



The Career Planning & Counseling Center

www.mhcc.edu/careercenter

503-491-7432

Hours:

Monday	8-5
Tuesday	8-5
Wednesday	8-5
Thursday	8-5
Friday	8-5

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Nicole Gilbertson
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Career & Experiential Learning Specialist:

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In this issue:

Welcome back	1
2008-09 Service-Learning mentor	1
Emancipate yourself from negative self-talk	2
Another great year for HD 100 College Success	3
Career strategies for tough times	3
Job search tips	4
Money-saving tips	4



Mt. Hood Community College Career Planning and Counseling Center Newsletter

Fall 2008

Welcome back from Dean

by Patricia Martin
Dean, Student Success Services

Welcome to Mt. Hood Community College! Whether it is your first time at this or another College as an employee or student, I wish you the best from the Dean of Student Success' office and the Career Planning and Counseling Center.

While many of you (and we too!) were enjoying some well-deserved summer vacations, the staff in the Career Planning and Counseling Center continued to plan a host of programs and activities to meet the career and personal counseling needs of our students. Additionally, the Center continues to hone its repertoire for work with faculty and staff consulting issues and concerns.

While there are a host of offerings, I want to call attention to a couple of new program initiatives.

Our popular HD 100 program has expanded (last fall to the high schools; see related

article on page 3) and will now include more academic and interest-specific courses. There are new HD courses on the web and in IS format, offering a range of methods to meet the needs of different students.

Our service learning focus is springing into action. During this Fall, not only will we offer a HD 100 course focused on service, but will sponsor four other courses that have service learning integrated into their curriculum. The opportunities for service will expand with two AmeriCorps student interns, who will work with Eric Juenemann to help bring the options for community service and volunteerism to higher levels.

During the spring and summer, several members of the College faculty and staff worked on threat assessment and after care options to assist with averting disasters and/or dealing with them after the

fact. The programs and processes will be unveiled during this academic year.

Finally, the Career Planning and Counseling Center is poised to assist all students with help in managing their academic and personal lives. There are small groups, individual sessions, and workshops available, as well as resources on the Web.

Faculty and staff are able to call on staff members to provide expert consultation on problems and issues, as well as offer class presentations on a range of career and human and student development topics.

I encourage all students and staff at the College to utilize this very good resource on our campus, and meet with the outgoing and friendly staff. Please call on me at 503-491-7372 if I can provide specific assistance or if you have any questions.

2008-09 Service-Learning mentor

by Eric Juenemann,
Career & Experiential
Learning Specialist

We're pleased to introduce Derek Ruecker, our first 2008-09 Service-Learning Mentor. Derek is a 2nd year MHCC student who brings with him a variety of leadership, communication, and organizational skills, but most importantly a passion for and commitment to service. Derek's volunteer experiences include the Cat Adoption Team, Girl Scouts



Derek Ruecker: "Service-Learning will help students gain the perspective of others while discovering the diversity of their world—and that they can make a difference in it."

of America, and serving as a Park Guide at Yosemite National Park this past summer.

Here are a couple of things that Derek had to say about his new role and about Service-Learning: "Service-Learning will help students gain the perspective of others while discovering the diversity of their world—and

...cont. on page 3



“The first tip I offer students in overcoming negative self-talk is simply realizing how much your thoughts affect your behavior.”

-Christopher Rowley, Peer Mentor



Emancipate yourself from negative self-talk

by Christopher Rowley, Peer Mentor

In the six months that I have been fortunate enough to serve the students of Mt. Hood as a peer mentor in the Career Planning and Counseling Center, there is a commonality - often displayed right in front of me - among those students who are struggling most to find their path and ultimately success in college. These students have a tendency to verbalize self-limiting and often self-degrading thoughts right out loud. Statements such as *I can't* or *I'll never*, used in as many variations imaginable, tend to be a permanent and comfortable part of their collective vocabulary. At times the self-talk gets much worse: *I am just not smart*, or the dreadful *I will not make it through college*, which often turns out to be a self-fulfilling prophecy, are commonplace particularly amongst those students on academic probation.

The negative self-talk gives me a glimpse of the internal obstacles these students face and have trouble conquering, and it helps me empathize with them fully. I know firsthand how changing your thought patterns from negative cycles to positive ones can in turn change your life. In the summer after my mother was diagnosed with ovarian cancer, I began to suffer from horrifying panic attacks. The fears I had stemming from her condition and my role as her sole caretaker sent me into a spiral of anxiety. As the attacks got worse, so did my internal dialogue regarding them. The first thing I would say to myself when I woke up during this period was *I hope I don't have a panic attack today, but I probably I will*. Turned out I was right, and my negative and fearful thoughts had a lot

to do with it.

