



Burmese refugee finds new life at Gateway

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A career you love? That's smart!

Good News!

Gateway to open police academy

Academy to benefit students, employers, and community

Looking to be a police officer? Your road to reaching that goal just got a little easier.

Gateway Technical College will offer its first-ever police academy, a 13-week, 520-hour session beginning February 18 and ending May 21. A total of 24 students can attend the first academy and two classes per year have been scheduled.

This is the college's first academy and it will be led by criminal justice instructor and academy coordinator Joe Whiten. He said a need exists for a police academy in the Gateway Technical College District now – illustrated by the number of law enforcement agencies within the district sending their recruits to technical college academies elsewhere.

"What oftentimes happens is that an agency finds a perfect candidate who needs the academy training," says Whiten. "They hire them. They need to be certified, though, and the way to do that is to put them through a 13-week academy."

"Currently, academies are at technical colleges in other districts. They send them there – and now they are paying for their salary, travel and hotel costs for the 13 weeks of training. That training should be something we provide here at Gateway Technical College. It will be a lot more economical for law enforcement agencies in the district and it will benefit the community in other ways, as well."

The academy will be held in the Technical Building on the Kenosha Campus, 3520-30th Avenue. The setup of the classrooms in that building allow for learning to take place in the traditional classroom as well as a hands-on training scenario area.

A mock tavern, apartment, and staging area that can be changed as needed will help students train in situations they will deal with as officers every day. A large open area fronted by bay doors can also be set up as a street scene for students to train on handling such things as motor vehicle incidents and street scenes and crowd control. Vehicles can even be brought inside.

"This will allow us to translate the classroom model to real-life training," said Whiten. "It's as hands-on and as interactive as we can possibly make it."

While academies are governed by state law on the standards they must adhere to, each academy puts its individual stamp on that training. Gateway's will be a strong link between lecture and hands-on learning.

"We want students to have that cognitive link as strongly as possible between what they do in the classroom to what is done on the street," said Whiten. "The academy is about intensive training – it's the next to best thing to on-the-job training."

Dr. Jackie Love, Dean of Campus Affairs and Protective Services and Hospitality Division, said the new academy will



Gateway Technical College will offer its first-ever police academy, a 13-week, 520-hour session beginning February 18 and ending May 21. The academy will benefit local law enforcement, students, community.

serve Gateway Technical College in two important ways.

"We will be able to provide more effective professional development for our tri-county police departments," said Love. "Plus, our criminal justice students will graduate with an edge above other students who desire to become police officers, enabling them to be the first to be hired as a result of their experiential scenario-based training."

Those students will have the ability to enroll in the academy, as a capstone to their Gateway program, which will make them that much more marketable to law enforcement agencies.

Agencies would be able to send their current, new employees, to the program as well. Kenosha County Sheriff David Beth said the academy will benefit his department by reducing costs and making the process simpler and easier for the recruits. Having an academy in the Gateway Technical College District also couldn't come at a better time, too – his office is looking at hiring 20 officers in 2008, its largest-ever hiring year.

For more info on Gateway's law enforcement academy:

Online: www.gtc.edu/policetraining
Academy Coordinator Joseph Whiten: 262.767.5352

"We're excited to no end that Gateway is holding the academy," Beth said.

Beth said costs decline as recruits stay in their homes during training rather than traveling to another academy and stay at a hotel there. Like many other law enforcement agencies, Beth's agency bears those travel and hotel costs.

Beth said recruits will also benefit from being trained by local officers knowledgeable with the tri-county area.

"The officers who will be doing the training will be local and aware of any situations locally and how departments work together," Beth said.

Graduate urges others to 'pursue your dreams now'

Barkley accounts for success through college programs and staff

Freda Barkley says being ready should never be mistaken for being fully prepared.

Seize the opportunity now, she says, because school is a part of life and not something that happens while life is put on hold.

"You are never 'ready' for school," says Barkley. "The first thing that everyone says is 'I'm going to go back when I'm ready.' You are never ready. The money is never going to be right. The day care will never work out. You will never be ready – you just have to do it."

