


Mountwest Community & Technical College CareerFocus™

Winter 2012 | Issue 9

Student Services: One-Stop

Accomplish all of your needs in one, single-stop location



**Empowering
Students through
the BEACON Project**

Let the World Be Your Classroom!

New Campus. New Challenge. New Opportunity.

JOIN US UP ON THE MOUNT



New Campus.

Truly “up on the mount,” the new Mountwest campus is a showcase for higher education and workforce development in our region. The 115,000-square foot, newly renovated campus offers more than 30 classrooms and larger lab spaces, 650 free parking spaces, common study areas, resource library, full-service cafeteria and one-stop for student services.



New Challenge.

A certificate or degree from Mountwest gives you the ability to step into a better or enhanced career right away. Joining the thousands of other students like you who have benefited from the affordable and real-world education you receive at Mountwest will allow you to face your new career head-on and overcome any challenge you face.



New Opportunity.

Your lifetime earning power and workforce readiness improve immensely with an education from Mountwest. On our new campus, we will work with more than 3,000 students and offer more than 50 programs that lead to an associate degree. Mountwest also offers a seamless transition to many four-year institutions.

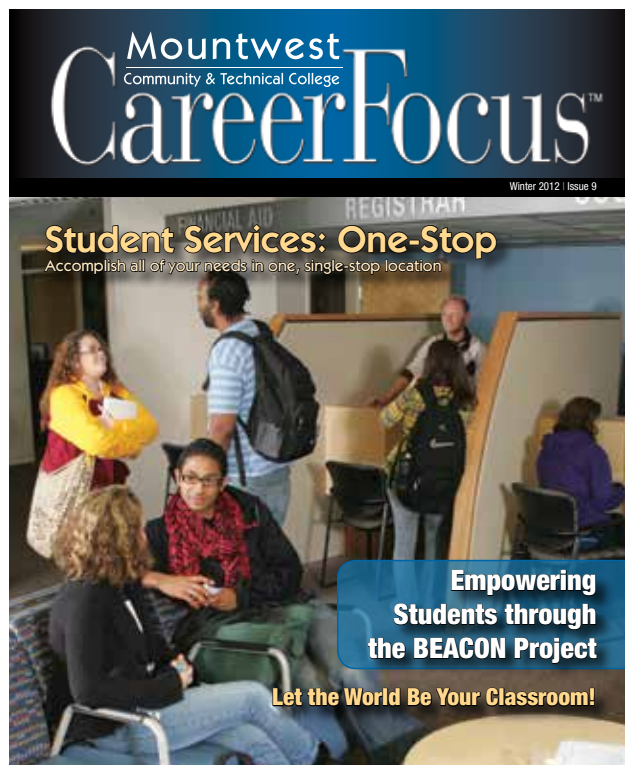


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Community & Technical College

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On the cover:
Mountwest's Student Services

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Mountwest Community & Technical College CareerFocus™

Features

- 3** Empowering Students through the BEACON Project
- 4** Student Services: One-Stop
- 6** A Career for the Future: Here Today
- 7** Pharmacy Technician: A Recipe for Success
- 8** Explore Broad Job Opportunities with a Degree in Criminal Justice
- 9** Let the World be Your Classroom, from the Deck of a Boat
- 10** Family Ties
- 11** The Value in Community College
- 16** Earn a Bachelor's Degree Without Leaving Mountwest
- 17** The Board of Governors Associate in Applied Science and the Degree Completion Agenda

In Every Issue

- 2** President's Page
- 12** Mountwest A-Z Guide



What do you think of Mountwest's new building?

"It's so much easier coming up here and not having to deal with the traffic. Plus, I don't have to run all over campus to get to class."

THOMAS ARMSTRONG, General Studies



PRESIDENT'S *Page*

“The ability to accomplish all of your needed tasks in one, single-stop location is a wonderful feature of our new campus.”

Welcome to the first issue of Career Focus originating from our wonderful new campus atop the “mount” off 5th Street in Huntington. As your President, I am extremely proud of this new campus and have greatly enjoyed welcoming students and staff members to our new home.

This issue of Career Focus showcases many of the exciting benefits of our new campus. The first of which is our new, one-stop Student Services area. We worked with consultants, students, faculty and staff to design this area to meet the needs of all. The ability to accomplish all of your needed tasks in one, single-stop location is a wonderful feature of our new campus. The entire Student Services team has worked very hard to make our one-stop as positive and efficient as possible, and they have succeeded.

