

Staying Connected

April 2011



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

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The Minnesota West Foundation is a private non-profit, 501 (c)3 tax exempt organization.

The Minnesota West Foundation believes in affordable and accessible educational opportunities for students. Because of this belief and commitment to education, the Minnesota West Foundation provides funding for scholarships and development opportunities for the students attending Minnesota West Community and Technical College.



Centers in Fairmont, Luverne, Marshall, Redwood Falls

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Minnesota West Begins Reaccreditation Process in 2011

Minnesota West Community and Technical College will undergo a comprehensive evaluation visit in October 2011, by a team representing The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

The accreditation process provides an assurance of quality to the public and also aids colleges and universities in their own planning. In addition, only accredited schools are eligible for certain federal financial aid programs for students. The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) is an independent corporation and one of two commission members of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA), which is one of six regional institutional accreditors in the United States. The Higher Learning Commission accredits degree-granting post-secondary educational institutions in the North Central region.

Institutional accreditation evaluates an entire institution and accredits it as a whole. Other agencies provide accreditation for specific programs. Accreditation is voluntary. The Commission accredits approximately 1100 institutions of higher education in a nineteen state region. The Commission is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. For more information about the commission visit www.ncahlc.org.

For the last several months, Minnesota West has been engaged in a process of self-study, addressing the Commission's requirements and criteria for accreditation. The evaluation team will visit the institution to gather evidence that the self-study is thorough and accurate. The team will recommend to the Commission a continuing status for the college; following a review process, the Commission itself will take the final action. Minnesota West

Community & Technical College has been continuously accredited by the Commission and was last reviewed in 2001. Accreditation by the HLC encompasses all facets of the College.

As part of an accreditation process that takes place every 10 years, **Dr. Karen Solomon** a Liaison for the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (HLC) visited Minnesota West Community and Technical College on December 8-9, 2010 in preparation for the upcoming accreditation review to be held in October 2011. Dr. Solomon says, "This is an exciting time for the institution for reflection since the last accreditation, and it is a great time to talk about the future. The accreditation team will be visiting the institution next fall to evaluate reports and visit with the institution and community members to assure that continued academic quality is present in the classroom and administration level."



L to R - Lori Voss, VP of Administration, Richard Shrubbs, President, Dan Roos, English faculty & Accreditation Coordinator, Jeff Williamson, Provost, Karen Solomon, HLC liaison

Canby

The annual Diesel Program Open House event held, Thursday, March 17, was the perfect setting for interested students and parents to gather information, tour the Canby Campus, and take in an impressive display of new diesel equipment. Diesel Technology students initiated the Xtravaganza in 1997 to raise funds for scholarships. Though it remains a student run event, the Xtravaganza has grown to become a community favorite and the largest annual event held on the Canby Campus.

Thanks to the generous support of our students, staff, industry and community 2011 proceeds reached over \$5,000! This money will be used for program field trips, competitions, and student scholarships. With a move into a newly remodeled building, the Diesel Technology program will gain 2,000 square feet of shop space. "We are extremely excited for the move into the new building and how it will enhance our learning environment," stated Instructor **Peter Girard**.



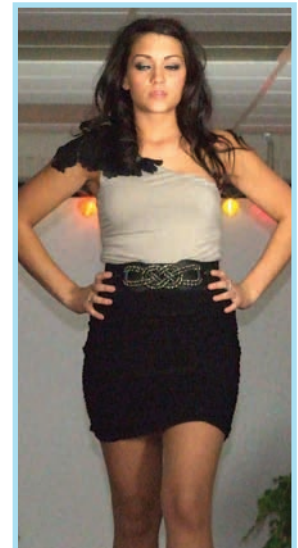
Diesel Technology - Canby Campus

Granite Falls

Second-year Minnesota West Fluid Power Technology student **Paul Kellen**, of Ortonville, MN, has completed his second-year Fluid Power project and is donating it to his alma mater, Ortonville High School. The project, which is called a "Weld Breaking Press", has a value of close to \$3,000. Paul used parts that he had donated from industry, his knowledge gained over his 3 1/2 semesters of training in Fluid Power Technology, and advice and guidance from his advisor **Jim Fischer**, to complete the project. The Weld Breaking Press is an air to oil system that powers a cylinder in an attempt to break a welded piece. The purpose is to test the strength of a weld. The system records the pressure so that the user can see what the maximum pressure a weld can withstand is. The system takes 80 PSI and gets 2500 PSI of hydraulic pressure, building over 5,000 pounds of force. Kellen is graduating from the Fluid Power Technology program in May. He is currently pursuing several different job opportunities in both Minnesota and South Dakota.