And Barkley, indeed, did do it. The married, mother of four took it upon herself to gain a Gateway Technical College education and turned the page in a new chapter of her life because she didn't wait until she was "fully prepared."

The road wasn't an easy one – it was pretty tough, actually. Barkley fought through finding time to succeed while still finding family time for her husband and children, working part-time jobs and dealing with financial issues that resulted in a car being repossessed and causing her to nearly become homeless her final semester in college.

But Barkley says it was worth it because she took the step to enroll at Gateway Technical College – and now she's reaping the fruits of her labor.

"All the hard work paid off," she says. "I now have a job with good benefits, good pay. Everything came full circle."

Ready to begin college life

Barkley, 29, started her accounting degree at Gateway in 2005 after two stints of enrolling and dropping out of college. She was a certified nursing assistant at the time and believed she had reached the peak of her wage earning potential within that career.

Barkley says she wasn't technically yet ready to enroll – but knew she had to do something to change her situation. She knew she had to return to college then, whether or not she was fully ready.

"I had four kids and a husband and we just weren't making it," she says. "I knew I had to do something different."

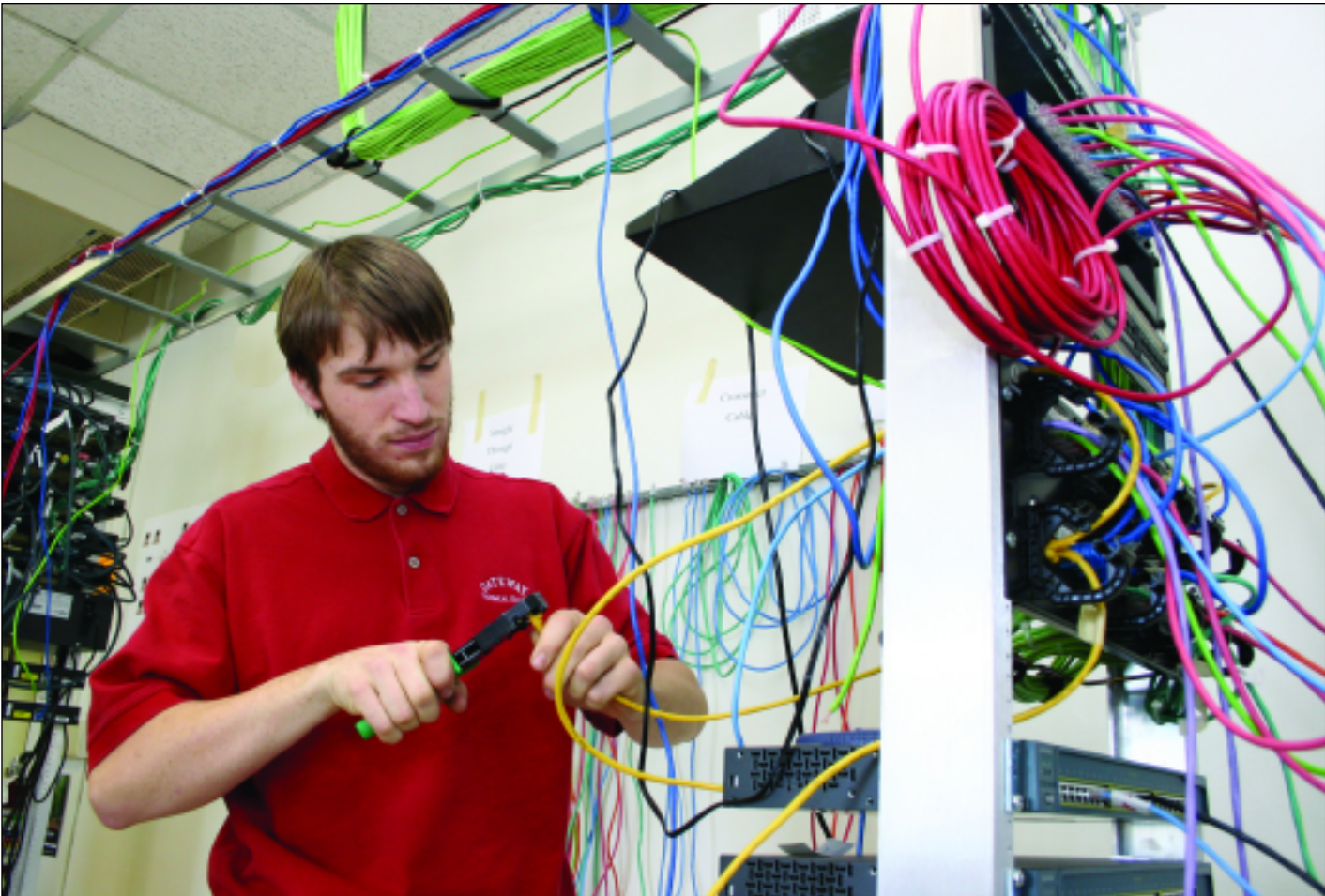
But going back to school proved to be tough. She was shy, questioning whether she fit in. Barkley says her first instructor cured her of that and pulled her out of her shell of shyness by making sure to include her in classroom discussions.