As you continue to enjoy the openness, accessibility and all the benefits that our new campus has to offer, please take a minute to also reflect on the value of the education you’re receiving at Mountwest. Inside this issue of Career Focus, we discuss some of the results of a recent economic impact study. The region receives a tremendous return on investment from a Mountwest graduate and from the Mountwest operation. The dollars that are invested in the college by government and private donors are returned in a very short amount of time and many times over. Combined with the cost of attending Mountwest versus a four-year institution or a for-profit educational institution, we can boldly say that a Mountwest education is the best value in the region, bar none.

If you are a current student or staff member, I thank you for your commitment to Mountwest. If you are a prospective student, I encourage you to come to Mountwest, visit our one-stop Student Services area, and talk with a student success counselor about the benefits of a Mountwest education.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'KJC', written in a cursive style.

Dr. Keith J. Cotroneo
President, Mountwest Community & Technical College

Empowering Students through the BEACON Project

By Eric Hardin, Student Success Counselor



I am proud to be a Student Success Counselor at Mountwest Community & Technical College in the BEACON Project. The BEACON project is a new program funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to provide the maximum support needed to make first-time college students successful in completing a two-year degree and entering the workforce with the skills demanded in today's job market. Mountwest was one of a handful of community and technical colleges in the country to be awarded this grant.

The BEACON Project is a program designed to improve retention and enhance student success in earning a degree from start to finish at a two-year institution. The students who meet the criteria to be a BEACON student have three support members assigned to them. The first is a Peer Coach; a recent graduate or student near graduation of a two-year degree program and hired by the BEACON project. The second is a Faculty Advisor who is the instructor that teaches the College 101 class they are required to take, and thirdly, a Success Counselor (me). BEACON students are required to meet with their Success Counselor twice a month. These sessions are designed specifically to help identify both academic and personal obstacles, such as transportation or childcare issues, that may hinder the student's ability to be successful.

The American Counseling Association defines counseling as such; "Counseling is a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals." In short, what being a BEACON counselor means to me are those same things with the big emphasis on EMPOWERS! Being a counselor in higher education means that you aspire to, and achieve, empowering people in your community to overcome obstacles in their lives, to set and meet both academic and personal goals in order to obtain employment with higher pay and job security. In many cases this type of gainful employment cannot be achieved without a college degree.

Empowerment is the most amazing thing to witness as a client goes through the metamorphosis and is truly empowered through understanding and enlightenment throughout the counseling process. In my area of higher education, counseling is important for many reasons. Education and career goals stand out of course, but in reality, the arena of higher education is one of only a few places in our region that diverse groups from all walks of life come together in a structured atmosphere. Diversity, in the form of race, age, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, religion and many other cultural differences can be found on one campus and many times in one classroom.



I believe in education and career goals. I believe that the adult and higher education system is difficult to navigate for many students, especially in our geographic region where many are first generation college students. I am currently taking my last class before graduating with a master's degree in counseling. Having twelve years experience in higher education including, five years experience in counseling/advising students who were first generation college students and in need of developmental classes, has provided me with an arsenal of tools required to guide students through the maze of being a freshman in a complicated college system.

Jumping through the hoops can become overwhelming for even the savviest of students. I enjoy helping them navigate the process from financial aid to time management, through probation schedules to grief counseling, all happens in the area of higher education. Students have to run a gauntlet of forms and requirements from learning to navigate the online systems of accepting their aid, getting to the federal building to get tax transcripts and jumping through the hoops that this decade's economy put into place in order to cut expenses in higher education across the nation. This is the very same economy that has created the need for schools like Mountwest Community & Technical College to turn out skilled individuals in our community's workforce. With so many people out of work, the two-year programs offered by Mountwest are a way to put our people back to work with specific skills designed for specific careers that are needed in our region and across the country.

Through being a counselor in the community and technical college system, I have the ability to change people's lives and inspire and empower students and their families to set and achieve goals in all aspects of their lives, adding skilled, empowered, and motivated individuals to the community and workforce. As a counselor in the BEACON Project I am rewarded daily with knowing I have helped students overcome the same obstacles that stop many students from ever walking back into the door at other institutions of higher education. I am certain the BEACON Project has the potential to change the lives of students in our area and consider myself fortunate to be part of the project.

