

# GOOD NEWS



**Nursing grad  
says Gateway  
prepared her for  
excellence**

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**Experiences,  
degree help  
student forge  
new career**

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## Student shows that Gateway meets the needs of all ages

Student enters college at age  
14, earns two degrees by 17



Eric Haskins works on honing the skills he's gained at Gateway that have empowered him to land consulting contracts and earn two IT degrees by age 17.

Many point to Gateway Technical College's flexibility in meeting student needs as one of its greatest assets - but Eric Haskins takes that to another level.

By Spring 2010 Eric had earned two degrees within three years - the Information Technology degrees of Computer Support and Network Specialist. He continues to work on a contract basis for companies he interned at while a student at the college, turning unpaid internship opportunities into paid consulting work.

In addition to the flexibility of being able to kickstart his career early, Eric also got a kickstart on a four-year college degree by transferring more than a year's worth of credits to the Milwaukee School of Engineering, where he is pursuing a degree in MIS.

But Eric has one more reason to call Gateway flexible in working with its students to give them the skills to enter the workforce or continue their education - the college provided the avenue for Eric to do all this before he was 18.

"Gateway was amazingly flexible," says Eric. "I'm 18 and have two associate degrees from Gateway. They allowed me to work this through a somewhat different approach and it worked. It's great."

Eric, a homeschooled student living in Elkhorn, enrolled at Gateway at 14 to pursue his interest in computer and information technology. His parents met with Gateway counselor Steve Durkin at the college's Elkhorn Campus, who worked with Eric on entrance exams, to enroll him in the college and make sure the transition would be beneficial to the teen.

"Steve said he thought it was possible, and we worked from there," says Eric. "Gateway provided the opportunity and framework for success."

Eric's family checked with other colleges, but Eric says Gateway was the only one willing to provide the framework in the program he sought. "Others were less open to this setup," says Eric. "Steve Durkin really knew his stuff and made this happen."

Eric says he was treated just as any other student on the Elkhorn Campus, adhering to the same rigor and taking part in student activities. He says he looks older for his age, so few suspected he was under the age of 18. "I remember laughing when I saw a sign at Gateway that said 'all children under age 18 must be accompanied by an adult,'" says Eric. "I was 14 at that point."

Through his training, Eric gained a solid foundation for his future career. He points to two benefits in particular - several internships he received through Gateway and the industry-savvy instructors at the college. Those instructors gave him the skills to enter the workforce, and the industry connections leading to internships that would further pave the way for a career.

"I worked at about 15 different places through those internships," says Eric. "Some were paid positions, some unpaid. I learned from all of them. Seeing how a variety of organizations operated gave me a great perspective on business and my career. It was great preparation."

Eric says the reality of the internships - working with actual customers on actual issues - is what resonated the most deeply for him. "They were real projects in a real environment - not fake problems and fake issues, solving it in a fake way in a classroom," he says.

Ironically, Eric worked as a consultant for two public school districts during that time, at an age that would have qualified him to actually be enrolled in the district. One has since called him back for private consulting work.

Eric worked closely with instructor Paul Nelson on the internships. He guided the student through a number of experiences that would continue to provide the skills needed for career success.

Eric says Gateway's affordability and quality programs were the final selling point for him and his family. "Gateway's cost was more reasonable than a private high school - and the quality training and education you receive make it even more so," says Eric.

*"We have been pleased with how well Gateway organizes, customizes and delivers quality content."*

- Marty Plecki, Albany Chicago quality leader

## Company says training customized to fit needs



Ron Valdez and Dave Lyons incorporate the skills they gained through Gateway's customized training in their work at Albany Chicago. The training raises the skill level of employees and helps businesses to strengthen their bottom line.

### Gateway's training increases worker skills

Marty Plecki, Albany Chicago quality leader, says when quality managers in his company were looking to conduct internal training to upgrade the skills of their workers, they automatically turned to the training partner they had worked with in the past - Gateway Technical College.

