central role in her life.

Deragon explained she helps out friends with childcare, volunteers in Red Cliff and strives to be a good role model for her two younger brothers. Past teachers have invited her to speak to students about her journey and experience with higher education. She says she wants to have an impact.



“I know what I want to do in life now.”

“I have a strong passion for children and want to better their lives and educational experience,” Deragon explains. She wants to leave an impact not only on her college and home turf, but also wherever else she ends up. ■

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 Hagstrom, 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 these 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. ■



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

the perfect plan

By Elizabeth Whitchurch,
Photo by Suzanne Wynveen

Those with an architectural inclination will relish the expansion of WITC's architectural commercial design associate degree program from WITC's Rice Lake campus to the New Richmond campus fall 2013.

The program allows knowledge in construction, heating, plumbing, electrical and mechanical systems to create detailed construction documents. The program, unique in Wisconsin, provides students with the latest computer-aided drafting (CAD) and architectural software.

"Though the construction economy took quite a hit in 2009, it is recovering, and there's no better time to start in architecture and construction," says architectural commercial design instructor Deb Kutrieb.

Architectural commercial design program grad found a wealth of possibilities



Meet program graduate, **Hattie (Bollom) Redmon**, who works in Missoula, Mont., for Jackson Contractor Group, Inc., as a project coordinator.

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 grads 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/alumniupdate and send us your information!

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Experience. Success.

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