

News

A Career Coach at West Campus

By: Sarah M. Grebe
Staff Writer

Did you ever feel uncertain about your major, confused about your career path or feel rushed through academic advising?

First-time college students may experience all of the above or they may feel uncertain or overwhelmed by this new experience. As a result, graduation rates can suffer.

Recently, Montgomery County Community College used Perkins grant funds to hire a career coach for West Campus to help more students navigate college life successfully.

"The objective of the Career Coach is to put confidence in a graduate that he or she is on the right path," the new coach, Margie Cherry, said in an interview, adding her job would be to make sure that students have the "best opportunity possible for growth and career satisfaction."

According to the college, the career coach helps students choose a suitable two-year program and see it through.

Why West Campus? Cherry says the Pottstown campus has a smaller student population and it is home to the Radiography program. Radiography happens to be one of the community college's top Associate of Applied

Science – or A.A.S. – programs. It is offered only at the West Campus.

Cherry says her ultimate goal is to help students become more confident in their chosen majors and career paths and to ultimately produce more graduates. The program is being piloted at West. The decision to roll it out college-wide has not yet been made.

Already a life coach, Cherry says her strategy is to provide a holistic approach to academic and career advising. A typical session lasts about an hour. It begins with a period of self-discovery, after which she crafts what she calls a sound and realistic college plan.

"If you don't know who you are, how do you know what you want to be?" Cherry asked rhetorically. "If you are a people person at heart, why would you choose an isolating career or vice-versa?"

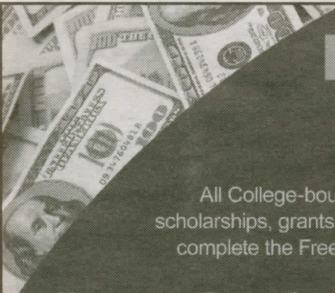
The advice isn't lost on human services major Marta Pecharo, who has been meeting with Cherry since October. Marta claims the coach has provided her a catalyst for change and motivation and has assisted her in "weeding-out" careers she is not suited for.

"The message needs to get out that we have this wonderful resource at MCCC, and this kind of counseling is suited for anyone, no matter where you are in your life, whether you have kids, are single or your career has been affected by the economy," Pecharo said.

Cherry can generally meet with five students per day and is interested in filling in her schedule. The first few meetings begin with personality, interest and behavioral assessments. Then, Cherry can better recognize and guide your chosen academic and career path.

Coaching sessions are longer than the traditional advising sessions, allowing Cherry the luxury of time to sit down with students and thoroughly discuss and discover who they are, what they love, their weaknesses and their strengths.

If you are interested in scheduling an appointment or want to see what a career coach can possibly do for you, contact mcherry@mc3.edu.



Need money for College?

All College-bound students who are interested in applying for scholarships, grants, loans, and federal work-study are required to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Montgomery County Community College is hosting a FREE Completion Day to assist students with completing their FAFSA.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12TH

TWO SESSIONS – 10 AM & NOON

<p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Central Campus</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">340 DeKalb Pike, Blue Bell</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 5px 0;">Parkhouse Hall</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">Rooms 309 and 310</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">West Campus</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">101 College Drive, Pottstown</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 5px 0;">South Hall</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">Rooms 248 and 249</p>
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Bring the following information with you the day of the event:

- Your Social Security Number and your parents' Social Security Number (if dependent*)
- Your Alien Registration number if you are an eligible non-citizen
- Your driver's license number if you have one
- 2010 federal tax returns (including W-2) for yourself and your parents (if dependent*)
- Information on savings, investments, and business and farm assets, and child support for yourself and your parents (if dependent*)
- If you have a FAFSA PIN (Personal Identification Number), please bring it with you.


*Dependent students should attend with a parent. Not sure if you are dependent? Visit www.fafsa.gov to see dependency criteria.

Pre-registration required register online at mc3.edu/admissions/paying

any questions? call 215-641-6566




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