"We have been pleased with how well Gateway organizes, customizes and delivers quality content," says Marty. "Craig Maeschen from Gateway worked closely with

**For more information**  
■ [www.gtc.edu/wedd](http://www.gtc.edu/wedd)

George O'Malley, Albany Chicago senior quality engineer, to tailor the training to the company's needs and to drive tangible results."

Gateway worked with Albany Chicago to deliver Blueprint Reading and Geometric Dimensioning and Tolerancing courses at the plant. Some employees were upgrading their skills, while others were refreshing their knowledge. The class was a mixture of men and women representing operators, engineers and leadership.

Gateway's customized training allows employees who participate in the effort to make more informed and better production decisions. This supports better decision making through a more thorough understanding of the part and brings efficiencies to their work, Marty says.

"The training was very good," said George O'Malley. "We had people in there with all different levels of skills. All participated because it was a good learning opportunity for themselves and a way to contribute to continuous improvement in the company."

"This will result in improved quality and improved profitability for us."

The training was a success for a number of different reasons, including quality instruction, skills learned, attendance and even the collegiality fostered through the course taught by Gateway instructor Craig Maeschen.

"Craig and Gateway provided us a great opportunity for success," says George. "We had a great completion rate, the course was informative and it will help our bottom line."

"Training also helps the morale in the company. People feel good about a company that is providing training like this. We have 25 people, very satisfied with the experience provided by Gateway."

George points out that training helps the business produce sophisticated die cast and machined parts. Pleasant Prairie-based Albany Chicago produces aluminum die cast and machined products to high tolerance levels, as close as 25 microns. They have the capability of producing highly engineered aluminum die castings as small as 1 ounce to larger than 100 pounds on die cast presses ranging from 400 tons to 2,500 tons.

Marty and George say the coursework was well taught and interesting. Gateway worked with Albany Chicago to ensure class times were delivered on a day and during a time when it was best suited for the company as well as tailoring the course to best meet the specific needs of its employees and plant operations.

"It was a fun class, I think everyone was very upbeat about it," says George, who also took the course. "It was a good stepping-stone class. We had our finals this week and everyone was really worried about it - it was like we were back in college. Everyone really cared about how well they did and how they could use the learning on their job."



# GATEWAY COOKS UP GREAT TRAINING, INDUSTRY INSIGHT

Gateway Technical College delivers the training, certification and industry insight to its Culinary Arts students, giving them an edge when interviewing for manager, sous chef or other similar positions in the restaurant industry.

Thomas Hiles, Kansasville; Shawn Lynn, Racine; Josh McCue, Waterford; and Steve Villalobos, Mount Pleasant, already have experience in the food industry - yet seek the training and a Gateway degree that lay the foundation for a career and potential earnings boost for many years to come. They gain the skills - and certification - that makes them a valuable addition to any staff in the industry.

"I ran a kitchen for almost eight years, and work in the industry now," says Shawn. "I bought a house at 21 and had a lot, but I was in a rut. I wasn't growing. I decided I needed to focus on college.

"Gateway has given me a different outlook on life and my career. I feel like I can do more now. Experience certainly helps, but earning the degree will make me really stand out with potential employers. When I apply now, I can say I have 10 years experience and a degree - that's a great situation to be in."

Shawn cooks for banquets and catering, as well as working as a line cook.

Steve held several food and beverage positions at the shuttered Dairyland Greyhound Park in Kenosha, which had the largest dining room in the state at its height of operation. Steve started out as a line cook, moved on to the position of sous chef before ultimately holding the position of assistant food and beverage manager for the park.

Steve could have returned to the industry after the park closed down, but chose to enroll at Gateway to earn his degree, and the state certifications that comes with it, to potential employers.

"Having that experience and college degree will help me and other graduates immensely," says Steve. "You gain many skills here that you won't learn if you're working the line. You learn it all - from costing out a menu to learning how to bake, make soup and a variety of entrées.

Thomas works as a sous chef and says he's pursuing a degree because he believes it will



Thomas Hiles, Steve Villalobos, Josh McCue and Shawn Lynn are food industry professionals, yet still seek the training and credibility a Gateway degree in culinary arts will have on their future career.