"Through being a counselor in the community and technical college system, I have the ability to change people's lives and inspire and empower students and their families to set and achieve goals in all aspects of their lives, adding skilled, empowered, and motivated individuals to the community and workforce."

ERIC HARDIN, *Student Success Counselor for the BEACON Project*



STUDENT SERVICES: ONE STOP

Many years of brainstorming and planning went into the creation of Mountwest Community & Technical College's new campus. In fact, Billie Brooks, Dean of Student Services, has been stashing ideas in a notebook since she attended a conference in North Carolina in 2007.

"One thing that really turns people off about a school is getting the runaround about where to go and who to see in order to register, enroll, talk to a counselor or get financial assistance," said Brooks. "At this conference I heard about the One Stop, a station set up where an existing or potential student can get everything taken care of at one time, and I knew we had to incorporate that into our campus."

New students interested in enrolling at Mountwest can begin by filling out an online application. Shortly after an application is submitted, the student will receive a phone call from a Peer Coach to set up a time for the student to take the Accuplacer, an exam all students are required to take that is used for placement in math, English and reading classes students are placed in. Peer Coaches are another new addition to Mountwest. These are currently

enrolled students or recent graduates that have displayed leadership skills and show a commitment to the College. Peer Coaches go through an application and interview process through human resources as any other Mountwest employee would. According to Brooks, the idea is that students tend to relate and respond better to other students.

"Once a Peer Coach reaches out to a student, they can meet with them and either help answer their questions or decide if they should consult with a counselor or faculty member," said Brooks. "We currently have a fabulous group of fifteen Peer Coaches that are doing a tremendous job aiding other students."

Once a student has submitted their application either online or in person at Mountwest and has taken the placement exam, which should be scheduled as each exam can take up to 45 minutes, they can meet with a counselor and establish their program of study. In the same visit, they can register for classes, meet with the registrar or financial aid and receive a tour of the building from a Peer Coach. If a student needs help filling out a FAFSA, someone from financial aid will be available to help.

At this point, a student will be assigned an email account and student ID, and the enrollment process will be complete with the exception of payment, depending upon the status of an individual's financial aid. Students can even walk across the hall to pick up their textbooks and Mountwest gear at the bookstore.

Brooks said that there have been times in previous semesters when students

What do you think of Mountwest's new building?

"I love it. I used to work here when it was DirectTV, so seeing all of the changes is amazing. It's so nice having everything so compact. Now we actually have time to eat lunch instead of having to sprint across campus to class."

STACEY DENNISON, Medical Assisting



faculty Spotlight

“There’s been so much less frustration this year among not only students, but faculty and staff too. We’re able to serve our students quicker and more thoroughly, which makes for a better experience for everyone.”



BILLIE BROOKS,
Dean of Student Services

had to wait three to four hours to enroll, but with the One Stop, this year’s longest wait time was slightly more than an hour.

“There’s been so much less frustration this year among not only students, but faculty and staff too,” said Brooks. “We’re able to serve our students quicker and more thoroughly, which makes for a better experience for everyone.”

Brooks said they’ve turned an environment that often left students asking, “Where do I even begin?” to a smoother, more personal, non-intimidating experience.

“If a student has an issue that can’t be dealt with right away by one of the front desk representatives, someone will be called to come out front, meet the student, and walk them back to their office to further discuss the matter,” said Brooks. “Above all, the One Stop has allowed Mountwest to be more helpful to its students, and that’s what’s most important.”



Kendra Bolen

Mountwest Faculty | Communications

“Speak a little louder” and “be sure to make eye contact with your audience” are phrases commonly heard by students that are taking a class in communications at Mountwest. This is especially true if the student is enrolled in one of Kendra Bolen’s classes. Kendra is an Assistant Professor of Communication at Mountwest where she teaches Oral Communication, Interpersonal Communication, and New Student Seminar courses. Kendra’s main area of emphasis in teaching is Oral Communication, better known to many as public speaking or speech.

Kendra began her journey with Mountwest in 2006 as a part-time instructor teaching College Study Skills while working full-time as a counselor at Marshall University. It was during this time that she realized her love for teaching and decided to go back to school herself. In May of 2011, Kendra received a Master of Arts Degree in Communication Studies and shortly thereafter began teaching full-time at Mountwest.

