Greetings from the Transition Center,

We have had a productive and exciting fall semester. We introduced a new and very popular program, Transition to College, to help provide resources and encouragement to adults interested in college. We hired a new staff member, Christa Cipparone, to fill a retirement vacancy. As the point of entry for Workers in Transition and specifically Michigan Works!, our office has served many students with the cost estimates and process support necessary for them to begin classes at Schoolcraft College. We have made numerous improvements to our web pages and have trained and scheduled new volunteer Peer Counselors. Our office also underwent a renovation and we invite you to come by to see it.

As the economy continues to create challenges, we see more and more students and community members who need our help. We continue to appreciate your support and hope that you will plan on attending one of our scholarship-based fundraisers – the Spaghetti Dinner or the upcoming Luncheon Series!

Kind regards,
Stacey Stover

Introducing Christa Cipparone

Though new to the Transition Center, Christa Cipparone is no stranger to Schoolcraft College. The department’s newly appointed Coordinator brings a wealth of knowledge and experience gained in her nearly 8 years of employment in the Learning Assistance Center. While at the LAC, Christa served as a Faculty Facilitator, assisting students in achieving their academic goals. Currently, Christa is also a part-time faculty member, teaching courses in the areas of College and Beyond, English as a Second Language, and English. While at Schoolcraft College, Christa has been involved with the Multicultural Fair, International Student Relations Forum, and the Schoolcraft Athletes Support System.

In her new role, Christa will help with development and implementation of new programs to support students and the community, oversee the day-to-day operation of the Transition Center, and rebuild and update existing programs. At the top of Christa’s current to-do list is the revamping of the popular CHIPS Program, for Women in Transition. The program, with the new title College with Confidence, is being revised to address the most pressing needs of non-traditional adult students.

Christa is the proud mother of two sons, Erik, a high school senior at Southfield Christian School, and David, who is finishing his degree in Advertising at Michigan State University. When she is not working, Christa enjoys spending time with her two sons, shopping, taking long walks at Kensington Metro Park, and staying up to date in the political arena.
In October, the Transition Center held its first Transition to College Workshop series. On Thursday evenings, a small group of adults attended sessions with the goal of demystifying the process of becoming a college student. Facilitated by the Transition Center and led by staff from a variety of Student Services offices, the workshops included a hands-on session in filling out the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), identifying other sources of financial aid, understanding the counseling process, meeting with an academic counselor to select courses, discovering the services provided by Learning Support Services, and completing assessment testing. Before and after the sessions, staff from the Transition Center answered questions and otherwise assisted the prospective students. When the workshops ended on October 29, participants had applied for financial aid, met with an advisor/counselor, selected courses, and were registered for Winter semester classes. Those who attended all 5 sessions qualified for a $100 voucher, generously funded by the Schoolcraft College Foundation, to be applied toward tuition.

Response to the program has been positive, with participants expressing gratitude that the Transition Center understands and addresses the unique and critical differences that face adult students wishing to attend college for the first time. With years of experience engaging adult students, the Transition Center staff knows that this is a motivated and hardworking population, bound for ongoing success in their higher education journey. A delightful, yet unplanned outcome of the workshops has been the bonding of the group of prospective students. The group has become a positive support system, whose members share their experiences in job hunting, working with MI Works! (in both the areas of unemployment benefits and the No Worker Left Behind program), and sharing information about the academic programs they are considering. At the conclusion of the program, participant Peggie Culross summed up her experience this way:

“The Transition to College class has taken away the reservations I had about going to college. I’ve been out of school for 20 years and I had no idea where to begin... this class breaks everything down into small steps and has made it seem so easy. Everyone has been very friendly and helpful. I’m grateful for this class.”

The Transition Center will run the workshop again in February 2010, to prepare students wishing to attend classes in the spring semester. Registration is limited. Call the Transition Center at 734.462.4443 to register or for more information.
January 22, 2010
“Edible Wild Plants”
– Jim and Theresa Magyari

Jim and Theresa Magyari have studied at the University of Michigan’s Adult Education classes under Botanist Ellen Weatherbee. They are now sharing what they have learned with audiences throughout the Detroit area. Their goal is to communicate the knowledge of feeding yourself with the edible plants that grow in urban areas.

February 19, 2010
“Down in the D! A Walking Tour of Detroit”
– Dr. Ken Stevens, Professor, Eastern Michigan University

Join Dr. Stevens in his “walking” history tour of downtown Detroit. Beginning at Campus Martius and concluding at Historic Fort Wayne, he offers interesting facts and stories surrounding many of Detroit’s famous – and some not so famous – landmarks and establishments.

April 9, 2010
“The Children in our Midst”
– Kim Gimmarro, Local Area Historian

In 1919, then Mayor of Detroit James Couzens made a charitable gift of $1,100,000 as a birthday present to his wife for the construction and establishment of an endowment fund for the Michigan Hospital School. Schooling, camping, swimming and music were part of the children’s care during their convalescence from a number of childhood diseases, including polio. Join us for a fascinating presentation of local history and photography that still lives on to this day.
Save the Date!
The Transition Center Annual Spaghetti Dinner will be held on Tuesday, March 9, 2010. Mark your calendars!

Schoolcraft College Transition Center 18600 Haggerty Road Livonia, MI 48152-2696

 Money Matters in Divorce
A certified financial planner from the Center for Financial Planning will be available on the first Monday of each month from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Transition Center at Schoolcraft College to discuss financial considerations related to divorce. Clients are served on a first come, first served basis. Anyone interested may sign in beginning at 4:30 p.m. on that day.

There will be no meeting on Monday, March 1, due to Spring Break.
Walk in – Free of Charge!

Divorce Support Group
A Divorce Support Group is open to anyone contemplating, in the process of, or having difficulty adjusting to divorce. Meetings are held the second and fourth Tuesday of each month from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Transition Center in the McDowell Center. The first meeting of each month is a group discussion; the next meeting features a speaker. Cynthia Koppin, MA, LPC, LLP, facilitates the group discussions. Attorney Patricia Kasody-Coyle is available for private consultation. There is no fee to attend and registration is not required.

Upcoming Dates:
January 12 & 26, February 9 & 23, March 9 & 23, April 13 & 27
Walk in – Free of Charge!

Request an Attorney
Attorney Laura Reyes Kopack, from the firm of Creighton, McLean & Shea will be available on the second Monday of the month and attorney Marie Pulte, from the firm of Marie A. Pulte, PC will be available the third Monday of the month from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Transition Center, Schoolcraft College. Clients will be served on a first come first served basis. Anyone interested may sign in beginning at 4:30 p.m. on that day.

Walk in – Free of Charge!

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Contact us for more information:
www.schoolcraft.edu/transitions/
Phone: 734-462-4443
Email: transitions@schoolcraft.edu
Charlotte O’Connor, Editor