**For more information**  
■ [www.gtc.edu/culinary](http://www.gtc.edu/culinary)

give him new and valuable insight into his current position - and future within this career. Students apply immediately what they've learned in their classes by cooking in the Culinary Arts kitchen on the Racine Campus, providing lunch opportunities for students and staff as well as preparing dishes for banquets and other gatherings on the campus.

"The training is realistic," says Thomas. "Not only do you learn how to cook, but you also find out about the money end of the business, how to save money, cost a menu but still provide great food for the customer."

Josh is a line cook at a local business, and says he believes one of the strengths of the program is its instructors. "They teach you here," he says. "They work with you on the steps you

need to take to do it right, and tell you the method and reason behind each of them."

Josh and the other three students quickly point out that all the Culinary Arts instructors have extensive experience and connections in the industry, and use that knowledge to mentor their students into becoming professionals. "They show you how a real restaurant works - and encourage you to gain the skills needed to work in the restaurant industry," says Josh.

He also points out that the dishes and menus they create and make are those that can be found at fine dining establishments in the area.

"It's cliché, but there's that old saying that you can do 4,000 things, or you can do five things 4,000 times and master the five things you want to do with your life," says Steve. "I would rather master those five things than do 4,000 and not master any of them. Gateway gives you the opportunity to master the skills you need to know for your career."

### Real-world skills gained through statewide competition

Gateway Culinary Arts students will participate in an Iron Chef-like statewide competition which they say will build their real-world skills and resumés because of the event's demanding, stressful structure and the desire to achieve excellence - all done within 90 minutes.

Steve Villalobos, Thomas Hiles, Shawn Lynn and Josh McCue will compete in the Wisconsin Restaurant Expo's College Culinary Hot Plate competition March 21, a team event they say will add to their Gateway experience and boost their resumés.

"This will be nice to have in my portfolio, to say that I competed at this event," says Shawn. "It provides you that opportunity to strive for excellence."

The goal of the competition is to "provide an opportunity for college students to compete in a real-world situation," according to the WRA.

■ [www.wirestaurant.org/expo/compete/college.htm](http://www.wirestaurant.org/expo/compete/college.htm)

# Gateway prepared me well for state exam, student says

## Courses were tough, but instructors caring and willing to help

Caring and willing instructors combined with tough courses at Gateway Technical College were the right prescription for Samantha Binkowski to pass the state nursing board test on her first attempt - and created the pathway for her current job as a nurse at St. Luke's hospital in Milwaukee.

Samantha says while the nursing license test - the National Council Licensure Examination, also called NCLEX - was tough, she predicted she would do well because of the preparation she received at Gateway.

"I passed the test with flying colors, and I knew instantly when I received the results it was because of Gateway," says Samantha. "The hard questions, the tough classes and the instructors willing to explain to you the correct answers - all of that prepared me to pass the exam."

Many nursing candidates fail the first time and must retake the exam. A total of 265 questions are posed in the state exam. Testing ends, in the computerized exam, prior to 265 if enough questions are answered correctly to indicate the nursing candidate has a strong enough grasp of the material to be awarded a license. The minimum number of questions a test can be stopped at is 75 - and Samantha's test stopped at 77, and she knew of fellow Gateway graduates who stopped at 78 and 88.

"The curriculum was hard, it wasn't easy by any means," says Samantha. "We were tested frequently at Gateway and we had some really hard questions thrown at us."

Samantha says instructors worked hard to ensure students could handle the complex nursing concepts and exams, knowing the questions they would face during the NCLEX exam. They would stay late to make sure students understood the material fully. They encouraged them to form study groups to support and learn from each other. And the numerous tough exams forced students to develop solid test-taking strategies.

"The curriculum was hard, but our instructors really cared. They really went out of their way to make sure we knew the material," says Samantha. "We did. We were prepared for our careers and the boards. I knew the answers to the questions because that's what we studied in our courses."

