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GCC celebrates new campus with grand opening

On Aug. 29, GCC held grand opening ceremonies for our new $198 million downtown campus, which brings hundreds of jobs and thousands of students to downtown New Haven and adds a new higher education partner to the downtown landscape.

Click here for a more detailed report of the day-long grand opening festivities, which began in the morning with a ceremonial ribbon-cutting and speakers, and continued throughout the afternoon with campus tours and an open house.

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Coming soon: Student college e-mail accounts

In the near future, all Connecticut community college students, including those at GCC, will receive special college e-mail accounts as part of a software upgrade by the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities. The details are in the midst of being finalized, so stay tuned. We will share more information about this exciting initiative as soon as it's available.

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President’s Corner
President’s Corner is Gateway Community College’s campus newsletter. It is published by the college’s Public Relations and Marketing Department.

Gateway’s Mission
Gateway Community College offers high-quality instruction and comprehensive services in an environment conducive to learning. We respond to the changing academic, occupational, technological, and cultural needs of a diverse population.

Kim Diaz knows what a difference an education at GCC can make. She is an alumna who went on to earn a bachelor’s degree at Albertus Magnus College and is now employed as finance clerk in GCC’s Finance Office.

She hopes GCC will open similar doors to success for the 12 members of her family who were among the thousands of GCC students to start classes Sept. 4 as GCC’s new downtown campus opened its doors to students for the first time. That’s why Diaz recruited and shepherded seven of those family members through enrollment, counseling and the financial aid process.

In addition to her daughter, stepson and stepdaughter, members of her family enrolled this semester include two grandsons and seven nieces. Two-thirds of them are the first members of their families to go to college, and two-thirds of them opted for career tracks in health or science. In addition to Diaz, two of her stepdaughters are also GCC graduates who now have well-paying jobs in radiation therapy and social work.

“I care very much about my family,” said Diaz, a New Haven resident. “And I’m confident that Gateway will give them the tools they need for a successful future and be their stepping stone to prevail in all their endeavors.”

Click here to learn more about the Diaz family at GCC.

Stay connected: Facebook page reaches 20,000

As GCC launched its fall semester this week and welcomed students to our new downtown campus for the first time, we helped our students, faculty, staff and the community get the most up-to-date information through our Facebook page and our Twitter feed.

Our Facebook page is up to more than 2,800 “likes,” has a total weekly reach of more than 20,000 individuals, and if you visit our page you’ll see that our student body is beginning to embrace our page as a sort of one-stop Help Desk. They post questions, we sent them answers.
And our Facebook page is connected directly to our Twitter feed, so those who prefer the short 140 character Tweet to logging into Facebook are also plugged in.

We encourage every member of the faculty and staff to “like” our Facebook page and subscribe to our Twitter feed to stay connected through the communication channels preferred by so much of our student body — and to help get the message out to students to do the same.

Our Facebook page is located at “Gateway Community College, New Haven.” And if you’re on Twitter, you can follow us under @GatewayNewHaven. Spread the word!

**GCC mindful of impact on parking, traffic downtown**

GCC is very mindful of the impact that its employees and students have on traffic and parking in the downtown New Haven area and the college is doing everything it can to mitigate that impact.

GCC is offering incentives to its faculty, staff and students to use public transportation and it is promoting other alternatives to single-occupancy vehicles as well, including carpooling, vanpooling and bicycling. We are hopeful this strategy will have a noteworthy impact because 28 percent of Gateway students live in New Haven and another 40 percent live in towns that touch New Haven. The campus is very close to both of the city’s train stations and offers easy bus access, too. Also, New Haven has the largest network of marked bike lanes in the state and the second highest percentage of residents who walk and/or bike to work in New England, second only to Cambridge, Mass.

