



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- December AWEstar, Gary Mendenhall
- Tutor's Corner, Sarah Burkey
- Teaching & Learning FIG

UPCOMING EVENTS

The next AWE Steering Committee, Fri. December 17th, in the Cellar, 9-10:30.

Fall Semester ends Friday, December 17th, Spring Semester starts Monday, January 10th, 2011

Academic Wellness Educators

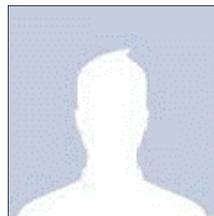
December AWEstar

Gary Mendenhall, is our AWEstar for December and the Dean of Vocational Education. Although he would not agree to being identified as an AWEstar we have decided we will honor his contribution and share that a large part of AWE's success is due to his efforts.

"The entire format of AWE is so unique and Gary is one of the reasons it has worked so well. He encourages innovation and a focus on students yet is also somehow able to keep everyone grounded and making real progress. He is a quiet, funny, consistent presence that we know we can rely on to help us implement a new service or tool for increasing student success. And have fun

doing it!" - **Kathy Schultz**

"When I worked with Gary as a faculty chairperson coordinating the first First Semester Experience, I had not been involved in leading a committee in a while. Gary mentored me through the process, removing obstacles along the way, and helping me to think not only



about how to keep track of details, but how to approach the process of inviting others into a shared stakeholder position. Gary offered me a real lesson in shared governance,

good leadership, and just plain old good teamwork—which is part of the reason why I continue to volunteer for Career Tools for Excellence." - **Meryl Soto**

"Gary was an inspiration and a mentor to me when I first came to Columbia. I have always felt safe going and talking to him even when he would say that "data" is a "four-letter word." He was able to teach me the need to balance work and life and always had an encouraging word. I will sorely miss his sense of humor and manifest caring for his staff and dedication to the mission of Columbia College. His are some big shoes to fill." - **Alex Campbell**

Tutor's Corner with Sarah Burkey

Honestly, I started college because I ran out of options. I was laid off from my job and after six months of being unemployed, my money ran out. So, four years out of high school, I finally faced my fear of failure and began working on an Office Technology certificate, hoping to qualify myself for more jobs in the future. After one semester, I realized

that learning and helping others brought me immense satisfaction, so I wandered into the Academic Achievement Center looking to give myself more experience by volunteering. I was surprised and thrilled to be offered a job instead!

I've been working with the wonderful staff at the AAC ever since the spring of 2010. I

tutor many Vocational and General Education classes, such as Office Technology, Computer Science, English, and Psychology. I have always enjoyed learning new things in the AAC and helping others to do so as well. I plan to graduate from Columbia College in the fall of 2011 with a degree in Office Technology and Language Arts. After that I will be transferring



Sarah Burkey,
AAC Tutor

*“Creativity is
contagious.
Pass it on.”*

Albert Einstein



Tywla Olsen, Kath Christensen, &
student, Taylor Skokan
participating in the
Teaching & Learning FIG.

Tutor's Corner Continued

to a CSU to continue my education.

The best advice I can offer to other students is to be **bold**. You are capable of learning only what you put the effort into. Ask questions, try new things, give every class your best shot. There are so many amazing resources and helpful faculty members on campus; take advantage of them! They want to see you succeed and if they see ambition

in you they will work hard to help you get there. These connections are truly invaluable and can benefit you for the rest of your life. As for professors – always keep that personal touch that makes this college so special. Reward ambition in your students with your much-valued advice and your viewpoints. Try to always give them the stepping stones they need as individuals that can help them rise to their

own potential. Every now and then, give them a peek into the path you took to get where you are, and show them how even the tiniest of decisions can help brighten their future.

AWEstar continued

“Thanks to Gary for hosting the ISW Retreat at Baker Station! He is deserving of AWEsome recognition! The Retreat was a great way to start the new semester, build strong connections to others on campus, and support AWE activities throughout the academic year!” - **Twyla Olsen**

“Gary has been a mentor to

all of us. He tells a lot of great stories and always makes you feel as if there is hope and solutions no matter what the challenge we face.” - **Melissa Colón**

Teaching & Learning FIG!

Kudos and thank you to all the participants in the Teaching and Learning FIG - Think Tank Teams! The morning was spent brainstorming ideas to identify and create learning and development opportunities. Teams focused on 21st Century Learning Skills as education needs are moving from the informational age to the con-

ceptual age. Many thanks to students: Taylor Skokan, Jennie Nies, and Stacey Boyce for their contributions.

The future economy paints a picture of successful employees possessing creative and critical thinking skills, effective communication and collaboration skills, as well as, the ability to make quick decisions in a fast paced,

ever-changing global society!

The Think Tank Teams identified similar topics for development during the next academic calendar and the top three identified skills are: 1) effective listening and other communication skills, 2) critical and analytical thinking 3) collaboration skills.