Intimidating

The reason behind her passion for public speaking is that she has found that the majority of the students that enter her class do not enjoy public speaking, and many actually dread doing it. She wants to help them see public speaking in a different, brighter light. Kendra tells her students from the first day of class that the information that you will learn in this class, will not only help you do well in this course, but it will also help you in other courses once you graduate and enter the workforce, as well as in your personal life. She explains to them that they never know where life will take them. She loves to tell the students that if someone would have told her when she was a college freshman taking public speaking that she would end up teaching it one day, that she would have told them that they were crazy. Never in a million years would she have imagined that, and now she cannot imagine it any other way. She also makes a promise to the students that by the end of the semester not only will they have improved public speaking skills, but they will have fun learning to improve them. Kendra is a firm believer that the learning process should be enjoyable, understandable, and relevant to everyday life. Kendra wants everyone to leave her class feeling as if their time was well spent and they are better off for having been there. In order to accomplish this, she uses a variety of teaching techniques, styles, and practical life examples to put students at ease, so when it is their time to get up in front of the room and speak, they feel comfortable and know that they are not alone in the process. Kendra explains from day one of the semester that a positive attitude is necessary for public speaking, because if the speaker does not have a positive attitude about speaking or the topic, then how could the audience possibly have a positive attitude. Kendra not only teaches this but practices it as well by teaching her classes and living her life with a positive attitude. Her favorite activity of the semester is having her students write their thoughts on public speaking on the first day of class; she then has them do this again on the last day of class. After they write their thoughts on the last day, she gives them back the thoughts they wrote on the first day. She says it’s amazing to see how some of the students attitudes about public speaking change throughout the semester.

Recently, Kendra has teamed up with the Workforce Development Office at Mountwest and has been doing training on how to effectively communicate at work. She enjoys teaching communication skills in an environment outside of the typical classroom. She says it is nice to go in to a workplace and see exactly how people are currently communicating and then tailor the training to meet the specific needs of the business and its employees. This not only benefits the business and its employees, but the students at Mountwest as well. Kendra takes these real life examples and shares them with students in the classroom in order to teach them how to effectively communicate in their future workplace. It’s a win-win situation, because everyone benefits from the experience.

Whether teaching in a classroom or a business conference room, one thing is for sure, she is always practicing what she teaches...positive communication.

A Career for the Future: Here Today



By Michael Maxson,
Assistant Professor, Electronics and
Biomedical Instrumentation

The invention of the transistor in 1947 paved the way for the dazzling array of electronic devices that now enhance our daily lives. Today, we are dependent on electronics for virtually everything we do. Nowhere is that dependence more important than when we are receiving medical treatment.

Hospitals are full of complex electronic machines, and like all machines, they require maintenance and repair. Unseen by most hospital patients and visitors is a dedicated crew of healthcare professionals whose job it is to keep the machines working. Who are these folks? They go by several names, but they all are biomedical instrumentation technicians. And, they are in short supply.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts a 31% increase in jobs for biomedical instrumentation technicians through the year 2020. This is much faster than the average for most other occupations. The Bureau reported there were 37,900 jobs in biomedical instrumentation technology in the United States in 2010. That number is growing every year. Greater demand for healthcare services and the use of increasingly complex medical equipment is driving the rapid growth. Those who have an associate's degree in biomedical instrumentation technology or engineering will have the best job opportunities, according to the Bureau.

Biomedical instrumentation technicians repair, calibrate, and maintain critical equipment used in the diagnosis and care of patients in hospitals, clinics, and extended care facilities. Equipment includes bedside devices that measure patients' vital signs, automatically dispense intravenous medications, or monitor patient activity. BMETs, as they are often called, also maintain surgical apparatus such as anesthesia machines, heart-lung bypass machines, robotic surgical equipment, defibrillators, specialized electrical scalpels, video and audio recording devices, and others. Experienced BMETs may work on x-ray, computed tomography (CT), and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) equipment.

All these devices and machines must be maintained to the highest degree of

reliability. With patient safety at stake, these systems must perform flawlessly, and it is up to the BMET to make sure they do. The job requires precision, attention to detail, and electronics skills that are not a usual part of medical staff training. This career is a unique fusion of medical, electrical, mechanical, and troubleshooting skills.