"I had the most absolutely wonderful teachers you could ever have," says Barkley. "But that first



Gateway Technical College graduate Freda Barkley works recently in her position as an accountant at The Province of St. Joseph of the Capuchin Order in Milwaukee. Barkley credits Gateway and its staff with helping her graduate with an accounting degree and start her new career.

'Dreams' continued on page 4



Gateway Technical College information technology (IT) network specialist student Louis Wegner works on a project at the college recently. Wegner won a \$5,000 scholarship through a technology essay he wrote. Wegner says he is receiving a high quality education at Gateway.

Gateway student lands national scholarship

Essay on technology and the environment one of top five

A Gateway Technical College student recently penned an essay on technology using the environment as his backdrop and earned one of five \$5,000 scholarships awarded by CompTIA.

CompTIA, an association representing the international technology community, awarded Racine information technology (IT) network specialist student Louis Wegner the scholarship in an essay contest of up to 1,000 words on the “coolest new technology in the next 25 years.”

While several of the students focused on actual technology items to be produced in the next 25 years, Wegner said when faced with putting down his thoughts, he just couldn’t do it. There were too many possibilities.

“I couldn’t decide,” he said.

With that in mind, he took a step back and took a more basic, yet global, look at the matter. Technology already changes at a rapid pace and has worked its way into every part of society today, with machines as commonplace in the homes as the workplace.

Wegner took a look at all those machines, and the likelihood their numbers will increase – and got an idea. He would write on the environmental impact of all these machines rather than the technological “gee whiz” aspect.

“I focused on what every new device should have – better energy efficiency,” says Wegner. “It’s the ability to work smarter, not harder, and making less of a negative environmental impact.”

In his essay, Wegner writes: “Our current technology is quite powerful, but frankly, it consumes far too much energy. Many applications and operating systems have become bloated, and their frivolous hardware demands are forcing us to develop

bigger and more powerful systems just to meet their requirements.

“These demands are having an impact on our environment. Outdated, discarded technology takes up space in our landfills and contains an unhealthy amount of lead. Most of the energy we use to power our technology is produced by non-renewable resources, and we need to start conserving them. If our industry is demanding this much power, then our technology will be the planet’s undoing as we burn more energy and release more pollution into the air.”

“It’s a fairly interesting paradox: We need this current technology, to help us design our future technology, so we can save the planet. So I believe that technology in the next 25 years needs to bring about drastic changes in energy consumption and reduce our environmental impact. What good is having all this technology if we won’t be around to use it?”

In addition to the scholarship, CompTIA also flew Wegner to Las Vegas in July for the association’s annual member conference. Wegner networked with IT professionals and learned more about issues facing the industry today.

Many of those issues he’s already learned about at Gateway, where he said he’s receiving a high quality education.

