



Star-Gazer



Volume 1, Issue 7

May 2011

Success Stories Issue

Boot Camp Reminders

A new component to the Bridge programs of Career Pathways at UACCM will begin this summer. These three-week Boot Camps will provide the chance to develop specific skills.

The first camp assists nursing students requesting funding for the Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS). Students will meet at the Continuing Education Center on Tuesday, May 17, to learn about the exam and obtain their sign-in information for PLATO online learning resources.

Students who complete the program will hone their test-taking skills, because the PLATO module for TEAS mimics the test itself. Students will also receive a study guide for the test.

The Employability Certificate (EC) Boot Camp will begin on

Monday, June 6, and will fast track students for completing an Employability Certificate. The EC serves as the gateway to receiving funded services. This will be the last opportunity for students to receive funded services for the Fall semester. This boot camp also allows participants to receive help developing job search skills and related documents.

Students who are newly-accepted into Career Pathways in May will be automatically signed up for this camp. Other CP students are welcome to request participation.

Our office is thoroughly excited about developing these two programs, and we look forward to serving our students in this new way!

**TEAS
BOOT CAMP**
Begins May 17

- Learn about TEAS
- Access online training
- Meet others taking the test

**E.C.
BOOT CAMP**
Begins June 6

- Earn Employability Certificate with speed!
- Get eligible for funding
- On-site support

A Note about This Issue of *Star-Gazer*

About two weeks after Spring Break, we ended up with student after student coming to our office to share simply outstanding news. This student had received a new scholarship. That student had earned an extra certification.

After all of the great stories we kept hearing, we decided that only one move made sense... Let's make the May issue all about the student success stories.

Certainly, our staff members

love to share thoughts, ideas, and wisdom gleaned from our own experiences. Still, sometimes it's better when we can hear our students' stories. This becomes more true when the students *tell* their own stories.

That's what you will find in this issue. Real students who have volunteered to share their experiences with us.

Here's hoping you enjoy their successes as much as we have!

Working Together for a Better Life



April 2011: Ready for success!



2007: Before changing their lives completely...

Many students choose Career Pathways not only for their own opportunities, but also because they want to make a better life for their children. That is precisely why John and Mary Weems began working with our office while pursuing their degrees.

Mary explains, "We were motivated by the fact that we're tired of struggling to meet the day to day bills." That struggle led her to pursue nursing; John will complete his AAS in CIS Networking in May.

The Weems are more than mere students, however. John is Vice President of the CIS Club, and Mary was inducted to Phi Theta Kappa in November 2010. Despite school activities, work (both are Wal-Mart employees), and home life, both excel academically.

When asked how Career Pathways has helped them, John was quick to respond about the TIAA+ Certification exam, which costs \$173. Mary pointed out, "The book loan and uniform programs alone saved us well over \$2,000 this semester...and we have

been Career Pathways members for three semesters."

Both are equally excited about the recently-instituted gas card program. The Weems points out that the program "has really helped us make ends meet some months." They live in Conway, so campus trips take approximately 25 miles each direction. As a PN student, Mary had clinicals this semester, requiring a drive to Russellville two days per week for roughly half the semester. Even with carpooling, gasoline is expensive.

So, what are the plans for this couple after May?

John is sending out résumés to multiple locations. He is hoping to find a job in which his computer networking skills will be utilized fully. Eventually, however, he is considering a more advanced degree, so that he can become a technology instructor.

Mary will continue working toward her RN degree, and eventually, a BSN. After graduating, she hopes to work either in an Emergency Room or Surgery.

Gas Card Distribution

The following must be turned by the posted deadline each month to be eligible to receive gas cards.



FORMS:

- Attendance Record
- Work Verification

ALSO:

- Receipts (=\$50 for GAS only)
- Monthly Meeting

Annual Documents

The following items are required EVERY YEAR to be eligible for funded services with Career Pathways.

- DHHS Verification Letter
- Previous Year Tax Info
- Completed CP application
- Children's Birth Certificates (if new child is born)
- AR License or State-issued ID
- FAFSA

Applications available at Career Pathways Office.



Nursing Students: Scrubs & Supplies

There is little surprise in the fact that many of our students are at UACCM to pursue a Nursing degree. It is, after all, one of the most competitive programs in the area, and the degree will offer a number of job opportunities.