Jackson

Every year students from **The Fringe Salon** at Jackson travel across the country to learn from some of the hottest training seminars and fashion shows available in the industry. A culmination of all that training was showcased at a recent event. Students from The Fringe Salon/ Minnesota West-Jackson Campus Cosmetology program strutted their stuff on the runway Monday night, April 11th during the inaugural "Runway at the Fringe" fashion show. Nearly 300 people purchased tickets to see the latest in fashion, hair and makeup trends held at the school's main common area. At the event, students showcased three basic genres: Minimalist; Polished and Feminine. To name a few, bold bright colors, feminine florals and animal prints were included in the show. Stunning poses, lights, cameras along with a variety of musical themes from **DJ Matt Wiechmann** of Elegant Affairs, made the first annual Runway Show a night to remember.



Jenaka Montemurno

Pipestone

For years the skylight over the main entryway at the Pipestone campus of Minnesota West has been leaking despite numerous attempts to seal it. Last May, campus officials began considering a complete remodel of the entryway. The plans call for removing the skylight and replacing it with cedar trellises, and removing the windows and outer door, making the entryway an open air space. Campus Dean **Jackie Otkin** said the plans also include adding landscaping and seating in and around the entryway. "We didn't want to do away with the structure, but we had to be financially responsible," Otkin said. The entryway project is one of a number of recent facelift projects at the college. Work began during winter break in December to convert the old meat-cutting classrooms, which hadn't been used since 2006, to Instructional Television (ITV) studios and computer space. That project is expected to be complete by May. During that same time, the college remodeled its main office, and they've recently been placing furniture in nooks and crannies around the school to create added study spaces. Otkin said it's all part of an effort to give the school a more collegiate atmosphere. (Courtesy: Pipestone County Star Kyle Kuphal)

Worthington

Sam Lynn was recently named a first team All-American by the NJCAA, a first for Minnesota West since 1998. "It's one of those things, it's not what you work for during the season," Lynn said, "It's just kind of one of those extra things that happen. I think it says a lot about my teammates, too. Lynn led MW to a 24-6 record and a second-place finish in the Southern Division and at the state tournament. She was named all-division, all-state and all-region. But Lynn didn't have time to think about becoming an All-American. "We got done with regionals on Friday and softball practice started on Sunday," Lynn said.

"We're happy for her," MW head coach **Mike Fury** said. "She's certainly deserving. She's just a pretty unselfish player. You look at her stats and she's the leading scorer, but oh yeah, she's the leading assist player, too. She had three or four triple-doubles this year." She was fifth in the nation in scoring and fifth in assists. Lynn was also fourth in the country in free-throw.

"As much as it seems like an individual award, it can't be with basketball being such a team sport," she said. At Adrian High School, Lynn was a standout. She graduated holding 12 program records, including most points, rebounds, assists and steals. Lynn started in all 59 games she played at Minnesota West, while shattering records along the way and leading her team to a 40-19 record. Lynn holds the points record and is second all-time to Bluejay assistant coach **Rosalie Hayenga-Hostikka** with 331 career assists. Lynn finished with a school-record 1,147 points, breaking the record by 45. As a sophomore, she is weighing her options for next season.



Sam Lynn

Fairmont

The Fairmont Center is set to graduate 12 students at the Jackson Campus Graduation Ceremony set for May 6, 2011. Students have pursued and completed a variety of degree programs such as the Associate in Arts, Business Management, Accounting, Administrative Assistance, and Medical Administrative Secretary. Each student has completed their studies over the course of the past two years with face-to-face, ITV, and online coursework. Many of the graduates are looking for employment within their respective major areas while others will be continuing their education at various colleges and universities.

Luverne

Students and advisors from Minnesota West with the Minnesota State College Student Association, or MSCSA, spent a few days in Washington D.C. sharing federal priorities with lawmakers and interest groups and talking about the important role higher education plays in our country's future. Students met with the entire Minnesota Congressional Delegation. Attendees included **Judy Drown** (Advisor), **Grant Goerger & Aaron Schultz** from Canby, **Keith Boyson, Wade Jensen & Ryan Lubke** from Granite Falls, **Sue Reisch** (Advisor) & **Mindy Jagerson** from Luverne, and **Kile Behrends** (Advisor) from Worthington.