“It’s a great place to be,” says Wegner. “I feel it’s a good value. I’m learning more here than at a four-year school where I would be bogged down with less relevant classes.”

Wegner says he’s been here three semesters and has gotten to know his instructors well.

“They are great people – I enjoy learning from them,” says Wegner.

Put spring in your step during winter months

Gateway to hold annual WinterGreen conference

An annual Gateway Technical College conference offers a little bit of green during a time of white and gray.

Helping to cure those winter blahs at the annual WinterGreen conference will be keynote speaker Stephanie Cohen, the “vertically-challenged gardener.”

Cohen, an award-winning author, designer and lecturer, will be one of four horticulture experts to talk at the conference to be held 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. January 25 in the Madrigano Auditorium on Gateway’s Kenosha Campus, 3520-30th Avenue.

The program will appeal to folks with a wide range of horticulture experience.

“In the dead of winter, when all of us horticulturalists are tired of looking at planting catalogs and need that green fix, you can spend an entire day being inspired and meeting other people with your same interests,” says Lisa DePratt, Gateway adjunct horticulture instructor and co-owner of KD Poolscales.

Proceeds from the event are used to fund scholarships for Gateway Technical College horticulture students. More than \$32,000 has been raised over the past 16 years the event has been held.

Conference topics will include:

- Cohen will speak twice, on “Garden Border Design” and “Tropicals – There is Life After Cannas and Bananas.”
- Jeff Joutras will speak on “Timeless Customer Service for the Green Industry.” Joutras, CLP, is from The Bruce Company of Middleton, Wis.
- Ed Lyon will speak on “Dwarf in Size, Not Stature: Dwarf Conifers.” Lyon is the executive director of the Rotary Gardens in Janesville, Wis.
- Dave Wanninger will speak on “Tough Plants for Tough Sites – New Choices for the Urban Forest.” Wanninger is the chief horticulturalist at the Beaver Creek Nursery in Clinton, Wis.



Walworth County study expands career options



A new look at Gateway Technical College operations in Walworth County as well as an effort aiming to promote economic development there will result in several new programs to be added and existing ones expanded. Recommendations from a college/community group includes considering more offerings in the nursing programs.

Walworth County residents and employers will soon benefit from an added Gateway Technical College presence, which will include expanding existing programs and creating new ones.

The effort aims to promote economic development growth in the county. A recently completed survey on the county’s educational and training needs give direction to the effort, which has become a reality in some areas and in the planning stages for others.

Gateway Technical College President Bryan Albrecht said he initiated the effort after assessing each of the college’s campuses as part of his work when he was appointed president of the college in 2005.

“I wasn’t comfortable with how we were positioning ourselves in the Walworth County area, primarily because of the services needed in

that community,” Albrecht said. “They are different and unique from Racine and Kenosha.”

Albrecht spent time surveying community members on the business climate and how Gateway might help to spur economic development there. With that in mind, he evaluated the college’s strengths and looked for areas to improve.

“The communities are flourishing but we are not serving those communities the way I feel we can and should,” Albrecht said.

Gateway formed a group consisting of a mix of Gateway staff and Walworth County community leaders to study Walworth County education and training. Its recommendations call for expanding programs as well as initiating new ones. Recommendations pinpoint bringing programs and hands-on training conveniently to Walworth County students as well as giving

them added career options.

Some of the programs have already begun. A Business Management program began in Elkhorn Fall 2007. A campus planning team began work in December to plan the implementation of new and expanded programming. Program plans through Fall 2012 include some short-term certificates, new associate degrees, alternate delivery approaches for education and expanding some existing programs.

Highlights of those plans include:

Fall 2008: Expand General Studies courses, specifically science; offer certificates in Professional Ground Maintenance, Small Business/Entrepreneurship, and Logistics.

Spring 2009: Begin offering Medical Interpreter program.

Fall 2012: Begin offering Culinary Arts program.

Other focus areas being worked as a result of the effort by the group that would help local employers and potential Gateway students include:

Construction

The group recommended implementing a construction program which would partner with high schools to offer heating, ventilation, air conditioning programs/courses at the Elkhorn Campus. An ad hoc advisory committee for building/trades and construction has already met for creating a new program.

