

Staying connected

A newsletter for the alumni & friends of
Minnesota West Community & Technical College



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Glen Veldhuisen

Life After the Lay-Off Notice

Many in Pipestone Went Back to School After Massive Lay-Offs in 2009

The Pipestone community suffered a triple shock with the closings of both *Suzlon*, a wind turbine manufacturing company, and *Bayliner*, a boat manufacturing company, in 2009 as well as layoffs at Ashton Care. Donzens lost their jobs and were left wondering what to do next. According to **Jackie Otkin**, Pipestone Campus Dean, 74 came back to school on the Pipestone Campus. The opportunity to return to school for retraining may have been an inviting option for many of the students because it would give them a chance to stay in the Pipestone area; however going back to school lead to challenges for many of the new students.

Glen Veldhuisen was not part of the large layoffs in Pipestone, but lost his job when the mortgage company he worked for closed his office due to the bad economy. After a friend told him about retraining assistance Glen found his way to Minnesota West. Even though he had never gone to college before, the medical field had always intrigued Glen, so he began his new training in nursing. After completing his LPN and RN course work Glen is now working at the *Tyler Health Care Center* in acute care. He said the instructors at Minnesota West were great with the nontraditional students because of their life experience and understanding the other responsibilities they had, but the instructors never let him get by without doing the work needed. Glen is continuing his education and will begin work on his bachelor's degree in nursing soon.

The Kuehl family suffered enormous loss with the closing of *Bayliner* as **Dawn Kuehl** lost her job, along with partner **Scott Wilson** and Dawn's two sons, **Jamie** and **Brad**, as well as

Jamie's wife **Carey** and Brad's new wife, **Catherine**. With all these changes in her life, Dawn decided to pursue a lifelong dream of nursing at Minnesota West and graduated in 2011 with her LPN and in 2012 with her ADN. Scott received a business management degree with a computer emphasis, while Jamie complited his degree in HVAC and plumbing and Carey did her degree in Administrative Assistant. Brad completed the plumbing degree and Catherine completed the practical nursing program.

Otkin said, "It was exciting to see these students learn and grow as they opened a new chapter in their life. They were enthusiastic and dedicated to learning new skills."



Jamie Kuehl, Dawn Kuehl, Scott Wilson, and Brad Kuehl

Faculty and Staff Stories

New Staff

Tom Midthun – Granite Falls Fluid Power Instructor

Tom Midthun comes to Minnesota West from SunSource, a national leader in industrial and mobile fluid power distribution. Tom has twenty six years of experience in the Fluid Power industry in a variety of jobs within SunSource, and also has two years of teaching experience for Alexandria Technical College. Tom is excited about the opportunity to work with students and to share the opportunities in fluid power. “I love seeing the “aha” moment, when a student understands a concept that you are teaching them.” **Linda DeGriselles**, Campus Dean at the Granite Falls Campus states “Tom will be a great addition. His enthusiasm for the industry, for teaching, and for the community is easily apparent, and we look forward to Tom carrying on the long-standing tradition of excellence in the Fluid Power Technology program.”



Tom Midthun

Nirmala Chandrasekharan – Worthington Chemistry Instructor

She has a Doctorate degree Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore, and a Master’s Degree from Indian Institute of Technology in Chennai. **Nirmala Chandrasekharan** has most recently been Chemistry Faculty member at Indiana University Northwest in Gary, Indiana. She says she has enjoyed the lively conversations and diverse viewpoints from her students at Minnesota West. Chandrasekharan enjoys experimenting with fusion cuisines and exploring southwest Minnesota when she is not in the classroom.



Nirmala
Chandrasekharan

Leah Gossom – Worthington Art Instructor

She has her Master of Fine Arts degree with specialization in Painting and Drawing from Ohio State University. **Leah Gossom** has most recently been teaching at the Prague British School in the Czech Republic.



Ron Schwint

Ron Schwint – Worthington Law Enforcement Instructor

He has his Master’s degree from the University of South Dakota. **Ron Schwint** is a trainer for Armament Systems and Procedures, Inc., and was a Sergeant for the Sioux Falls Police Department. After retiring from the Sioux Falls Police, Ron continued training and thought the transition to Minnesota West was a good fit for his skills. Ron lives in Brandon, South Dakota with his wife, **Julie**, and their two high school aged children. He is hopeful to develop a great skills training program at Minnesota West.