Of all the life changes I had to make to overcome my panic attacks (and there were several), changing my pattern of negative, fearful and defeatist thinking to a more positive and rational pattern was the most instrumental in ridding me of debilitating anxiety. In psychology this is known as *cognitive restructuring*. I learned to talk myself *out* of having panic attacks instead of talking myself *into* having them. I began to wake up in the morning and replace my old thought with a new one: *if I have a panic attack today I can handle it and everything will be all right*. This made all the difference in the world. By confronting the reality of my panic attacks, and choosing not to live in a constant state of internal dread, I empowered myself to control them instead of letting them control me.

Many psychologists believe that our subconscious hears and processes our own thoughts as if they were told to us by someone else. If I had a teacher tell me “you know what Chris, you just aren't smart at math and I honestly don't see you passing the final,” I will be the first to admit that would affect me and diminish my chances of passing the final. Saying this to myself would not yield a different result. The impact of the dialogue, whether coming from an external source or from your own negative thoughts, is very similar. The difference is that while it is often easy to disassociate from those who talk negatively about us, it is not so easy to disassociate from our own deep seeded negative thoughts about our perceived vulnerabilities and weaknesses. This is precisely why

negative self-talk often turns into a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The first tip I offer students in overcoming negative self-talk is simply realizing how much your thoughts affect your behavior. There is a reason the dentist says to us “you may feel a bit of pressure” before performing a root canal. Even if you find this to be hogwash, can you imagine the difference in your anxiety level if the dentist were to say “close your eyes, say a prayer, and clench your fist, because this is going to be *long and excruciating!*” Understand that your internal dialogue has the same effect on your perceptions and behavior. The next tip is to track your negative self-talk. Keep a journal. Pinch yourself every time you catch yourself fixating on the negative. Scream “Shut up!” at the top of your lungs when that pessimistic voice begins to creep into your head. This increases your awareness of just how *often* you bombard yourself with self-limiting thoughts.

This all makes the final tip I offer easier: *Change the internal dialogue*. Do not become narcissistic, or try to convince yourself you have capabilities well beyond reality. Simply stay optimistic and rational in your thoughts, and you will be amazed at how your self confidence and productivity grows. If you forgot about an exam all the way until an hour before class and you have to cram, instead of telling yourself *I'll never pass now*, ask yourself *what can I do within the next hour to most effectively prepare for the test?* Don't beat yourself up. Don't be a prisoner in your own mind. Emancipate yourself from negative self-talk and great things will follow.

Another great year for HD100 College Success!

by Nicole Gilbertson, Counselor

The 2008-2009 academic year is off to a great start for MHCC's HD100 College Success program. Over 30 sections of HD100 were offered this term-- and our enrollment in these classes looks great! Students were able to choose from one of our eight pre-Fall term sections or five or ten-week sections taught during the term. Full time and part-time instructors from a wide range of departments taught the course bringing with them their expertise, energy and enthusiasm.

Designed specifically for incoming freshman and returning students, the HD100 College Success curriculum



engages students in activities designed to increase self-awareness and motivation and familiarize them with campus resources. Students learn how to manage their time and set goals, balance school, work and personal life and develop new habits to help ensure success. In addition they gain practical knowledge by putting together a preliminary educational plan.

This year we will also continue our HD100 (H) program which is a version of HD100 specifically created for high school students. Last year six of our district high schools (Gresham, David-Douglas, Park Rose, Fir Ridge, Springwater Trail and

Centennial Learning Center) participated in a pilot of this program. We are happy to announce that two additional high schools, Reynolds and Sam Barlow, have joined us this year and we are looking forward to expanding this project further.

Taking an HD100 course is a great way for students to gain the skills and knowledge needed for success in college. Plus students receive 1 transferable elective credit, and tuition is free! Please remember to refer your students to this active and valuable course.

If you are interested in teaching HD100, please contact me directly at Nicole.Gilbertson@mhcc.edu (please note, a Masters degree is required to teach this course).

Service-Learning mentor ...continued from page 1

that they can make a difference in it."

As an AmeriCorps member, Derek will also earn a \$1,000 Educational Award upon successful completion of his year of service!

Here are just *some* of the exciting projects and activities that Derek has planned for this year:

- Leading National "Day of Service" projects for days such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day and Earth Day

- Coordinating the inaugural "Service-Learning Week" at MHCC (dates TBD)
- Leading reflection for groups of students who engage in extra-curricular service-learning
- Meeting with students who are looking to get connected with service-learning opportunities
- Making presentations to classes and student groups on the value of service-learning and ways to get involved at MHCC

Now, we need your help! Are you interested in incorporating service-learning into one of your classes? Would you like Derek to speak with your class or assist your students in getting connected with service opportunities? Do you have a great service-learning project idea? If you've answered "yes" to any of these questions, please contact Eric Juenemann at 503-491-7323 or eric.juenemann@mhcc.edu.

"Are you interested in incorporating service-learning into one of your classes?"