Health

This recommendation calls for investigating the development of high school academies. It also includes looking into more offerings in pharmacy tech, medical records and nursing programs as well as completing course work for a Bachelor of Nursing Science degree.

Hotel/Hospitality

An alternative high school on the Elkhorn Campus will be the fifth high school to become involved with Gateway’s Youth Options

Hospitality offering.

A final recommendation calls for adding programs for recreation management, lawn maintenance and golf course management.

Manufacturing

The group called for looking into establishing a manufacturing subcommittee to continue to work with the variety of manufacturers in Walworth County.

Also recommended is for the college to seek more internships from Walworth County businesses for Gateway students. This gives them added access to hands-on training.

Grace Kragness, Elkhorn Dean of Campus Affairs, said she estimates a specific implementation plan created from the recommendations will come out in April 2008.

“The study was completed and now it’s up to us to take these recommendations and run,” says Kragness. “This will help Walworth County residents to achieve their employment goals.”

Albrecht said the process was initiated with the goal of offering measurably stronger and more responsive educational services to Walworth County communities with a five-year timetable.

Gateway Technical College is also looking at reaching out to the Hispanic population in Walworth County. In the works is a Hispanic leadership program that will be overseen by Gateway and the Walworth County Economic Development Corporation.

It will offer young Hispanic leaders of Walworth County the opportunity for training in “soft skills.” These skills are those that focus on interpersonal skills such as customer service, leadership, mentoring others and general management skills. Soft skills complement a worker’s technical, or hard skills.

Reaching out to the Hispanic community is important to Gateway Technical College. Census figures indicate an increasing number of Hispanics living and working in Walworth County.

New CNC lab provides students state-of-art equipment for training

Gateway Technical College students will have the ability to train on state-of-the-art computer numerical control (CNC) machines in the new Haas CNC Production Technician Lab at Gateway’s Racine Campus Technical Building, 1001 S. Main Street.

Having that ability will make them even more marketable in a job field short of qualified workers.

Gateway Technical College celebrated the opening of the lab Dec. 3 with an open house event. Gateway earlier this year bought two CNC lathes from Haas as part of a partnership with the company that helped to produce the lab. The college lab will be designated as a Haas Technical Education Center.

Under that agreement, Haas will entrust two new machines to Gateway – free of cost other than shipping – that will be used to train students.

Haas will replace those machines with two new machines every two years, ensuring Gateway students the opportunity to always train on modern CNC machines. CNC machine technology changes so rapidly that features and models often are updated every two to three years.

Gateway will have the option to buy the machines being rotated out of the lab at a reduced cost. There is a demand for trained CNC operators, and Gateway students will benefit from training on a brand of machines used at so many businesses already.



A Gateway Technical College student works on a CNC machine at the open house for the new Haas CNC Production Technician Lab at Gateway’s Racine Campus Technical Building, 1001 S. Main Street.



Barbara Greco looks through some tile samples recently at Wholesale Direct Flooring in Kenosha. Greco has started up her own business, Barbara Greco Interior Design LLC, after graduating from Gateway Technical College’s Interior Design program.

Gateway grad uses education as springboard to business

Interior designer begins third career through Gateway program

Her third career is a charm for Barbara Greco.

Greco, a 2004 Gateway Technical College Interior Design program graduate, owns and operates her own Kenosha-based business. Interior design is the third career for Greco who was a nurse and floral designer before deciding to enter the Interior Design program in 2001.

Comments made by a friend prompted her to consider changing careers. She was a floral designer at the time, and her friend told her she had the skills and presence to try something different with her life. She did – and entered Gateway’s Interior Design program in 2001.

There, she developed the skills that would three years later help her to open her own business, Barbara Greco Interior Design LLC.

“I really enjoyed it,” Greco said. “Interior Design was a tough program, but it was wonderful and with excellent instructors.”