Paul Seifert

Paul Seifert – Worthington Physics Instructor

Paul Seifert has his Doctorate and Masters from North Dakota State University. He has most recently been a professor at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota where he built a high-altitude balloon program to launch student build payloads to 100,000 feet in the air which was funded by the Minnesota Space Grant. Paul has one daughter who is in college in California and enjoys high-power rocketry, astronomy and brewing beer.



Mike Wesselink – Worthington Mathematics Instructor

Mike Wesselink has his Master’s degree from the University of North Dakota. He has most recently been a Mathematics instructor at Worthington Public Schools and adjunct instructor at Minnesota West Community & Technical College. Mike and his wife, **Tami**, have lived in Worthington for eleven years and have two adult children. Mike says he is enjoying the change of teaching at the college level and looking forward to advancing his skills at this level.



Mike Wesselink

Bradley Schloesser – Dean of Agriculture for Southwest Minnesota

Bradley Schloesser has a B.S. in Agricultural Education from the University of Minnesota, and pursued an Animal Science Master’s from Montana State University. Schloesser is currently at South Central College, North Mankato Campus as an Agribusiness Team Faculty member. Schloesser comments, “I am looking forward to developing and growing opportunities for the Center of Agriculture in Southern Minnesota and work with students, farmers and agribusiness community members, and eager to be on the team with the faculty and students in the Minnesota West Community and continue with the South Central College Community. I try to be the best version of myself I can be every day, and help others to be the best version of themselves that they can be.”

Bradley Schloesser

Minnesota West Family Tree

What does all this mean?

WCC WJC STC PAVTI
CAVTI STC PAVTI
JAVTI WSCJC

Many people, including our alumni, are confused about how they “became” Minnesota West Alumni. With this “Family Tree” you can follow how your graduation from a previous campus and/or college has morphed into Minnesota West Community and Technical College. While the names may have changed, the strong commitment to our students and communities has not. Through alumni giving, you can support the current students of your alma mater – no matter which campus you originally were a part of.



Endowed Scholarship

You can make leave a permanent legacy with the college through an endowed scholarship. Endowed scholarships exist to provide scholarships to students in perpetuity because the donated principle is never spent while the interest from the donated sum is given out as scholarships. Are you interested in honoring a family member or leaving a legacy yourself? Contact the foundation at 507-223-1329.

Minnesota West Foundation Annual Report

Included with this edition of *Staying Connected* is the Minnesota West Foundation's Annual Report with some financial data as well as a list of our donors over the past fiscal year. We greatly appreciate all our donors and are glad to share our financial information. If you want our complete tax return (IRS form 990), please visit www.mnwest.edu/foundation.

Foundation News

Did you know that “*Staying Connected*” is published three times a year? Only one issue is mailed to save on postage and printing costs, but you can receive it via e-mail by sending your contact information to:
foundation@mnwest.edu
or check out back issues on the foundation website at:

www.mnwest.edu/foundation

Alumni – Keep us informed of what you are doing by updating your information at
www.mnwest.edu/alumni

COLLEGE NEWS

Mobile Welding Lab to Meet Local Labor Demands

Minnesota West will receive \$74,779 in state equipment funds which will be dedicated to establishing a second 12 station mobile welding lab to expand the capacity for Minnesota West to deliver specialized welding training. The mobile lab will help meet a pronounced need for welders and metal fabricators in southwestern Minnesota. The equipment includes a 53' semi van trailer, a fume extraction and heating/air conditioning system, and 12 MIG/TIG welders with accessories. The state funding was matched by both cash and in-kind contributions totaling \$102,570 from the following private sector businesses throughout the Southwest Minnesota region:

AGCO- Jackson Plant (Jackson)
Doherty Staffing Solutions (Jackson)
Winnebago Manufacturing Company (Blue Earth)
Chandler Industries, Inc. (Montevideo)
Zierke Built Manufacturing Inc. (Winnebago, MN)
The Schwan Food Company (Marshall)

Contractor of Choice (Marshall)
Bisbee Plumbing & Heating (Marshall)
SMI & Hydraulics (Porter)
Jim Brewers Electric (Minneota)
American Welding & Gas, Inc (Wilmar)

Dawn Regnier, Director of Minnesota West Customized Training Services comments, "It is exciting to receive this level of support from the System Office and the private sector businesses throughout our region. We appreciate the generosity of the businesses that partnered with Minnesota West to support this initiative. The level of funding expands our capacity to offer more welding training to students and assist our employers with their workforce development needs."

Minnesota West 10th in 2012 Digital Community Colleges

Minnesota West Community & Technical College ranks in the top ten mid-sized colleges for the 2012 Digital Community Colleges Survey. Community Colleges across the nation respond to increased enrollments and limited budgets through innovative use of technology, according to the Digital Community Colleges Survey results released today.