Many students don't realize just how much money goes into learning the trade, however. On average, Nursing students can spend upwards of \$800 on books and supplies for their classes each semester. That is one of the reasons our program has worked so diligently to provide books and required supplies for nursing students.

Required supplies do include scrubs (current PN students pictured at right). Students in each level of the program (Nursing Assisting, Practical Nursing, and Registered Nursing) require different colors of scrubs, and upper-level students require lab coats.

We will also assist students with other required supplies and fees, when needed. We have been able to provide stethoscopes and blood pressure kits to select students on a limited basis.

Students can also request fees for background checks at all levels, as well as CPR training.

Finally, Career Pathways is fortunate to be able to assist nursing students with testing fees.

In addition to offering assistance with NCLEX, we are most frequently requested for assistance with the Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS). This exam measures baseline academic skills for entering nursing students. Those requesting funding from Career Pathways for this test now will participate in a three-week boot camp. The TEAS Boot Camp is designed to assist students in preparing for the types of questions and general information and about the exam. Primarily, students will utilize PLATO web-based tutoring software; however, there will be two on-site meetings to bookend the program.

The initial session will begin on May 17. Further details to be presented, as available.



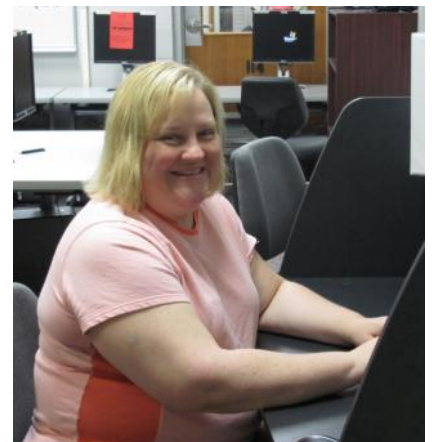
“A Tremendous Emotional Support”

Career Pathways has been a major help to me and my family since starting at UACCM in August 2010. They have not only been a great help by providing books and supplies to that I have more of my Pell grant left to use for gas and other day-to-day living, but they have been a tremendous emotional support.

Any time that I have gone into the Career Pathways office with a question or other need, the staff

has been helpful and friendly. If they didn't have the answer, they would find out who did. They are not only concerned with what is going on in school, but they are there to listen to concerns about my life as a whole and how those things could affect my studies.

Shelly Jack is a Practical Nursing student. She is hoping to work in hospitals in Little Rock upon graduating from the nursing program at UACCM.





Continuing the Path to Success

Career Pathways has helped me tremendously. It's like a home away from home to me. Career Pathways helps students with many things that mothers and fathers can't afford.

They are there for you. I know because they have given me the support I need to keep my head held high and finish out my school. First, I started as a CP student getting my GED. CP helped me with getting my folders, pens, pencils, and paper. After I completed my GED, I started the bridge program.

I needed extra help to improve my compass scores, and the Bridge was a great experience. Mat would sit in our class every morning, helping us with things like interviews, résumés, and cover letters. We had guest speakers to talk about hygiene in the working fields and just good manners really. Then the time came we all had met our goals and graduated from the program.

Thanks to the CP staff giving me support, I am now in the

nursing assistant class.

It is hard for me to explain what CP means to me. I'm not sure if I can explain what CP means to me, or ever will. But, I do know if it wasn't for CP I would not sit here today in this college, because after I quit school I was not sure if I would go on.

But, thankfully, with the help of the CP staff (Mat Herrman, Brittney Vanderpool, Stephanie Ellis, and Denise Wells) I was able to go on with the support system I had. I know that Career Pathways means the world to me and have a chance to help many mothers or fathers just like myself. I can honestly say the Career Pathways has worked a miracle for me.

Kayla Blackwell is a true Career Pathways success story. In 2010, Kayla earned her GED through UACCM's Adult Education program. She transitioned into the Bridge Academy in Fall 2010, where she earned top marks. She is currently a Nursing Assisting student at UACCM, and hopes to one day earn her Registered Nursing license.



What Has Career Pathways Done for Me???

When I passed by a friend working inside the Career Pathways' Lab, I asked him, "What does Career Pathways do for you?" He said, "They get books for me." With a quick appointment, I was enrolled, and Career Pathways loaned me books for my next semester. It was amazing; it saved me hundreds of dollars. But that's not all.