Board exam questions frequently feature a bevy of answers which are all correct - but the test-taker must choose the "best" answer, or the proper series of factors that go into the best decision-making. "Since the first semester the hierarchy of needs in patients was

**What is the NCLEX?**  
■ The NCLEX (National Council Licensure Examination) is the national board exam taken by graduate nurses as part of their licensure process to become a registered nurse (RN). The test is developed by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) and is administered by Pearson VUE, a testing vendor. Each state Board of Nursing establishes its own criteria to become a registered nurse.

**For more information**  
■ [www.gtc.edu/nursing](http://www.gtc.edu/nursing)

instilled in us," Samantha says. "That's exactly what the boards are about."

"Honestly, I don't know if I would have passed the test had I gone anywhere else. It's such a difficult test, and it forces you to use information you've gained from every semester at Gateway."



Gateway nursing graduate Samantha Binkowski says Gateway prepared her well to take her state nursing board certification exam - passing it on her first attempt.

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# training BURN

Gateway partners with community fire departments for firefighting training

Gateway Technical College partners with community fire departments to conduct live fire training in acquired structures, an effort which reduces fire department response time to emergencies, increases the working efficiency of the members of those departments – and ultimately saves lives. Gateway has increased the opportunities it provides to departments as they seek ways to develop their staff members. Departments turn to the college for its expertise, ability to set up the training burns and provide any additional training needed afterward.

“The fire service deals in a framework of time sensitivity,” says fire program chair and instructor John Dahms. “Everything we do is time sensitive – minutes can mean a great difference.

“Even if you show up to the scene within 2 minutes, if you don’t have your entire crew there, if they don’t know how to deploy quickly or make decisions quickly, that could mean disaster. Working with a live fire gets your staff members into the framework of deploying properly, quickly and getting the job done. It’s a team-building experience.”

This training is done outside of Gateway’s Fire Protection Technician program, provided as part of the college’s mission to reach out to business and community stakeholders to assist them in professional training and on a collaborative scale.

The burning of a building such as the one provided in September 2010 provides an insight into how well firefighters respond to key situations and whether any additional training is needed (see [related photos on page](#)). Planning done beforehand and briefing afterward add to the training done at the burn itself.

“We want to give them every opportunity to be successful, and these are extremely excellent opportunities to do so,” says John. “And, if through the process, we do identify some training shortfalls, Gateway can come up with a plan for additional training tailored to the needs of each of the departments.”

John notes that it’s Gateway’s mission to partner with stakeholders to accomplish the quality, training and efficiency levels they believe to be important to their organization. Gateway’s helps them do that.

“These burns may be beyond the scope of some of the single departments within our district,” says John. “This way, many of the single departments can join together to train.”

The training doesn’t just simulate a burning building - it *is* a burning building, and firefighters must deal with most of the issues they would have in suppressing a fire from an actual call in their community.

“This is an actual fire situation, not a controlled burn,” says John. “This is a dynamic situation. A building burn does the same thing as any structural fire does – and that is the challenge and the reward for taking part in one.”

John says there are many training opportunities provided by the live burn. It allows newer officers to be involved in the planning and organizing process of setting up and conducting a training burn, including working with other first response organizations.

“It prepares people to perform at a higher level,” says John. “They gain experience because this is as close to reality as possible, so when they respond to an actual call they have this experience and training from which to draw.”