"This survey gives great insight into the nation's Community Colleges' efforts to advance services to students through new technologies," says **Cathilea Robinett**, executive vice president of *e.Republic*. "The winners in these categories have increased the number of computers and kiosks, automated labor-intensive processes, improved student portals and increased student online services and more. Congratulations!"

The *Center for Digital Education (CDE)* is a national research and advisory institute specializing in K-12 and higher education technology trends, policy, and funding. CDE's media platform includes the Center for Digital Education's Converge Special Reports, centerdigitaled.com, email newsletters, and custom publications. The Center is a division of *e.Republic*, a national publishing, event and research company focused on smart media for public sector innovation.

STUDENT NEWS



Jake Hoffman

Jacob Hoffman, of Porter, Wins National Award in Electrical Construction Wiring

Jake Hoffman, a student at Minnesota West Canby Campus, finished 2nd in the nation in Electrical Construction Wiring at the annual National Leadership and Skills Conference and SkillsUSA Championships. The competition was held at H. Roe Bartle Hall, Municipal Auditorium and American Royal in Kansas City, Missouri, on June 27, 2012. Jacob is the son of Ron Hoffman of Porter and Joyce Nordin of Otsego. The SkillsUSA Championships is considered the largest single day of corporate volunteerism in America and valued at \$35 million in industry support of donated time, equipment, cash and material. All contests are run by and judged by industry using industry standards for employment. Over 1,000 industry judges participated this year.

Stan Sebring Elected State Vice President for BPA

On the cusp of graduation, Minnesota West Community and Technical College student **Stan Sebring** has been involved with the Business Professionals of America (BPA), a national career and technical student organization, long enough to be considered a BPA veteran. Like any good veteran, Sebring knows that his experience has endowed him with a responsibility to lead. And like any good veteran he welcomes such opportunities—which is why he vied for, and won, one of five BPA state officer seats during a recent leadership conference in Duluth in late October. Sebring was elected as vice president of public relations. As a candidate, Sebring had to go through an arduous round of applications, knowledge tests, and interviews—which all served as but a precursor to the election campaigning. According to Minnesota West BPA Advisor **Leslie Bauman**, as a BPA officer Sebring will have a number responsibilities, from planning future conferences to promoting membership. *Courtesy: Scott Tedrick, Granite Falls Advocate Tribune*



Stan Sebring

COLLEGE NEWS

Pipestone Campus 45th Anniversary

Minnesota West Community & Technical College – Pipestone Campus celebrated 45 years of education this fall. The campus opened its doors in September of 1967 to students eager to prepare for their future. On September 18th the campus hosted an anniversary event open to the community, students, and alumni. The *Johnny Holm Band* performed on campus to help celebrate the accomplishments of the campus. Prior to the entertainment a complimentary meal was served. Tours of the building showcased the many changes made to the campus over the years.



Jason Bush, Michaela Miller, Nick Sysavath, Lowell Schelhaas, Joe Bruss (Student Senate Advisory), Crystal Arends and members of Johnny Holm band

ALUMNI news

Phil McCarty Part of Law Enforcement Family

Phil McCarty of Jackson knows something about police work, not only from his schooling at Minnesota West – Worthington campus, but also from his own family. McCarty joined the Lakefield Police Department in October. McCarty's brother, **Pat**, is also an officer with the Lakefield Police Department; his brother, **Matt**, is an officer with the West Des Moines, Iowa Police Department and his brother, **John**, is a deputy with the Isanti County Sheriff's Department. With three brothers in law enforcement, it was almost expected McCarty would carry on the tradition and in fact it was his brothers' experiences that influenced him to head in the same direction with his career. Phil is a 2012 graduate of the Law Enforcement program on the Worthington Campus of Minnesota West.

Courtesy: Mike Jordan, Jackson Pilot



Phil McCarty

Hayenga-Hostikka Inducted into MSUM Athletics Hall of Fame

Being nominated into the hall of fame is a great honor for any athlete. "To be inducted is quite an honor," **Rosalie Hayenga-Hostikka** said about her induction into the Minnesota State University Moorhead Athletics Hall of Fame.