I have access to the computer lab where I can print for free! Career Pathways even gave me enough paper to last the entire semester. I was even more

surprised when they recently approved a \$50 monthly gas card for me!

On top of all of this, Mathew Herrman, Career Pathways' Curriculum Coordinator, meets with me personally to advise, encourage, and keep me accountable. All of their hard work and services prove they really want me to succeed here at UACCM, and are committed to help me achieve my goals.

Tony Kuettle will graduate in 2012, and hopes to teach middle school Math & Science.

After eight years of being a mom and food service worker, I started college without any knowledge of Career Pathways. My first semester took all but a few dollars of my financial aid, leaving my family tight on funds with the cost of gas driving from Conway to Morrilton. I don't quite remember how I found out about the Career Pathways program, but I am thankful I did. Since obtaining my Employability Certificate in 2009, I have received many valuable services and have seen many positive changes in the Career Pathways program.

With the implementation of new services, and a change in staff, there has been a steady influx of students requesting services, as well as many who have reentered the workforce. Of the many services provided: the Career Pathways Lab allows for more productive study time; the gas card program offers assistance for the commuting student; the book loan program assists with the burden of rising education costs;

and workshops enhance the student experience in providing knowledge of a variety of topics. However, the services provided would not be as successful without implementation by a great staff. I like knowing I have to answer to someone if I drop a class or my grades drop. With that knowledge, my grades have never dropped below a "B," and I feel as though I have a sturdy support system of people who understand and care.

The services and support of the staff in Career Pathways has made such an impact on my life that I have sent, and will continue to send, any parent that may be intimidated by college, or who may not know where to begin. The tools for success are there, and Career Pathways is the perfect first step toward a brighter future. I sincerely appreciate the services and dedication of the Career Pathways staff.

Kecia Davis is active in many campus activities, and will graduate in December 2011, and intends to pursue a degree in law.

Automotive Collision Repair Students Receive Tools

(Edited from February 2011)
Career Pathways expanded its funding to create a loan program for automotive tools. In the auto maintenance and repair industry, students are expected not only to have the necessary certifications, but also provide their own tools.

At the cost of \$2500 per student, the tools are a massive expense, even for those working full time in the field. We decided that this was definitely an area of need that we wanted to tackle.

Tools are the property of Career Pathways and will be kept

in the automotive classroom. They are available to eligible Career Pathways students only during school hours of operation. Upon completion of their program, tools will be gifted to the students. This gives students the option to become self-employed and/or immediately enter the workforce.

To qualify, students must complete one semester of school with a 2.0 GPA. We are proud to be able to expand our services and impact every program on campus.



Kecia Davis pictured with Kelly Roach (left) and Darren Jones (right), after receiving UACCM SGA Member of the Year.



Below: Automotive Collision Repair students Danny McKnight, Lester Welshans, and David Thomas display the tool sets funded by Career Pathways (Spring 2011).





A Note of Thanks for All You Do

I wanted to thank the Career Pathways crew for your help this semester. Had Career Pathways not been there to help with supplies when I couldn't afford them — as well as the use of the Career Pathways computers, printers, scanners — my first semester would have been a challenge.

Career Pathways kept me in school when I thought my outside financial issues were going to

interfere with my goal by offering me job assistance and just listening when I needed a kind ear.

Mostly I want to thank all of you for the encouragement and kind words. Anytime I was negative, you guys were there to point out the bright side. I cannot wait to work with you all again during the summer semester.

Michelle Hormann is currently studying Dietary Management. She found a job in her field in April 2011.

Lab Assistant's Take on Career Pathways



During this semester, I have become more involved with the Career Pathways office. First, I was offered a work-study position as a lab assistant. Since beginning this endeavor, I have come to respect both the staff and the procedures for what they mean to Career Pathways students. The team we have working for us do an outstanding job, and the benefits we receive add up. They have been extremely gracious in understanding my school load as I have been able to maintain my grades, meet my family's needs, and manage my work schedule. I look forward to coming to work!

Another way that I have come to work so closely with Career Pathways is that I intended to graduate in May. However, I was one class short of the degree I had initially sought to obtain. Through counseling with Brittany Vanderpool, Career Support Service Facilitator, and Stephanie Ellis, Director, I decided to remain at UACCM for the fall semester and graduate with both an AA in General Education and an AS in Business. I remember that the goal of Career Pathways is to help

students obtain a high-demand, high-wage career, so their support and advice mean a great deal. I was able to receive help regarding my resume as well as the job search that coincides, and will continue to counsel with Ms. Vanderpool next semester as I enter the workforce.