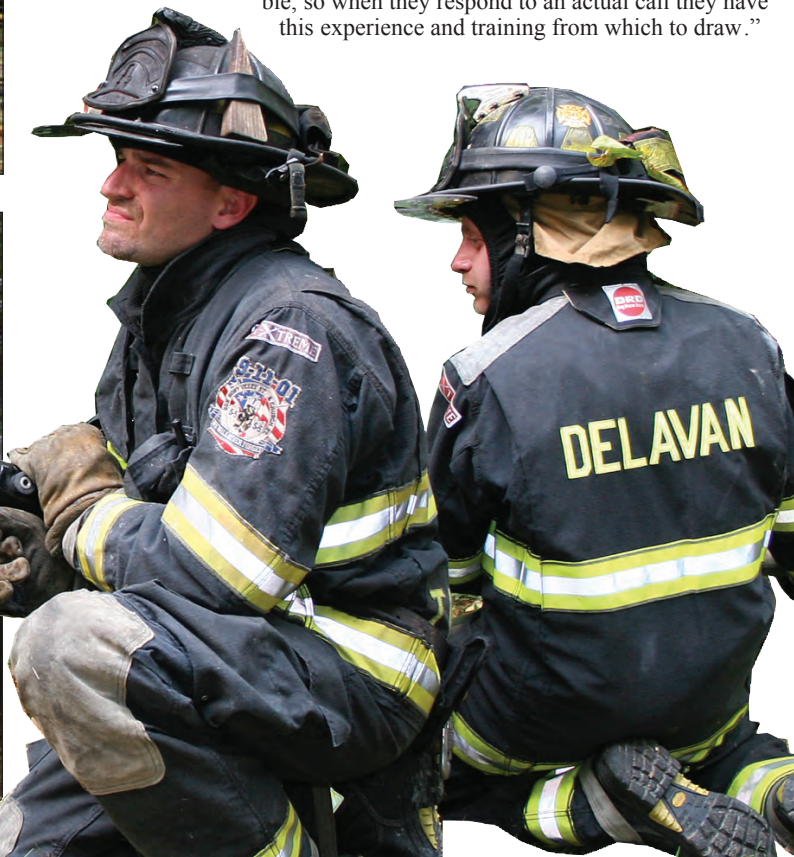
## At a glance

Gateway partnered with the following departments in a live burn recently hosted by the Kansasville Fire Department.

- Burlington
- Town of Burlington
- Union Grove
- Rochester
- Wind Lake
- Delavan

## For more information

■ [dahmsj@gtc.edu](mailto:dahmsj@gtc.edu)



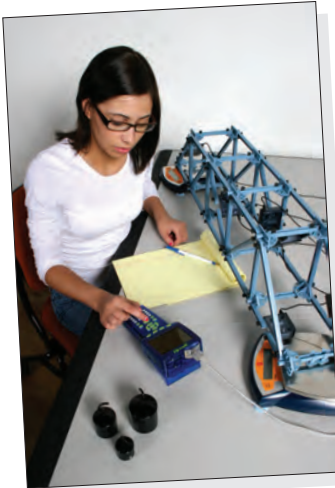


# Gateway to celebrate 100th anniversary

*College is the first public technical college in country*

Gateway, in 2011, will celebrate its 100th anniversary by honoring its history as the first publicly-funded vocational school in the state and the country.

As Gateway commemorates a century of supporting community growth through workforce training, it celebrates its growing role as a



national model college with an eye on career training of the future. “The anniversary celebrates 100 years of education and training which have helped to shape communities throughout Southeastern Wisconsin,”

says Gateway Technical College President Bryan Albrecht.

“Looking back, Gateway has a past filled with stories of student and community success. Today, Gateway has established national prominence as one of America’s leading community and technical colleges. Looking to the future, Gateway will continue to embrace the meaning of its name as a passage to a new beginning.”

Gateway will hold a centennial celebration which will provide opportunities for the entire community to participate. The first of a three-part lecture series will take place March 1, 2011, in the Madigrano Auditorium on the Kenosha Campus. The community is invited to hear “Eleanor Roosevelt” speak about education during her lifetime. On



July 12, 2011 the Wisconsin Technical College System Board (WTCS)

and all of the 16 technical colleges will meet on the Racine Campus to celebrate the birth of the WTCS. Other events are also being planned.

“Gateway Technical College’s centennial is something of which the entire community can be proud,” says Gateway Executive Vice President/Provost Zina Haywood. “A sense of pride comes from the fact that Gateway was the first Wisconsin technical college, and the first state-supported technical college in the nation.

“The college’s growth over the last 100 years has not just been in enrollment but also state, national and international recognition as a model two-year college.”

Wisconsin was the first state to create adult and vocational schools when it passed a law in 1911 requiring all cities of more than 5,000 to establish a school. Racine was the first to do so, beginning classes just weeks after the legislation was adopted.