"It is especially an honor since I only played two seasons there. College transfers can't always make a big impression in the few years they are there." Hayenga-Hostikka, a Worthington native who played at WCC, played her high school basketball for the Trojans before heading to then Worthington Community College where she played two years under coach Mike Fury from 1990-92. In the 1992 season, Hayenga-Hostikka led the Lady Jays to victory in the State Championship. She is the all-time assist leader as well as the third all-time leading scorer in school history. After her two years at WCC, Hayenga-Hostikka transferred to Moorhead State where she was a two-year starter for the Dragons. While at Moorhead State, Hayenga-Hostikka was a two-time All-NAIA District 13 and All-NSIC selection and matched the school single game record with six 3-point field goals. Hayenga-Hostikka was also voted Dragons' Most Valuable Player as well as earning third team NAIA All-American and first team All-NSIC honors in her final season. Hayenga-Hostikka came full circle in her basketball career when she took the assistant coaching job with the Lady Jays nine

years ago; she is also the head softball coach for Minnesota West.

Courtesy: Jordan Willi, Worthington Daily Globe



Rosalie Hayenga-Hostikka

FOUNDATION NEWS

Foundation Celebrates a Great Friend in Ray Crippen at Evening with the Stars

Over 100 people joined in to raise money for the students, staff and faculty on the Worthington Campus and say thank you to Worthington native **Ray Crippen**, Worthington Community College alumnus and long-time supporter of Minnesota West on November 10th. The Evening with the Stars dinner and silent auction fundraiser featured musical talent from current students in the Minnesota West choir as well as staff **Eric Parrish**, **Reggie Gorter**, **Kayla Westra** and **Dawn Gordon** and future students as well. The fundraiser brought in over \$9,000 to support the Worthington Campus!



Left: Reggie Gorter, Pipestone Staff person singing opera.

Right: Eric Parrish, Worthington faculty with Minnesota West Choir



Alumni Updates

1960s

Kenneth Sathoff – 1968, Auto Mechanics, Jackson – Kenneth is living in Sioux Falls, South Dakota and is retired. He remembers his instructor, **Dan Pike**, from his time in Jackson.

Ronald Revier, 1968, Automotive Technician, Jackson – Ron is living in Willmar, Minnesota with his wife, **Mary**, and is retired. Ron was drafted into the United States Army before completing his final exams in 1968, however was later awarded a diploma. He worked for many years in three Firestone Tire Centers (Revier Tire and Service Centers) before retiring in 2007. Ron and Mary have been married for 42 years, and have three adult children and nine grandchildren. Ron stays busy volunteering for Lets Go Fishing and at the YMCA.

1970s

Connie (Beseke) Beckius – 1972, General Secretary, Jackson – Connie is living in Sherburn, Minnesota and has worked for Minnesota West Community and Technical College for twenty-two years. Connie is married to **Ronnie** and they have two adult children and two grandsons.

John Holecek – 1972, Architectural Drafting, Jackson – John is living in Omaha, Nebraska and working for Dine Out Now, Inc. John has two adult children.

Steven Gerhard – 1973, Liberal Arts, Worthington; 1975, Telecommunications, Jackson – Steven is living in Grundy Center, Iowa with his wife, **Cindy**, and has worked for the Grundy Center Municipal Utilities since 1998 as a cable, telephone and high speed internet tech. Steven and Cindy have three adult daughters.

Mary Stringer – 1976, Fashion Management, Pipestone – Mary is living in Helena, Montana.

Edwin Hoffman – 1977, Auto Body; 1983, Electronics & Telecommunications, Jackson – Edwin is living in Sioux City, Iowa with his wife **Mary**. Edwin worked for a few years after his first degree and came back to school. He currently works for the United States Department of Defense as a weapons maintainer for an F16 at the 185th Fighter Wing. He is currently overseas working as a security escort for Operation Enduring Freedom.

Merlin DeJongh – 1978, Auto Body, Jackson – Merlin is living in Sioux Falls, South Dakota with his wife, Geena, and working for the United States Postal Service. Merlin and Geena have three adult children.

Lehne Nelson – 1979, Optometric Assistant, Granite Falls – Lehne is living in Appleton, Wisconsin and works for My Eye Store.

1980s

Brian Higgins – 1980, Electronics; 1982, Electric Motor; 1987, Telecommunications, Jackson – Brian is living in Clear Lake, Iowa with his wife Vicki and their two adult children. Brian began his own electrical contractor business in 2009.

Dale Studer – 1980, Worthington – Dale lives in Phoenix, Arizona with his wife **Kris** and their three adult children. Dale and Kris operate Studer Insurance Agency, and he recalls living in the trailer houses north of the campus with other WCC athletes (Dale played football, wrestled and baseball during his time at WCC).