Redwood Falls

Minnesota West Redwood Falls reached a small milestone spring semester 2011. Enrollment of full and part-time students linked to the Redwood Center reached 50 this spring. Additionally, the center has increased the number of ITV classes offered beginning Fall 2011 to 25. Accounting, business, and medical administration courses are being scheduled in addition to the standard liberal arts offerings.

Customized Training

Matthew Loeslie, Law Enforcement Training Coordinator, received approval from the Homeland Security Equipment Reuse Program to utilize the program and receive equipment for the public safety training at no cost to the College. The first set of equipment requested and approved includes (80) 10lb fire extinguishers valued at \$96 each; (10) fire face masks \$100 each; and a Honda portable generator valued at \$3,000. Minnesota West Community and Technical College is currently the only College in Minnesota approved to receive equipment through the Homeland Security Equipment Reuse Program.



L to R - Mindy Jagerson, Sue Reisch, Kile Behrends, Judy Drown, Aaron Schultz

Student Spotlight



Sherri Karsten

Sherri Karsten – Medical Coding, Medical Secretary, AAS – Canby Campus

Sherri Karsten grew up in Tracy, Minnesota and graduated high school in 1991, but she was not ready for her next step of education. After one year of college on the Worthington Campus of Minnesota West, her educational future did not look bright. Karsten says she spent too much time having fun, and not enough time in the classroom. She moved back home and began working. After several years of working and moving around the region, Karsten received a surprise in 2006, the birth of her daughter **Ryann**. Now a single parent, Karsten decided that it was time to make a better life for herself and her daughter. She moved closer to family and began to think about going back to school again. Karsten began taking classes on the Canby Campus of Minnesota West in 2009 with her sights on multiple degrees. She plans on graduating with degrees in Medical Coding, Medical Secretary, Medical Administrative Secretary and her Associates in Science. During this time of going to school and being a single parent, Karsten has continued to work, both on campus and off of campus. She does work-study on the Canby campus as well as is the manager for the Canby movie theater. Having overcome her past educational mistakes, as well as beating thyroid cancer in 2008 after two surgeries, Karsten is looking forward to her new life with her degrees and her daughter. The one point she urges all to remember is that everyone makes mistakes, and if you learn from those mistakes you will grow and do better the next time – a point Karsten takes to heart every day in her courses.

Omission!

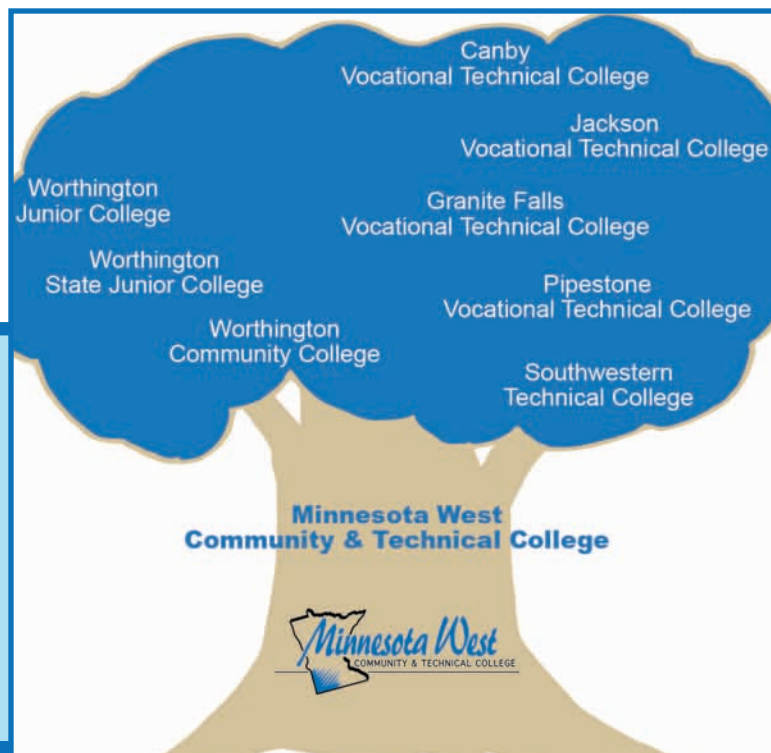
We are very sorry to the Granite Falls Bank. We left them off of our 2009-2010 Annual Report as a donor. We apologize for this oversight, and greatly appreciate the long-standing support of the Granite Falls Bank.