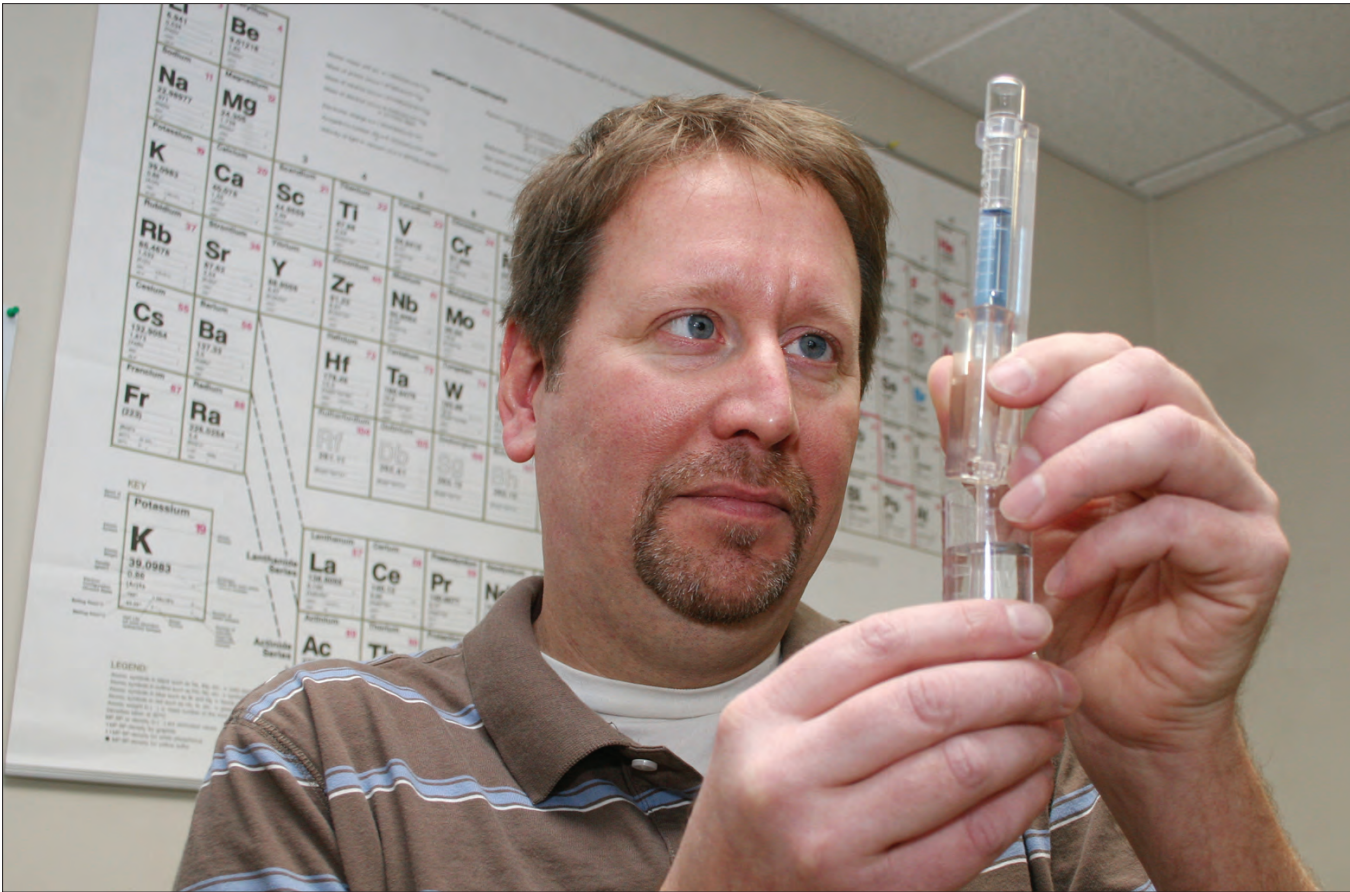
Since then, Continuation Schools evolved into technical colleges. Wisconsin’s Technical Colleges were formed to help employers and



employees meet the demands of the industrial revolution. Today, Gateway and the other 15 Wisconsin Technical Colleges lead in providing skills to support the digital and knowledge economy.