Career strategies for tough times

by Malcolm McCord, Counselor

Every day in the news we are hearing about uncertainties in the economy and students wonder how they will be able to find a job and what careers will give them job security. In this climate it may make sense to have both a short term and long term strategy.

A short term plan may be necessary for some to get through the current tough times while still aiming for a longer term career goal.

Let's talk about long term picture. While times are increasingly tough, recessions come and go. It doesn't really make sense to base long term career plans on short term economic conditions. For the long term, the picture may actually have some hope for optimism. Because there are more people in the baby boom generation, some experts believe that there will be a shortage of younger workers available to replace them as they retire. This could translate into

opportunities for younger workers.

The contracting labor market seen in a recession also tends to wring out a lot of established employees from positions they've held. When the economy recovers it then may have the ability to absorb an influx of newer, less established employees. But how do you avoid getting "wring out"? How does one achieve job security? We used to seek job security externally by striving for a career in

... cont. on page 4

Career strategies for tough times

“bullet proof” occupations or industries that were thought would never suffer a downturn. But nowadays the numbers of industries that we can count on to never decline are few. Because of this we increasingly seek job security internally, with things we can control.

Today job security comes from maintaining up-to-date skills in high demand areas so that if one industry or career track declines we can shift to another. It comes from having a well-educated understanding of economic trends so that we foresee shifts in labor market coming down the road and can make plans to reposition ourselves if need be. It comes from excellent job search and career management skills as well as social networking skills. It comes from having an opportunistic rather than a defensive attitude toward tough economic times.

In tough times people have a tendency to hunker down, to protect what they have and be fearful of risking new endeavors. But economic turmoil often provides the catalyst for major innovations and emergence of entirely new industries or career paths. These are some new occupations that are emerging: carbon management consultant, professional blogger, nursing informatics, viral marketers, and international logistics manager. Some other areas with growing opportunity include: occupations that serve the gaming industry, “green” careers of all kinds, computer security (forensics), welders, personal chef, and preventive health care experts.

Those alert to emerging fields and willing to take a chance on them may thrive if they are willing to accept the

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somewhat unpredictable nature of a new and emerging industry or occupation. But neither should someone seek out an occupation simply because it is growing rapidly. It is important that it also be a good fit for you.

In general those who do well in labor market of the future will not see their career as static. Rather, one is always engaging in lifelong learning, always looking for the best opportunities to grow and develop new skills or better position ourselves with trends in an ever more globalized economy.



Simple money-saving tips

In these tough economic times, here are a few things to consider:

- Simply downgrading your cable service from ‘Preferred’ to ‘Basic’ could save you over \$48 a month, or **\$576 per year!**
- Do you have a home phone AND a cell phone? Getting rid of one of them could save you between \$30-\$50 a month or more, adding up to **\$360 to \$600 per year.**
- Are you a soda drinker like most Americans? Let’s say you go out to dinner once a week (also an unnecessary expense) and buy a soda each time for \$2.75- that adds up to **\$143 a year** in addition to the cost of your restaurant meals. Spending \$1.29 on a Big Gulp five days a week adds up to **\$335.40 every year!**
- Buy a water filter instead of bottled water. Those 20 oz. bottles of water cost between **\$4 and \$6 per gallon.** Filtering your own water costs about **20 cents per gallon.** Drinking 5 gallons a week you’d save **\$1040 to \$1560 a year!**

Job search tips

...from the CPCC

- **Broaden your geographic search:** Add other neighborhoods to your job searches. Transportation can be expensive, but many companies provide TriMet passes to their employees.
- **Get away from the computer:** Remember that many companies do not post jobs online. Get out there and meet potential employers face to face!
- **Network at social functions:** That party or dinner you attend may include guests that can potentially help your career path. Introduce yourself!
- **Think about your immediate needs:** You may need to adjust your goals. Don’t give up on long-term goals and dreams, but also be realistic and be flexible.
- **Consider temporary or seasonal work:** Even with the economic downturn, there are still seasonal holiday jobs out there if you look. Many are part time and can help you cover extra expenses.
- **Every trend has opportunities:** Learn to take advantage of them and don’t be afraid to go after what you want.
- **Make yourself more competitive:** Is your résumé ready? Are you ready for interviews? We can help you with both of those things here in the Career Planning & Counseling Center!
- **Don’t forget about small businesses:** There are many small businesses in the Portland Metro area that hire on a regular basis.
- **Do internships and volunteer work:** They might not be paying positions, but they can add valuable experience to your life - and your résumé!
- **And of course, use campus resources for research, job searches, and networking:** Faculty Advisors are valuable resources in your job search. The Career Planning & Counseling Center is also here to assist you! Counselors and a Career Specialist are available by appointment to help you choose a major, perfect your résumé, practice interviews with you, and help in your job search. Plus, our website (www.mhcc.edu/careercenter) has a free job board where you can search local job postings. Stop by today!