Did You Know...

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.

The Minnesota West “Family Tree”

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.



Alumni Profile

Cy Amundson – Worthington Class of 2003

Cy Amundson comes from a familiar Minnesota West family. Both his father and mother work at Minnesota West, as did his grandfather. His father is a graduate of Worthington Community College as are his six siblings, and Cy began coming to the Worthington Campus of Minnesota West as a senior in high school through the Post-secondary Education Option (PSEO). Because he started his college studies early, he finished his Associates degree in one and a half years, graduating from Minnesota West in the fall of 2003. From there he continued his education at the University of Minnesota and completed his Bachelor's degree in Public Park and Recreation Studies in 2006. After getting to Minneapolis, his brother-in-law tried to get Cy to try out for an open-mic night at the Acme Comedy Club, while he did not try it the first night he went, he did the next time he attended and was hooked.



Cy Amundson

Amundson says his interest in comedy began when watching television classics like “*I Love Lucy*”, “*Get Smart*” and “*Green Acres*” as a child with his father. Amundson says the instant gratification of being on stage is a great draw to being in comedy; knowing instantly if your material is funny to the crowd or not. Since graduating from college, Amundson has spent the last three years traveling the country to perform at comedy clubs and college campuses as well as being a regular at the Acme Comedy Club in Minneapolis. While traveling may be a great way to get noticed as a comic, Amundson says he would like to get into a more regular schedule of being on television or on a network so he does not need to be on the road as often. One thing Amundson says he has appreciated more since being in comedy and traveling is the great support he receives from his family and friends. He says often other comics tell stories of their families not supporting their work, but his family fully supports him. Amundson says he could not be doing what his doing without the support of his parents, siblings and extended family.

Amundson has been performing at national festivals such as the *Seattle International Comedy Competition*, the *Aspen Comedy Festival* and the *Great American Comedy Festival* in **Johnny Carson**'s hometown of Norfolk, Nebraska where he got to meet comedy great **Ed Asner**. Most recently, Amundson was the winner of CMT's “*Next Big Comic*” contest. He hopes this award will lead to other television work to highlight his skills. People can learn more about Cy or see where he is performing and watch him perform on his website at www.cycocomedy.com.

Stay Connected with Facebook Too!

Join the Minnesota West Facebook fan page to learn even more about your favorite campus...or even find a classmate!
www.facebook.com/minnesotawest

Want to Join the New Legacy Society?

The Legacy Society allows a person to make a substantially larger gift to the students and programs at Minnesota West than they could during their lifetime. Contact the foundation office at **1-800-658-2535** if you are interested in these opportunities.



Alumni Weekend

The Minnesota West Foundation hosted an Alumni Weekend in February at the Worthington Campus. The highlight of the event was a presentation to the members of the 1971 men's basketball State Championship team! Appearing at the event was: **Mike Fury, Doug Harms, Vic Heyden, Rick Kiesow, Bruce Leu, Gene Martens & Denny Voss** as well as **Coach Arlo Mogck**.

Students Attend Educational Conferences for their Programs

Child Development Students from the Granite Falls Campus recently attended the *Kids First Conference* at Jackpot Junction, Morton, Minnesota. Nearly 400 Early Childhood professionals and students gained a new understanding of what distinguishes a brain-impooverished environment from a brain-enriching environment. **Bev Bos**, author, international lecturer, and preschool teacher, provided a tremendous learning experience for the students. The Child Development program is an integral part of the year-long planning of the annual *Kids First Conference*, as well as serving as one of the event hosts. This conference is one of two major conferences each year that the Child Development students get to take part in.



Child Development students

Jackson Cosmetology Students Visit Las Vegas

Jackson Campus Cosmetology students were part of the Redken Symposium/Hair Show which offered an educational platform next to none. The symposium was held recently at the Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada. Tickets to this award winning educational event - 2011 Inspiring the Future, were expensive at \$525 per person with attendance limited. Students had to pay for all their own expenses. Instructor **Danylle Espenson** stated that there was total consensus among her students that the training experience was priceless.