Greco said what made her instructors excellent was the

experience each of them had in the industry and how they used that to help their students learn and grow.

“They all had been out in the field and they all brought that experience back with them into the classroom – which means a lot to students,” Greco said.

She, too, was able to gain some of that real-world experience through an internship with area interior designer Kathy Redlin. The hands-on training offered there helped her when she graduated from the program.

“I began shadowing her and by the end of my internship, she allowed me to work with one of her clients,” Greco said. “It was wonderful.

“The way you really learn is with clients in the field. It was a good experience.”

Greco said business began slow but has finally picked up and her business varies from kitchen remodel work to selecting paint colors.

Burmese refugee finds good life through Gateway Technical College

Burmese refugee Delta Shine wanted a good life for her family in America – especially after the pain and suffering endured in their homeland.

She fled the country after government officials began seeking out and killing members of her collegiate group which protested the slaying of a student there by government security forces during a protest and its ensuing stance on the action.

Shine also lost her father in the country’s civil war, a man who disagreed with the changes overtaking Burma at the time.

Shine, 37, landed in Burlington with her husband and says she realized the best way to ensure they could take part in the American dream was to learn English and become a U.S. citizen.

Six years ago, she turned to Gateway Technical College to help her do both – and now she’s reached both goals. She became a U.S. citizen in May and speaks and writes English well enough to be a translator for others from Burma.

“Because we came to America as a refugee, the language is very hard for us and I knew I had to improve my English,” says Shine.

“I have a strong belief I must have a good life in America and I want my children to have a good future in this country.”

Shine and her husband, Thein H. Shine, took English as a Second Language (ESL) classes at Gateway and learned other skills at the Adult Learning Center in Gateway’s Burlington Center. She began attending Gateway six years ago, but left for a while because of a job and children.

She returned in September 2004 when she realized she needed to improve her English further.

Adult Learning Center/ESL instructor Gerry Millette called Shine a hard worker, inside and outside of the center.

“It’s interesting because she went through the entire system with us,” says Millette. “She came here with zero English and went through the six levels of ESL and then took some pre-college courses, so we’ve seen her evolve the entire way.”

The most striking thing about Shine is her willingness to help others. In spite of being forced from her country and moving to another halfway across the globe, Shine remains a positive force and has set helping others as her lifelong goal.

She speaks easily and excitedly about the opportunities to help others, whether it is in her future as a nurse or now as a translator. Shine hopes to enter the Gateway nursing program at some point.

“I am proud of the unrelenting giving she has for others within her community,” says Millette. “It can be 10 o’clock at night and if someone from the Myanmar (Burmese) population needs help at the hospital, the courts or is upset with filling out a government form, they call Delta and she’ll show up on their doorstep immediately.”

Shine says she simply wants to help others to have a good life as she has.

“I want to learn English so I can interpret and help people,” says Shine. “Many Burmese refugees come here and cannot speak the official language, they only speak their ethnic lan-



Delta Shine recently helps teach group of students at the Adult Learning Center at Gateway Technical College’s Burlington Center. Shine, a Burmese refugee, learned English at the Burlington Center and now plans to pursue her GED there as well. She said the college helped her to find “a good life.”

guage, so they have a very hard time. It is difficult for them when they see the doctor or they go to a bank or they need help. Whenever they need help, they call me.”

Shine has a daughter in first grade, a son in preschool and her husband has a job at a Waterford manufacturer. For now, she babysits other children as well as taking care of her own. She attends a Gateway writing class on Saturdays and is working on her GED so she can then move into entering a health care-related program at Gateway. Her goal is to some day become a nurse.

But her life now is different than what is was a decade ago. Shine was a second-year chemistry major at No. 3 Rangoon University Kyit Myin Dine Campus when a student was killed by government security forces during a protest. She and other students questioned the government’s actions.

“We wanted them to tell the truth about what happened,” Shine says. “The government refused to tell the truth.”

Shine participated in the protest movement – and those involved later found themselves arrested, with some put to death, Shine says. At that point, she fled for her life, living in a refugee camp in Thailand just over the Burma border. She later moved to a camp near Bangkok where she met her husband.