Brad Lewis – 1983, Ag Business, Worthington – Brad is living in St. Louis, Missouri with his wife, **Kate**, and their three children,

ages 15, 13 and 6. Brad works for Monsanto as an area business manager. Brad credits former football coach **Don Varpness** and instructor **Walt Larson** with getting him to where he is today. Brad was the team co-captain on the 1982-83 team.

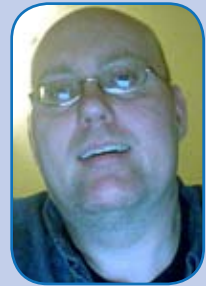


Ron & Mary Revier
- 68

1990s

Timothy Zinniel – 1990, Construction Electrician, Jackson – Timothy is living in Sleepy Eye, Minnesota and is the president of Zinniel Electric Company. Timothy has one son.

Sara Jo (Fury) Klubertanz – 1998, Liberal Arts, Worthington – Sara Jo is living in Rochester, Minnesota with her husband **Tim** and their two young children. She works for the St. Charles Public Schools.



Gary Deyoung - 11

2000s

Matt Deutsch – 2002, Liberal Arts, Worthington – Matt is living in Iowa and working for the Central Lyon Community School District.

Karla Olson – 2008, Administrative Assistant, Granite Falls – Karla is living in New Ulm, Minnesota and working for Torgerson Properties.

2010s

Jason Halvorson – 2010, Powerline, Jackson – Jason is living in Redwood Falls, Minnesota and works for the Redwood Falls Public Utilities.

Lindsey (Walcher) Leer – 2011, Dental, Canby – Lindsey is living in Bismarck, North Dakota with her husband, **Matt**, and works at Nelson Family Dentistry.

Gary Deyoung – 2011, Accounting, Canby – Gary is living in Tucson, Arizona and preparing to go back to school for IT skills to complement his management education.

Shantelle (Ortega-Conde) Lowry – 2012, Human Services, Worthington – Shantelle is living in Worthington with her two children and working at ShopKo.

Mitchell Loncorich – 2011, Wind Energy Technology, Canby – Mitchell is living in Hutchinson, Minnesota with his wife, **Katie**, and working for Vestas. Mitchell is a traveling resource technician and works on construction and service of wind towers. Mitchell and Katie are expecting a daughter soon!

Lisa Stenzel – 2011, Accounting, Jackson – Lisa is living in Pequot Lakes, Minnesota and working for White Birch, Inc. as a staff accountant at Breezy Point Resort. Lisa is going back to school to complete her Bachelor's Degree in Accounting.

Jessica (Nelson) Riordan – 2011, Medical Administrative Secretary, Granite Falls – Jessica is living in



Shantelle Lowry &
Family - 12

Alumni Updates contd...

Windom, Minnesota with her husband **Daniel** and their nine year old son. Jessica is working for AGCO as a senior buy planner. She says she enjoyed the ability to work at her own pace with her education at Minnesota West.

Ashley Kolander – 2011, Child Development, Granite Falls – Ashley is living in Wood Lake, Minnesota .

Allan Johnson – 2012, Nursing, Worthington – Allan is living in Appleton, Minnesota and working for Stevens Community Medical Center.

Kiah Fast – 2012, Fairmont – Kiah lives in Truman, Minnesota and is attending school at Southwest Minnesota State University to complete a degree in culinology.

Zackary Williamson – 2012, Powersports, Jackson – Zackary is living in Okoboji, Iowa and working for Pure Fishing, Inc.

Josh Oder – 2012, Powerline, Jackson – Josh is living in Greenfield, Iowa and working for Farmers Electric Cooperative.

Alyson Droeger – 2012, Liberal Arts, Worthington – Alyson is completing her Bachelor's Degree in exercise science at Dakota State University while also continuing her basketball career for the Lady T's.

Glen Veldhuizen – 2012, Nursing, Pipestone – Glen is living in Pipestone, Minnesota and working for the Tyler Healthcare Center.

Dawn Kuehl – 2012, Nursing, Pipestone – Dawn is living in Pipestone, Minnesota and working for Avera Pipestone Medical Center.

Dawn graduated with her significant other, **Scott Wilson**, her oldest son, **Jamie**, her daughter-in-law, **Carey**, her middle son, **Brad**, and Brad's wife.



Dawn Kuehl - 12



Runway Show on Jackson Campus Another Success

The Cosmetology program on the Jackson Campus held their third annual Runway Show on November 15th. The program, known as "The Fringe" is a salon and spa school which trains students in hair, skin and nails. The Runway Show, called "Boom", is used to highlight the student's talents and as a fundraiser for the program.



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