Cosmetology students - Jackson Campus

Matthews to Attend Community College Summit

Dave Matthews, Minnesota West Community and Technical College math instructor was formally invited by the U.S. Department of Education to attend the Community College Regional Summit on March 23, 2011 at Ivy Tech Community College - North Meridian Center, in Indianapolis, Indiana. The summit's goals are to bring federal, labor and industry, and philanthropic partners to the region to discuss how each entity can support local community college efforts to meet the President's 2020 goal; Provide a forum to share institution-level barriers, solutions and promising practices in college completion; developmental education; industry-education partnerships; services to military service-members and veterans; transitioning adults to community colleges; and successful transfer programs to four year colleges and universities; and Provide a forum to identify local, state and national recommendations for increasing community college completion to meet the 2020 goal. The opportunity was limited to 150 participants with Matthews being identified as a participant in attending the event.



Jim Grove

Jackson Campus' Jim Grove Retires, Dennis Hampel Promoted

Campus dean **Jim Grove**, after completing nearly two decades at Minnesota West/Jackson Campus, ended his 47-year career in higher education on December 31, 2010. "I got into education because I liked working with students, and that's what has really kept me in education all these years. It is a great feeling knowing you're assisting students in achieving a goal, achieving a dream," Grove said in reflecting on his career. An open house farewell celebration was held on campus on December 14, 2010. He was recognized by Minnesota West President, **Dr. Richard Shrubbs**, along with colleagues, community and family members, and also by his students. Dr. Shrubbs also announced the appointment of **Dennis Hampel** to the position of Campus Dean for the Jackson Campus. Hampel's employment dates back to 1969 when he began as an instructor teaching in the electrician program. Since 1997 he has been serving as Dean of Career and Technical Programs in addition to his other duties. Dennis began his additional responsibilities as Campus Dean on January 3rd.

Canby Campus 45th Anniversary Celebration

The Canby Campus of Minnesota West will be celebrating its 45th year of operation in the fall of 2011. The campus has set Thursday, September 15th at 11:00am as the date for the celebration. This will be an occasion for all past students, faculty and staff to come back to visit the campus and remember people's time on the campus. More information will be available at a later time.

Worthington Campus 75th Anniversary Celebration

The Worthington Campus of Minnesota West is also celebrating an anniversary in 2011. The campus' 75th Anniversary celebration will take place the week of homecoming, September 26th to October 2nd. The community events will include an evening event on Friday September 30th, the Homecoming football game on October 1st and a community picnic on Sunday October 2nd. This will be an occasion for all past students, faculty and staff to come back to visit the campus and remember people's time on the campus. More information will be available at a later time.

Business Professionals of America (BPA) Students Shine at State Competition

The BPA students from the Jackson and Granite Falls campuses competed at the Spring BPA Leadership conference in Alexandria, MN. The following students finished in first place in their respective events (and some students had multiple first place finishes): **Deb Schwager, Micah Hooper, Sam Olson, Christopher Cain, Dee Bogan, Tam Stimpert-Schoens, Todd VanHeuveln, Michaela Busenbark & Calvin Kilby, Zach Koepke & Stan Benson.** In addition, the Jackson Campus chapter received the *Model Chapter Award* while the Granite Falls Campus finished second in that award. Finally, Schwager is the State BPA President while fellow student Hooper is the National BPA President.

Alumni Updates

1970s

Brenda (Nordmeyer) Alley – 1978, General Secretarial, Canby – Brenda is living in Porter, MN.

Chris (Hegemann) Weber – 1979, Governmental Accounting, Granite Falls – Chris is living in Rogers, MN and working as the office manager for Tarten Marketing. She is married to her husband of six years, Louie, and she has three adult children. Chris and Louie have six grandchildren with another on the way.

1980s

David Scheibel – 1981, Production Ag, Canby – David is living in Bird Island, MN with his wife, Charlene. He farms and owns Minnesota West Ag Services, Inc. which is a market consulting and crop insurance business. They have three adult sons. David is active in his community and is friends with a number of former classmates and fondly remembers skiing with **Brian Dunkelberger** at Hole in the Mountain in Lake Benton.

Mike Winter – 1985, Business, Worthington – Mike is living in Maple Grove, MN with his wife Karen and their two children. Mike has been the president of Worthington Ag Parts since 2002. Mike is a former baseball player with the Bluejays and enjoys spending time with his family when he is not traveling for work.