“At Gateway we are honored to lead Wisconsin’s technical colleges into their second century of learning,” says Albrecht. “As the first vocational education school established in our state, we have a responsibility to reflect the changes and needs of the citizens throughout the region and state we serve.”

“Gateway’s centennial is a remarkable milestone symbolizing generations of community leaders, faculty, staff and students in the building of a solid foundation for business, industry and families throughout southeast Wisconsin.”



Chris Williamson chose to enroll in Gateway’s Fresh Water Resources Engineering program because it will train him for a career in an emerging and expanding industry.

## Student seeking to be on bottom floor of growing career

Chris Williamson left an industry hit hard by the economy and shrinking quickly to receive training at Gateway Technical College in an expanding career field.

Chris enrolled in Gateway’s Civil Engineering Technology-Fresh Water Resources program after losing his job in the printing industry, leaving it in favor of one he

### For more information

■ [www.gtc.edu/freshwater](http://www.gtc.edu/freshwater)

believes has more potential for his future. “It is a career field I believe will bring me more job security,” says Chris. “I know there have been efforts to establish Southeastern Wisconsin as a major player in the field of freshwater resources, and I want to be in on the ground floor of that effort.”

Chris says the printing field has been rocked by job insecurity for the past several years and his move to Freshwater Resources will give him that peace of mind to be in an industry that’s expanding.

“It is a degree that I believe will translate into a good-paying, secure job,” he says. “That is really what I need.”

Two years ago, Chris knew his job would soon be eliminated and was pondering which career pathway he should choose. His answer landed right in his lap – almost literally.

“I had lost my job from the printing industry,” says Chris. “Oddly enough, we were printing Good News at our shop and I saw the story that Gateway was going to be offering courses in this new program of Civil Engineering Technology-Fresh Water Resources.

“I thought it would be something that would interest me, and, after talking to career counselors at Gateway, I realized this was where I wanted to be. I enrolled right away.”

Chris says while it’s been a couple decades since high school and the studying for tests, quizzes and bookwork, Gateway has helped him to acclimate to the demands of college life.

“The environment at Gateway is very welcoming,” he says.

Chris was somewhat worried over his first class - technical math - but he soon settled in to studying and earning his degree, helped by Gateway’s instructors and Academic Support Centers.

“Gateway’s instructors are exceptional,” says Chris. “They all offer their support, even if it happens to be in a class they don’t teach but which is still within their framework of expertise. They encourage you and work with you to earn your degree.

“I did go the Academic Center for my Physics classes. The staff members there are excellent, just like my instructors. They are very personable and professional, and work

### What is a Fresh Water Resources engineer?

Freshwater engineering technicians have skills in civil engineering design and construction, coupled with advanced education in specific environmental assessment and protection issues.

A freshwater resources engineer will work as a team member with an environmental engineer, project manager, or project engineer to:

- Operate a water treatment plant.
- Operate a wastewater treatment plant, either industrial or for a municipality.
- Collect and analyze water/wastewater samples to determine if a treatment plant is operating correctly.
- Evaluate analytical results (soil, water/wastewater) to determine whether there is contamination and if a site needs to be cleaned up.
- Evaluate analytical results to determine if the quality of the water in a lake, river or creek is sufficient for drinking, fishing or recreation.

hard to help you to understand the material.”

Chris says he still likes the career potential of working with water quality issues. “I like the fact that I will be working outdoors as well as indoors – but not tied to a desk,” he says.