Once at Bangkok, Shine and her husband were able to choose their new home from a list of countries willing to take the refugees, which included the United States, Australia, Norway, Canada and Sweden. She says they selected the United States because of a belief that they would have a good life here and Wisconsin specifically because they have friends here.

“We learned that it was a good state to live in and safe,” she says.

Their Wisconsin sponsor told them about Gateway, and the college has helped them to assimilate into the culture, including becoming citizens.

“It is important for us to become citizens so we can vote, obtain jobs, help others and help the country we arrived in to be strong,” says Shine.

Shine says she and her husband will continue to further their education at the college. Both will look at obtaining their GED and then move forward with other programs.

But she credits the college with helping get them this far.

“Gateway helped us to improve our language, improve our writing and our other skills – so we can improve our life.”

Paying for college – help is available

How are you paying for college? Gateway Technical College, in partnership with the Lumina Foundation and the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, is presenting College Goal Sunday.

The event, it its third year at Gateway, is designed as an approachable way of learning how to apply for financial aid and get individual assistance in completing the application. Students and their parents are encouraged to attend together.

College Goal Sunday will be held from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday February 10 at two Gateway locations: The Conference Center on the Racine Campus, 1001 South Main Street, and the Center for Bioscience and Information Technology on the Kenosha Campus, 3520-30th Avenue.

Things to bring:

- Social Security card
- Driver's license (if any)
- 2007 federal tax returns
- 2006 federal tax returns (if 2007 not complete)
- 2007 untaxed income records (Social Security, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, welfare or veterans benefits records)
- 2007 bank statements
- 2007 business and investment mortgage information, business and farm records, and stock, bond, and other investment records
- Alien registration card (if you are not a U.S. citizen).

All students are eligible to apply for financial aid. Financial aid may come in the form of grants, work study, and other assistance.



Bradford High School students recently work on a car in an automotive technology class in their high school. Qualified juniors at Bradford will begin their automotive technology training at Gateway Technical College's Horizon Center for Transportation Technology. The program is one more example of Gateway providing a seamless education for students from high school through technical college.

High school students to use state-of-art Gateway transportation technology center

Gateway Technical College will help Kenosha Unified School District students take their work to become automotive technicians to the next gear.

Qualified second-semester juniors will begin taking classes at Gateway's Horizon Center for Transportation Technology starting in January. The program is one more example of Gateway providing a seamless education for students from high school through technical college and then providing a portal to a four-year degree as well, if preferred.

"I'm very excited about this," says Gateway Technical College President Bryan Albrecht. "I think it demonstrates how community support and investment can serve multiple purposes.

"Traditionally, a community would

support a high school and then they would support their technical college separately. In this case, everyone came together and we will be serving high school students, post-secondary students and industry workers – all in the same facility."

Students have already taken the basic automotive technology classes in their high school such as Auto Tech 1 and learned such skills as basic maintenance, basic braking systems, oil changes, vehicle part identification.

They will now move on to more sophisticated automotive technology classes and will earn credits at Gateway they can apply toward a degree in the automotive technology program. High school students will soon have the potential to earn nearly a year of credits toward the two-

year degree.

"Our goal is to have KUSD students complete the first year of an associate's degree while in high school," says KUSD technical education director Greg Wright.

Wright says students will benefit from their time in the Gateway Technical College program and at the Horizon Center because of the quality training and the high-end technology available to use for training at the site.

"This has the potential to really jumpstart their future," says Wright.

Wright says district officials hope to get students to a job site during the summer to give them even more real-world experience with the auto technology Youth Apprenticeship Program.

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class, income tax accounting, it was so hard and the teacher was on me every day. Now I know why – she was helping me to come out of my shell. She told me I probably felt like I didn't belong. She told me that wasn't true – that everyone belongs.

"She said she would call on me every single day I didn't participate in the class discussion. And she did. I got used to her calling on me every day. It got to be that time in the class, and the other students would say 'it's time for Freda's question of the day.' It helped me to come out of my shell and interact with people of different cultures and races."