Most employers require an associate's degree, and they may provide special on-the-job training. Not all employers are hospitals; some are service providers that hospitals contract to maintain their equipment. Equipment manufacturers also hire BMETs to work in development, customer service, or technical sales. Like doctors and nurses, BMETs can find employment in virtually any location in the country.

Median income in 2010, as reported by the Bureau, was \$44,490. There is wide variation in salaries, however, largely due to the rapid evolution of this field. The starting salary nationally averaged \$41,000 in 2011. With a few years of experience, salary can top \$60,000. Salary, however, should not be the only reason for selecting a career in healthcare. Every successful BMET will understand their critical role in healthcare and be willing to accept its demands. Job satisfaction reported by BMET surveys is 91%, double the national average for other jobs.

Mountwest Community & Technical College is uniquely positioned to train individuals for this exciting career field. The AAS degree in Biomedical Instrumentation Technology leverages an existing base of health and human services courses with a fundamental electronics education. With new laboratories and classrooms, Mountwest offers a unified learning environment with the facilities and staff necessary for academic success.

The degree requires courses in electrical circuit analysis, analog and digital electronics, microprocessors, mathematics, medical terminology, anatomy and physiology, and specialized classes in equipment repair. Students develop a wide range of skills that place them in high demand. A special feature of the Mountwest program is a one-semester internship that provides the student with hands-on work in a hospital clinical engineering department. The internship builds on the classroom studies and gives the student a look at real life within the career.

Students of all ages and backgrounds will find this to be a rewarding career. Whether you are about to complete high school or are moving forward from a prior career, this path deserves consideration. How could you go wrong with new skills that enhance the lives of other people and provide you with solid employment far into the future?





By Melissa Ballard, Instructor,
Pharmacy Tech.

Pharmacy Technician: A Recipe for Success

Rx is commonly said to be an abbreviation for the Latin word recipe. However, Rx also derives from the astrological sign for Jupiter, which was once placed on prescriptions to invoke that god's blessing on the drug to help the patient recover. Today, pharmacy technicians use "recipes" to compound intravenous medications, creams and liquids to help their patients recover.

Pharmacy technicians are currently in very high demand, and this demand is expected to continue through at least 2018. As pharmacies expand patient care services, the role of and need for pharmacy technicians will also expand. Pharmacy technicians are highly skilled individuals who play a critical role in pharmacies. They assist pharmacists with day-to-day operations so that pharmacists can spend the time they need to provide quality counseling and care to their patients.

Pharmacy technicians who work in retail or mail-order pharmacies have varying responsibilities, depending on state rules and regulations. Technicians receive written prescriptions or requests for prescription refills from patients. They also may receive prescriptions sent electronically from the doctor's office. They must verify that the information on the prescription is complete and accurate. To prepare the prescription, technicians must retrieve, count, pour, weigh, measure, and sometimes mix the medication. Then, they prepare the prescription labels, select the type of prescription container, and affix the prescription and auxiliary labels to the container. Once the prescription is filled, technicians price and file the prescription, which must be checked by a pharmacist before it is given to a patient. Technicians may establish and maintain patient profiles, prepare insurance claim forms, and stock and take inventory of prescription and over-the-counter medications.

In hospitals, technicians have added responsibilities. They read patient charts, compound intravenous admixtures, repackage and label unit dose medications,

restock automated dispensing cabinets, deliver medications, and complete paperwork for quality assurance or billing purposes.

With the appropriate amount of training and experience, pharmacy technicians may be promoted to supervisory roles, may seek specialization (e.g. oncology, nuclear pharmacy), or may pursue further education and training to become a pharmacist. Some technicians gain specialized skills in sterile products admixture, pharmacy automation, and health information systems. An ASHP survey of pharmacy practice managers in August 2009 revealed 56 percent of organizations offer career advancement opportunities for technicians. In an ASHP survey of pharmacy technicians, 81 percent indicated they expect to perform duties of a pharmacy technician for five or more years.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, job opportunities for pharmacy technicians are expected to increase by 32 percent by 2018. This is well above the average job growth rate. The BLS also suggests that pharmacy technicians with formal education or training, previous work experience, and national certification will be specifically sought after to meet these demands. Depending on certification, a pharmacy technician salary ranges from \$27,000 to \$40,000 per year.