The college also has arranged for 20 percent more parking spaces associated with our new campus than with our two existing campuses combined. The new campus will have 1,300 parking spaces in all, including 600 in the new parking garage built for the college at the north end of campus and 700 leased spaces in the adjacent Temple Street Garage. At the beginning of the fall semester, the college is also offering overflow parking at our former Long Wharf campus with a shuttle every 20 minutes to downtown.

The college, in conjunction with traffic experts, also redesigned its class and staff schedules to mitigate the number of vehicles attempting to enter or exit the campus at high traffic times. And the City of New Haven has installed high-tech traffic signals at nine intersections in the area around the campus to keep traffic flowing smoothly during peak traffic times after the beginning-of-the-semester heavy traffic winds down.

**Town Green District welcomes GCC to downtown**

New Haven’s Town Green Special Services District — a business improvement district founded to improve ownership values by making downtown an internationally competitive urban environment in which to live, work, learn and play — is reaching out to our students with a packet of information designed to introduce them to downtown.

Among other things, the packet included information about parking, dining and downtown activities. Stay tuned for more information on a related Welcome Program and Window Sticker Program for GCC discounts downtown.

In addition to providing services like public space improvements, Town Green
Office of Student Activities and Leadership Programs

At the end of July, GCC’s Office of College Life was renamed the Office of Student Activities and Leadership Programs as part of an effort to increase student awareness of the various leadership development opportunities that it provides and to better reflect the programs that the office supports.

The Office of Student Activities and Leadership Programs will continue to provide support for all student organizations, including the Student Government Association (SGA) and its subcommittees, Student Community Outreach Programs, New Student Orientation, the Administration of the Student Activity Fund and the game room, which is now called Game Haven.

Everyone in the GCC community is invited to stop by the new office in room S109. It includes a student organization work room, which will be the SGA office and will be where all student organizations will hold their meetings. To get involved or to serve as presenter in the office’s various leadership sessions, contact Director Roberta Prior at 203-285-2208.

Faculty, Staff Highlights

Luncheon honors Stewart for Coach of the Year

The GCC Foundation sponsored an appreciation luncheon Aug. 1 for John Stewart, GCC athletic director and head coach of the men’s basketball team, for being once again named regional Coach of the Year by the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA).

The event was held at the New Haven Lawn Club and was attended by Stewart’s family, as well as GCC President Dr. Dorsey Kendrick, Dean of Students Wilson Luna (right in photo with Stewart), Director of Human Resources Lucille Brown, Dean of Development and Community Partnerships Mary Ellen Cody, Director of Student Services & Student Development Matthew Long, assistant coaches Allen Gales, Carrie Coles and John Austin and others.

The Gateway Lions finished their 2011-12 season with a 15-7 record. Although they headed into the Regional Tournament the first weekend in March with the momentum of a winning season, the Lions were eliminated from the tournament March 3. Still, Jerome Parks made 1st Team All-New England. And his teammates Nate Campbell and Davon Pratt made 2nd Team All-New England. And all three played in an all-star...
3 staff members named to new positions

Please join us in applauding three members of the GCC staff on their new positions. Kellie Byrd Danso (left), M.Ed., NCC, has been named director of career services and veterans affairs. Michael Buccilli (center), MSW, has been named director of counseling and student success. And Maribel Lopez (right) has been named registrar. Congratulations!

Professor attends language fellowship in Egypt

GCC Professor Susan Chenard was awarded a fellowship this summer from the U.S. Department of State to participate in the 2012 Intensive Summer Language Institutes’ program at Alexandria University in Alexandria, Egypt.

She was one of 20 U.S. educators and graduate students selected to represent 10 states and the District of Columbia in the program. The Intensive Summer Language Institutes offer current and pre-service educators at U.S. K-12 schools and community colleges a specially designed six-week program of courses and seminars in Arabic and Chinese language, culture and linguistics. It included 20 hours of in-class instruction per week, peer tutors and cultural excursions. The academic component also featured weekly symposiums that offered participants the opportunity to exchange practical experience on materials development, curriculum design and assessment.