Finally, Career Pathways has topped all of this off with the addition of gas-card assistance. I drive five days a week from Conway in a large vehicle, due to having a large family. I have received \$100 in gas cards to offset some of my fuel purchases. What a blessing it has been to have such supportive facilitators of our education and needs. The process is greatly supported by my five instructors, who merely sign an attendance report that I print from Angel. I do not mind having a little accountability when it comes to helping support my goals, as Career Pathways is doing for me on a daily basis.

Amy Jo Hall will graduate in December 2011. Her ultimate career goal is to work in a business environment, possibly in a managerial capacity.

The Bridge Academy (soon to be STAR Employability Academy) assists Career Pathways students who desire to transition into the college community at UACCM, but may desire additional guidance or assistance. In approximately 12 weeks, students build employability and academic skills, as well as work toward enrollment in an approved career pathway at UACCM. The following passages are excerpts from the participants writings this term.

Career Pathways is giving me a real chance at success. I believe that my success could be vital to the success of my family... my son seems to idolize everything I do. If my son chooses to do the same things as his father, my success or failure could directly affect what my son thinks is possible for his own personal achievements. When he watches me pursue further education, it will be a given that this is the path that he, too, should take.



Joshua Butterfield will begin taking classes at UACCM in the Summer. He intends to pursue a degree in Petroleum Technology.

I chose family first...so, I feel as though my children have had to experience things they might not have had to experience. My children have been a huge influence in starting Career Pathways. I want them to know when I tell them that their education is the most important thing right now that I also believe mine is just as important. During my journey...I have made connections, learned new skills, and brushed up on old skills.



Jami Blaylock will begin her college career at UACCM in the Fall 2011 semester. She intends to study surveying.



I am continuing my education because I want to set a good example for my kids, and I want them to think, "Hey, mama [did] it; so can we." I am trying to get my education so I can get a good job and support my babies and give them what

they want. I want to...be able to give them a better life than I had, and give them the life I always wanted.

Tamara Withnell is currently pursuing her GED through the Continuing Education Center at UACCM. When she graduates, she intends to ultimately pursue a degree in Business through our campus.



I am going to continue my education, not for the obvious reasons (like better pay, a home of our own, more security in the future, and provide a better life for my girls), but so my girls will be proud of me. I want to be [their] role model. When the

time comes for them to finish [their] education, they will see there are no limits on how far they can go. Going back to school is more than economics for today, but a future for my girls when they are older.

Debra Rogers will enter UACCM in Fall 2011. A veteran of the food industry, she plans to attain a certificate in Dietary Management.

read on



"Very excited about joining Career Pathways in the fall!"

"CP has been a huge help to me and my family. I don't know how I'd get through school without them!!"

"Will graduate in May & I am so glad I chose to go through CP before starting college I have learned so much from all the assignments & lessons we have gone through. I spoke to a teacher at the campus today & he advised me to take 3 classes because of the skills I could pick up in them & those skills he mentioned are the skills I have learned through CP! Best of luck to you & for those who are serious about wanting to get a degree, CP is AMAZING!"

May 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 SGA Bingo	4	5	6 Last Day of Classes	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14 UACCM Graduation
Final Exams						
15	16 Ready, Set, Graduate	17 TEAS Boot Camp Begins	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30 Memorial Day (UACCM Closed)	31 CP New Student Info Session				



Career Pathways
 1537 University Blvd.
 Kirk Building Room 130
 Morrilton, AR 72110
 510-977-2186

CP Computer Lab Availability



MAY SCHEDULE: Mon-Fri 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

A weekly schedule is posted in the Career Pathways Lab. If Career Pathways is closed, the lab is also closed.

Additional UACCM computer labs:

- *Student Success Lab*
- *Kirk Building 114*
- *Library Complex 105*
- *Library Center*
- Wi-Fi is available in many buildings around campus!

Consult your local library for more computer resources. Libraries in Morrilton, Conway, Russellville, and Clinton have additional hours, including Saturdays.

If you need to make copies, we encourage students to use the copier in the Library.