Explore Broad Job Opportunities with a **DEGREE IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

By Heather Hussell, Associate Professor, Legal Studies

An Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in Criminal Justice will include education in the basics of the U.S. government, the legal system, law enforcement, criminal evidence and procedures, and corrections. This type of education and training will help you be prepared to enter the criminal justice career you desire.

What kinds of careers can you have with a two-year criminal justice degree?

In part, the answer to that question will depend on the rules/regulations of the geographic area where you choose to work. Nevertheless, the options are broad and the opportunities exciting.

An associate degree in criminal justice may help you enter a career as a police officer. Police officers are employed by all levels of government—federal, state, county and city. Most urban police forces are now requiring at least some college education, and many demand an associate degree. Even when not required, earning an associate degree in criminal justice is evidence to employers as to one's commitment to the field of law enforcement.

Probation or parole officers are important criminal justice careers. Probation officers supervise offenders who are awaiting trial or serving a sentence of home confinement. Often times probation officers conduct investigations of an offender's personal history prior to their sentencing. Probation officers will also arrange for offenders to participate in therapy or rehabilitation. Parole officers, on the other hand, generally supervise offenders who have been released from prison or jail. A parole officer will generally oversee a parolee's work responsibilities and/or community service. Also, parole officers are in charge of overseeing recently-freed inmates adjust back in to society appropriately.

Within the jail/prison system, several criminal justice careers are waiting for qualified individuals. Corrections treatment specialists, or case managers, work with inmates and probation officers with the goal of rehabilitating criminals. These case managers strive to help inmates create healthy, functional lives. Additionally, corrections officers are skilled individuals who work directly with inmates to maintain order in jails and prisons. Corrections officers rely on good communication skills and specialized knowledge to maintain peace within the correctional facility.

If security is more your style, body guards, private security guards and airport security personnel all benefit from the lessons taught as part of a criminal justice curriculum.

Would you like to have a career where uncovering the truth is your profession?

An associate degree in criminal justice may be your ticket to making that dream a reality. Private investigators or detectives who work for police departments spend their time researching and investigating. This type of desk and field research requires the knowledge of a person with specialized training in the criminal justice field.

The annual salaries of criminal justice related jobs vary greatly depending on experience, location and employer. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that as of May 2006, the medial annual salary for deputy sheriffs was \$47,460. The median annual salary for investigators in the same year was \$33,750.

An associate degree in criminal justice can open doors to more challenging, higher paying jobs. Again, one should take care to investigate the specific requirements for their jurisdiction. Regardless of where you are, there are many exciting criminal justice careers available in today's job market for those with an associate degree.



CRIME SCENE DO NOT CROSS

LET THE WORLD BE YOUR CLASSROOM

From the Deck of a Boat



By Captain John Whiteley,
Director of Workforce Development

As the first rays of the sun begin to break through the autumn leaves on the bank and the morning mist begins to rise, you stand out on deck with a cup of coffee in your hand, enjoying the sunrise and preparing to begin your work day.

Or you are standing out on deck as midnight approaches, drinking a cup of coffee or a cup of tea, watching the brilliant stars swirling overhead. You have finished your second shift of the day, and you are getting ready for your relief to come on deck. Then, you will turn in to a comfortable room and let the rumble of the engines lull you to sleep.

Ahh, the life of a deckhand! Yes, the work is hard, sometimes very hard. You work outdoors in all conditions. But you are doing important work, and it's work you can be proud of. You are moving cargo along our Nation's arteries, the rivers that comprise the Inland Waterways. It's a vital part of our national economy, and you can be part of it as a deckhand.

What is a deckhand's life like?

The typical towboat on the rivers has a crew of eight, and they are very much like a family. The captain and the pilot share command duties, and there are four deckhands, one engineer, and a cook on most boats. Companies realize that a well-fed boat is a happy boat, and they make sure to provision the boats accordingly. The accommodations are nice. On the newer boats, every crew member gets his or her own private room, and they share a bath. The newer boats have Internet access, wide screen televisions in every room, and there are lounges and exercise rooms available for crew members who are off watch.

