



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Rudy, the Red-tailed Hawk Lands at the Racine Zoo in May**

*Guests can meet the Gateway Technical College mascot in a special exhibit*

**Racine, Wis., April 15, 2014** – The [Racine Zoological Society](#) is excited to announce Rudy, a native Wisconsin red-tailed hawk and official mascot of Gateway Technical College, has a permanent home in a special exhibit at the zoo.

The female hawk came to the zoo from a wildlife rehabilitator and is healing from a broken wing. Zoo staff is currently training Rudy so that after she is fully rehabilitated will become an education ambassador for the zoo and the college. Rudy's exhibit will be located in the peasanry just north of the lower Andean bear viewing area. She will be ready to meet the public in early May.

"Rudy is an important animal ambassador because she allows guests to get close to, observe, and learn about a species from right here in Wisconsin," said Jay R. Christie, zoo president and CEO. "Thank you to Gateway for making this a learning opportunity for the entire community."

Gateway sponsored the hawk and exhibit, and Rudy will make appearances with educational staff at events and schools to provide a means for children and adults alike to learn about one of the most common and beautiful birds of prey in Wisconsin. Rudy's exhibit will be outfitted with a live web camera so educators from around the world with Internet connection can teach their students about red-tailed hawks, their habitat, and efforts to conserve these birds in the wild.

"We believe in environmental stewardship, education and, of course, Rudy the red hawk," said Stephanie Sklba, Gateway vice president, community and government relations. "The real-life Rudy helps us to embrace all of these. She will be a great ambassador for the college and education. We are happy to partner with the zoo on this effort."

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There also will be added opportunities for Gateway students in several different programs to apply the skills they gain at the college to the real-life aspects of managing Rudy and her exhibit at the zoo.

In June of 2013, the Gateway Technical College Board of Trustees adopted the red hawk as the official mascot for Gateway Technical College. As Gateway developed its official mascot the goal was to identify an approachable personality for the symbol representing Gateway to their communities. Rudy the Red Hawk was quickly adopted and participates in student life activities, academic competitions, and represents the college at key community events.

For Rudy's entire story, go to <https://www.gtc.edu/rudy-red-hawk>.

Red-tailed hawks are keen-eyed and efficient hunters. Red-tails prefer open areas, such as fields with high perching places nearby from which they can watch for prey. They often perch on telephone poles and take advantage of the open spaces along the roadside to spot and seize mice, ground squirrels, rabbits, reptiles, and other prey.

### **About Gateway Technical College**

Gateway Technical College collaborates with communities in Kenosha, Racine and Walworth counties to ensure economic growth and viability by providing education, training, leadership, and technological resources to meet the changing needs of the students, employers, and communities. For more information, visit [www.gtc.edu](http://www.gtc.edu).

### **About the Racine Zoo**

Nestled along the sandy shores of Lake Michigan, the Racine Zoo is open year round. Current hours are 9 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission rates are: Members and children under three: FREE, children three to 15: \$6, seniors: \$7, and adults: \$8. Racine County residents receive \$1 off by showing a valid photo I.D. For more information on the Racine Zoo, its programs and events, visit [www.racinezoo.org](http://www.racinezoo.org), call 262.636.9189 and find us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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