Scott Rosenkranz – 1987, Professional Sales, Granite Falls – Scott is living in Brookings, SD, and is a Master Sergeant in the South Dakota Army National Guard. Scott is the state ammunition manager and competitive events coordinator and a member of the state marksmanship training section after completing a tour of duty in Iraq in 2003-2004. He has two daughters and enjoys supporting the Disabled American Veterans.

Melissa (Polzine) Whiting – 1987, Secretarial Science, Worthington – Melissa is living with her husband, Kirk, in Bloomington, Minnesota. Melissa is the accounts payable administrator at BI, a world-wide performance improvement company in Edina. Melissa enjoys spending time with Kirk's four children and their grandson.

1990s

Dain Deutschman – 1997, AA, Worthington – Dain is living in Shakopee, MN and is a network engineer for World Wide Technology. Dain has been able to complete a number of industry related certifications as he moved from working in Worthington, Estherville, and Mountain Lake before coming to WWT.

Jay Adams – 1998, Robotics, Granite Falls – Jay is living in Marion, IA and is a territory manager for Braas Company. Jay and his wife, Stacey, have two children ages 3 and 1.

Jereme Ascheman – 1998, Fluid Power, Granite Falls – Jereme is living in Benson with his significant other, Jessica, and his two young children. Jereme began working for Redball in Benson before it closed and now works for the sister plant, Willmar Fabrication in Willmar. Jereme is a designer/project manager and has been able to travel around the world with his work. He and Jessica enjoy riding their Harleys around the lakes in the region.

2000s

Janelle Gawarecki – 2000, Medical Secretary, Pipestone – Janelle is living in Arco, MN with her husband, Chad, and works for the Tyler Healthcare Center and Affiliated Community Medical Centers in Marshall as a medical transcriptionist. Janelle and Chad raise a number of animals on their hobby farm and raise and race homing pigeons. Janelle has two adult children, two step-sons and two grandchildren. Janelle says she uses her skills from her education every day for her jobs.



Chris (Hegemann) Weber



Janelle Gawarecki

Shawn Weber – 2001, Fluid Power Technology, Granite Falls – Shawn is living in Cologne, MN and is the vice-president of operations for Durabotics, Inc. Shawn began working in Florida after graduation before returning to Minnesota and working for Hartfiel Automation. In 2009, Hartfiel sold Durabotics to Shawn and two partners. Shawn is engaged to his fiancée, **Ashley**.



Shawn Weber

Kandi Kirk – 2004, Computer Maintenance and Repair, Granite Falls & 2006, Graphic Communications, Canby – Kandi is living in Morristown, TN with her boyfriend **Dustin** and his two children. Kandi left Minnesota West for USD then moved to her native Tennessee and began working for Best Buy. She currently works with the Geek Squad and hopes to move to a support division soon within Best Buy.

Laura Kalfs – 2007, Agriculture, Worthington – Laura is living in Sioux Falls, SD and works as the nursery manager for Cliff Avenue Greenhouse and Garden Center in Sioux Falls. Laura has been working there since she completed her degree at SDSU in horticulture.

Rosemary Lewis – 2008, Liberal Arts, Worthington – Rosemary is living in Minneapolis, MN and will graduate from the University of Minnesota this spring with a bachelor's degree in Art History and a minor in Architecture.

Carter Brandt – 2009, Fluid Power & Robotics, Granite Falls – Carter is living in San Angelo, TX and is the owner of Carter Brandt Hydraulics in San Angelo. The company provides hydraulic service work on oil drilling rigs. Carter and his fiancée, **Brittnee**, were married in early April.

Camille Richter – 2009, Nursing, Granite Falls – Camille is living in Abilene, TX and is a registered nurse at the Abilene Regional Medical Center. She is an emergency room nurse at the hospital.

Shannon Younce – 2010, Medical Secretary & Business Management, Pipestone – Shannon is living in Phoenix, AZ and is the assistant manager at Harkins Theatres.



David Scheibel



Mike Winter & Family



Jeremy Ascheman & Family

Alumni

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

We Want Your Comments

The public is invited to submit comments regarding the college:
Public Comments on Minnesota West Community & Technical College
The Higher Learning Commission
230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500
Chicago, IL 60604

Comments must address substantive matters related to the quality of the institution or its academic programs. Written, signed comments must be received by **September 2011**. The Commission cannot guarantee the comments received after the due date will be considered. Comments should include the name, address, and telephone number of the person providing the comments. Comments will not be treated as confidential.

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