The boat's routine is split into four six-hour watches. You, as a deckhand, will take two of those watches. Let's say you are on the front watch. That means you will work from 6:00 in the morning to noon and again from 6:00 in the evening until midnight. At 6:00 a.m., if the boat is underway, you will go out on deck and check the bilges of the barges to make sure they are not taking on any water. You will do this a few times during the watch. Then, you will perform maintenance duties around the boat until your watch ends. In the evening, you will continue to check the barges during your watch, but you will probably not do too much outside

Deckhand wages can be as much as \$35,000 per year, and you earn that, usually, in only six months of work.

maintenance since it's too dark to work. You will do some light housekeeping inside the boat, and then, just be available if the captain needs you until your watch ends at midnight. If the boat is at a landing, however, your routine will change. All the barges in a tow (typically 15) have to be wired snugly together, and that is your job. The senior deckhand will lay the wires, but your job will be to tighten them. You will be swinging a ratchet until your arms ache, getting everything tight.

What is the pay like on the boats?

You are very well compensated for your labor and your extended absence from home. Deckhand wages can be as much as \$35,000 per year, and you earn that, usually, in only six months of work. Most companies have a day-for-day system, where you work for 28 days, and then, are on vacation for 28 days. While you are on vacation you can do anything you desire. Your time is all your own. Also, while you are on the boat, your room and board are provided by the company.



The Inland Waterways Academy can help you get the skills and prepare for the certifications you need to enter the 21st century workforce.

Family Ties



Shown left to right:
Rhonda, Kim, and Kris Patrick

Spend a few moments with the Patrick family, and you'll find two things to be quite evident – their love for each other and their love for Mountwest Community and Technical College.

It all started in the winter of 2011 when Kim Patrick reached her breaking point after losing two jobs and her home in less than three years. The day she lost her second job, she called her best friend, a Mountwest student, who encouraged Kim to apply to Mountwest for a fresh start. Kim heeded her friend's advice, drove to Mountwest and applied that day.

"I wish I'd done it right the first time in the 1980s when I was attending WVU, but I didn't," Kim said. "I'm grateful for this new opportunity, and I love it here. I love my instructors, and I believe in the education I'm getting."

Kim admits that when she enrolled at Mountwest she was planning to transfer. "I thought I'd get my feet wet and transfer to nursing school," she said. But she went from getting her feet wet to diving in head first. Kim is now a representative for the Board of Governor's, Student Body President, and a Peer Coach. In fact, her life was impacted so much that when her sister, Rhonda, came upon a difficult time in her life, Kim immediately suggested enrolling in Mountwest.

After coming down with a serious illness, ending a marriage of twenty years and closing their family-owned business, Rhonda, a mother of two – one in high school and one in graduate school, said she didn't know what to do. "I had no desire to go back to school, but after being sick, you have this drive to live life to the fullest," Rhonda said. "Kim was having so much fun that I decided to go for it."

Rhonda and Kim admit that their first day back to class was scary, and they even felt a little embarrassed to be coming back to school, often having a class with one of their kids' friends.

It turns out that Mountwest was just the medicine Kim and Rhonda needed. "After owning my own business for more than twenty years, I couldn't imagine spending my evenings doing homework," said Rhonda. "But I actually look forward to it now. It's so nice to be part of something where everyone cares. Getting an education at Mountwest is a very personal experience; people go out of their way to help you."

About the same time that Rhonda enrolled at Mountwest, Kim's son, Kris, decided to give Mountwest a try after taking a year off after high school. Kris has dreams of attending West Virginia University or Ohio University to study journalism or teaching, but Mountwest has helped him get back into the routine of going to school.

When asked if she had any advice for someone thinking of returning to school, Kim simply said, "Just do it. Don't think twice about it, because you'll talk yourself out of it. You'll think of every reason not to – your age, your kids or your work, but you won't regret it if you just go for it."

Rhonda expands by saying she could have returned to Marshall University to finish the degree she started 24 years ago, but she wanted to attend Mountwest. "I love the atmosphere," she said. "Instructors go out of their way to help you; you're not just a number."

The Patrick family all agree that it's nice having each other around. Kim and Rhonda have class together and admit they have a friendly competition going on test days. Kris enjoys having his mom around and jokes that he benefits by getting free lunches. The Patricks explain that their entire family is very close and that sharing their educational journey at Mountwest is just another way for them to draw closer. In fact, Kim and Rhonda are now trying to recruit their sister and mom to join the journey.