Student Highlights

Students, alumni spotlighted in grand opening event

GCC’s grand opening event Aug. 29 shone the spotlight on two current students and two alumni.

GCC alumnus Vinnie Penn (photo), who hosts a weekday morning talk show on WELI 960 AM radio, was the ceremony’s emcee. Current students Sam Allesandrine and SGA President Symphany Joseph participated in the ceremony itself.

Allesandrine sang the national anthem and Joseph gave remarks. And the Salsa band Mikata, featuring GCC alumna Yaditza LaViera as lead singer, provided music in the cafeteria.
About 860 new students, their spouses and their parents participated in New Student Orientation at our new campus last month.

The events on Aug. 23, 27 and 30 were sponsored by the Office of Student Activities and Leadership Programs and run by 12 Student Orientation Leaders (photo), who also provided tours during our open house event on Aug. 29.

“The evaluations came back positive and with a lot of feedback about how much Gateway deserves this new campus, how much the college has grown and how excited the students are to start classes,” said Roberta Prior, director of the Office of Student Activities and Leadership Programs.

GCC student Rodney Wilkerson was granted a $1,000 scholarship at an event Aug. 3 where GCC, the City of New Haven, New Haven Public Schools and WYBC radio hosted their annual back to school rally at the Floyd Little Athletic Center in New Haven.

GCC Dean of Development and Community Partnerships Mary Ellen Cody attended to present the scholarship to Wilkerson, a graduate of Hillhouse High School in New Haven. Also in attendance were Mayor John DeStefano Jr., Superintendent of Schools Reginald Mayo and WYBC hosts Banesha B and Juan Castillo.
BMET graduates honored by New England engineers

Two graduates of GCC’s Biomedical Engineering Technology (BMET) Program were honored in July by the New England Society of Clinical Engineers at its annual summer meeting.

Frank Rosen and Scott Sivek were selected as having the top senior design project presentations at the 2012 Biomedical Symposium.

GCC is the only community college in the state to offer this important program, which saw its 30th class of students graduate in the spring. Growth in the biotechnology industry offers its graduates new opportunities as instrumentation calibration technicians for production, validation and research equipment and instrumentation. Also, equipment manufacturers require the services of biomedical engineering technicians to assist in developing, manufacturing, testing, service, and technical sales of biomedical equipment.

Calendar Highlights

Sept. 20: Certified Student Leader Series launches

The Office of Student Activities and Leadership Programs kicks off its new Certified Student Leader Series on Thursday, Sept. 20, when John A. Vincze, director of GCC’s Business and Industry Services area, will present a seminar on time management.

The seminar will be held from 12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. in room S109. All GCC students are invited to participate in the series. Those who participate in all eight of the series’ seminars throughout the year will be eligible to become GCC Certified Student Leaders. For more information, call 203-285-2208.

Sept. 26: Get the Scoop on Gateway Groups

On Wednesday, Sept. 26, the Office of Student Activities and Leadership Programs will host a Get the Scoop on Gateway Groups event from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the Fairway, which is the second floor of the George Street Bridge. Student participants are invited to come and build their own ice cream sundaes and learn more about the student organizations that GCC has to offer. For more information, call 203-285-2208.

Sept. 27: Plastic Musik percussion show

What happens when you combine plastic tubes, laundry tubs, musical instruments, and a bunch of classic songs? Plastic Musik, a Nevada-based percussion group that combines innovative instrumentation with high energy, unpredictable theatrics to bring audiences an experience they are unlikely to
Plastic Musik is scheduled to perform a free concert at 7 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 27, in GCC’s Community Center, room N100, The show is sponsored by the Esther Haseltine Schiavone Endowment Fund for the Arts at GCC and the Campus Activities Board.

By using all plastic instruments, including a product known as “Boomwhackers,” Plastic Musik is able to put an unexpected twist on some of the most recognizable songs of our time, including songs by Mozart and Beethoven, as well as Motown, hip-hop and other music.