

Guest Column for July 2009 from Terra Community College

Reaching Out to Students in a Whole New Way at Terra

By Lisa Jozwiak, Vice President for Academic Affairs

Throughout the U.S., we are experiencing economic times unlike what most of us have seen in our lifetime. The unemployment rate in Sandusky County alone presently stands above 10%. As people who have lost their job try to transition into new positions, they are being faced with the reality that employers are demanding a more skilled workforce. Additionally, 45% of Ohio's adult population between the ages of 25 and 54 has no postsecondary (college) education. Due to these trying circumstances, many individuals are faced with the need to find a new career or ways to advance their current skills to meet workforce demands. At Terra Community College, we are poised and ready to assist this new group of adult learners. Whether you are returning to school to earn a degree, receive a certificate, or take a class, we can help you to become successful.



One option for potential students may be through our new Academic Service Center that opens this August. The Academic Service Center will house many of the services that are essential for students, especially those who have been out of school for several years, to have success in their learning endeavor. We will offer tutoring, academic advising, testing services and learning skills workshops. A Math and Writing Lab will provide students with specific tutoring assistance to help them further develop their math and writing skills. In addition, a new developmental education classroom, housed in the Academic Service Center, will provide classes to help students prepare for and excel in college level coursework.

Another way we will be reaching out to potential students is through our new Skilled Trades Center that will open in August of 2010. The Skilled Trades Center will house Heating, Ventilating and Air Conditioning (HVAC), Automotive, Welding and Truck Driving Training. While these programs are currently available at the college, they will soon be taught in a brand new Center with state-of-the-art labs and equipment. Also, through the Skilled Trades Center and our Technology Programs, adults who may not be seeking a degree but wish to add to their skill level can earn a certificate such as HVAC, Welding, Diesel Engines or Wind Power Technology.

Besides our individual efforts at Terra, we are also taking part in a new statewide initiative throughout Ohio that targets adults. The goal of the program is to advance a student's education through "Stackable Certificates." Stackable Certificates are a way for adults to earn credit for prior work or educational experience. Each piece of a student's education "stacks" on to the next. Through this program, we will be able to provide adults with college credit and jumpstart their educational journey.

Through our new Academic Service Center, Skilled Trades Center, and Stackable Certificates, we hope to meet the needs of our community. Offering an array of new programs and improved facilities, Terra has options for the student looking to improve his or her existing skill set or planning on a career change. Regardless of which category you fit in, plan on becoming a Terra student, where you can *Start Here ... and Go Anywhere!*