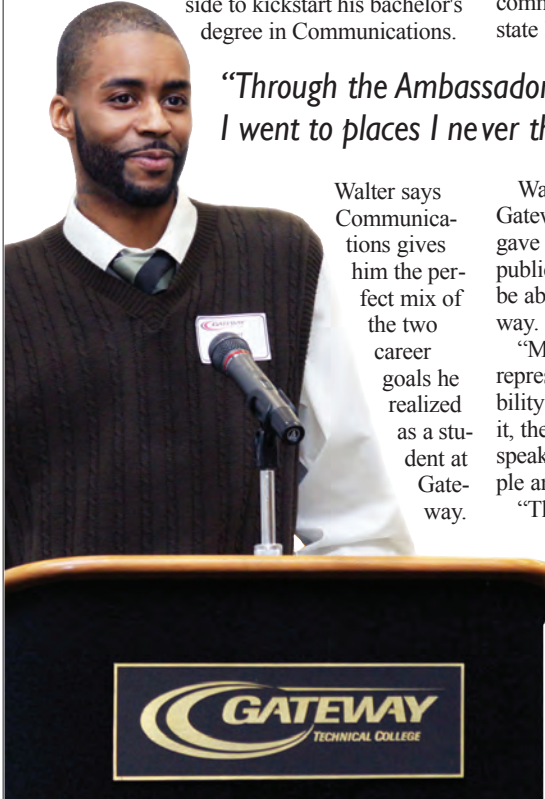
## Graduate forges new career outlook though Gateway degree, experiences

### Student Ambassador program brings out new strength in student

Walter Murphy has combined the educational training he received through his Gateway Technical College Human Services degree along with the experience of representing the college to area communities to embark on a new career that uses skills from each.

He also benefited from the transfer agreement Gateway has with UW-Parkside to kickstart his bachelor’s degree in Communications.

*“Through the Ambassador program, I went to places I never thought I would.”*



Walter says Communications gives him the perfect mix of the two career goals he realized as a student at Gateway.

“At first, I wanted to work one-on-one with at-risk students,” says Walter. “But after getting my degree and experiencing all the public speaking I did representing Gateway, I realized I wanted to be out in front, representing a non-profit group. That’s where my strengths lie – and I realized that through my experiences at Gateway.”

Walter earned his Human Services degree at Gateway and volunteered at the Salvation Army as part of his program requirement. He also was named Gateway District Ambassador, a leadership opportunity which allowed him – through speaking engagements – to be the voice of the college to fellow students, communities served by Gateway and at the state level. Ambassadors are nominated by

their instructors and compete against fellow students for the honor.

Walter says the opportunities provided by Gateway through being selected Ambassador gave him the confidence and skills to speak in public, something he never expected he would be able to do when he first enrolled at Gateway.

“My instructors and Gateway felt I could represent the college. It was a huge responsibility – but I took it seriously. The more I did it, the more I realized I liked it. I gained speaking skills, learned how to meet new people and gain knowledge on new ideas.

“Through the Ambassador program, I went to places I never thought I would – like speaking at the state capital – and met a lot of people. I was nervous the first time I spoke in public, but I think now that public speaking is one of my strengths.”

Walter came to Gateway five years

### For more information

- [www.gtc.edu/starambassadors](http://www.gtc.edu/starambassadors)
- [www.gtc.edu/humanservices](http://www.gtc.edu/humanservices)
- [www.gtc.edu/transfer](http://www.gtc.edu/transfer)

in a row to enroll before finally coming to the conclusion that he was “wasting time” and needed the skills and education a Gateway degree provide for a career – and enrolled immediately. “I saw the opportunities a college education would give me to a career and to further my education,” he says. “Many of my friends benefited from their Gateway education, and I wanted to, also.”

Walter says Gateway prepared him well to enter the workforce.

“I believe that the degree equipped me well for a career in Human Services,” he says. “You learned a lot in class, but the internship opportunities really showed you how to apply that in a real-world setting. When you graduate, you have the degree, and the internship provides you with the experience that you can show to potential employers. They are looking for that experience as well as degree.”

Caring instructors, the convenience of a location near his home, flexible hours and the many different student activities all added to his Gateway experience and forged the foundation for future learning and a career.

“Gateway has a great support structure, from instructors to the Academic Support Centers. Janet Days, in particular, mentored me. I still talk to her about my education, even though I’ve graduated from Gateway.”

Walter says Gateway also prepared him well for his transfer into a four-year college.

“The transfer agreement and academic standards also qualified me well for a four-year college – without Gateway, I don’t think I would be enrolled at UW-Parkside.”

Walter Murphy developed public speaking and communications skills through speaking engagements as part of his duties as Gateway’s District Ambassador.