A diverse learning environment

College officials work hard to foster cultural diversity on all of its campuses through the Multicultural Program and other efforts. Barkley says she has taken what she's learned at Gateway and applied it to her life and her new job as an accountant with The Province of St. Joseph of the Capuchin Order in Milwaukee.

"Up until that point in college, my only interaction with other cultures was bad," Barkley says. "I grew up in an all-black culture, so I didn't know how to interact with any other ethnic group than African-American.

"I sat back and said 'maybe I don't like accounting.' My teacher set me aside and told me 'I know you go to church. Maybe you will find a job with a church, or with the government, or a nonprofit, health administration – it doesn't have to be Wall Street.' She gave me so many options that I began to think that I did fit and I could use this education to further me along."

Gateway lead accounting instructor Linda McGee taught Barkley in some of her classes. She says she was impressed with how much Freda had grown as a person and a student since her start at Gateway.

"Her confidence, her level of achievement, everything about her ... she has turned into a stronger person with some great accounting knowledge," McGee says.

"At the beginning she told me she picked accounting and I said 'let's give this a try.' I felt a sense of growth within her, a sense of ownership to the accounting degree as she progressed."

The further she went in her education, the tougher it got. Time management became a critical issue for Barkley, one that Gateway helped her work through. The Multicultural Program helped set her up with an individual action plan that charted her time, helping her to prioritize the many tasks of her life.

"I was working part-time hours between several jobs, my husband was out of work and I had four children, two were in school," she says. "That individual action plan helped me. I had to spend my time wisely and still have time to kick the ball around with the kids or make dinner and work a part-time job to make ends meet."

She notes that her children also helped her with her homework.

"They were my biggest cheerleaders," says Barkley. "They did all they could to help me. They even reminded me to do my homework."

Even with the plan chart, finding all that time was a daunting task. She claims it all nearly came crashing down the final semester at Gateway, causing her to nearly become homeless. Her church, Glorius Light, helped her stay afloat and even allowed her to use the church van after her car was repossessed.

"My job with the Capuchins in Milwaukee allows me to be a help to those who are in the same situation that I was in just a few months ago," says Barkley. "It feels good to be able to give back."

Barkley's instructors helped her, too, although they made sure she kept on task and graduated – and land her current job.

"My teachers were there for me all the way, but they weren't giving me any breaks," Barkley says. "They said 'we know what you are going through, but we still need those assignments.'"

Having that harsh reality, but knowing my teachers cared, helped me to know that I can make it through anything now."

McGee characterized Barkley as energetic and caring for other students.

"She is a hard-working student who amazed me by how she kept everything together," McGee says.

One final benefit of Gateway was the transfer agreements between the college and Carthage College, where Barkley is finishing up her four-year degree. She was able to transfer into the private college in Super Sophomore standing – one class away from junior standing – and will be able to finish that degree in two years of 11 credits per semester. Her final bill between Gateway and Carthage will total about the same amount as one full-time year at Carthage, she says.

"Freda reminds me very much of this Jim Watkins quote shared with me by a friend: 'A river cuts through rock, not because of its power, but because of its persistence,'" says Janet Days, Gateway Multicultural Program Coordinator, Non Traditional Occupations (NTO) Program Coordinator and Displaced Homemaker Program Coordinator.

"Using her financial savvy, Freda has figured out a way to get the biggest bang out of her buck by taking advantage of Gateway's 2-plus-2 Program with Carthage College, and is currently working towards earning a BA in Accounting."

Barkley's parting advice to Gateway Technical College students carries almost as much weight as her advice to begin their college journey.

"Get into your major, ride out those tough times. Take yourself out of your comfort zone and take on new challenges. Meet people who you thought you would never meet in a million years. Be part of the culture of the college. Chase the unknown."



amaze yourself

Enroll now for Spring

Class schedules available online at www.gtc.edu or call 1.800.247.7122

Classes begin January 16!