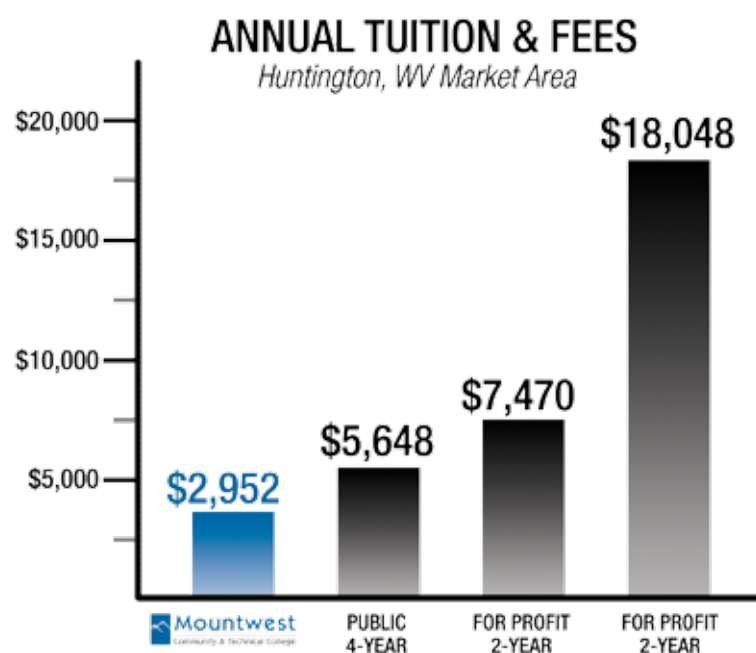
THE VALUE IN COMMUNITY COLLEGE:

Earning a degree without sinking below a mountain of debt

The rising cost of college and the amount of debt students take on to finance higher education have recently been called matters of national importance by elected officials and U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan.

While all colleges and universities should continue to address the perennial concerns regarding cost and student debt, the fact remains that community colleges represent the best value in higher education — providing affordable educational programs leading to life-changing opportunities.

In our region, the average cost of attendance for the various options for higher education varies greatly. Tuition and fees at Mountwest, for one year, are significantly less than any other institution in our area.



*Internet based research on publicly available websites of higher education institutions in Huntington, WV market (June, 2012)

Many of our students have begun to take advantage of our two plus two partnerships with various institutions in our region such as West Virginia University, Ohio University and others. This allows them to begin their college career at Mountwest and transfer their credits to a four-year institution to achieve their bachelor's degree. This education track is the least expensive avenue to achieving a bachelor's degree in our market.

Not surprisingly, more students are choosing to begin their college journey at a community college, and these students are coming from all types of backgrounds with all types of educational goals.

For example, student loan provider Sallie Mae found that 22 percent of students coming from households with a combined income of \$100,000 or more attended community colleges in 2010-2011. Starting at a community college and transferring to a four-year institution after earning an associate degree saves students and their families thousands of dollars and results in the same educational outcome — a marketable degree. Also, many two-year associate degrees and one-year or less certificates lead directly to rewarding jobs and careers.

A community college education remains the most accessible pathway to economic stability available to many residents in our region. Community college graduates earn an average of \$435,000 more over the course of their working lifetimes than do those with only a high school diploma — earning power that stays with the citizens we serve whether our colleges are experiencing declining or growing enrollments.

Recently, Mountwest completed an economic impact study that gives a tremendously positive snapshot of the achievements of a Mountwest graduate. Just a sampling of the results of the study include:

- Higher earnings of Mountwest students and associated increases in state income expand the tax base in West Virginia by about \$7.1 million each year.
- West Virginia will see avoided social costs amounting to \$333,900 per year due to Mountwest students, including savings associated with improved health, reduced crime, and reduced welfare and unemployment.
- The average annual added income due to the activities of Mountwest and its former students equals \$31.3 million. This is approximately equal to 0.5% of the total Mountwest Service Area economy.

Depending on the level of education you seek, incurring some student loan debt may be unavoidable. However, numerous grants, scholarships and federal work-study positions are available to help cover the costs of college. You can find out more about financial aid opportunities at www.mctc.edu. The earlier you complete this step, the more likely you are to maximize your financial aid.

Community colleges also offer significant scholarship opportunities. The Mountwest Foundation is growing day by day and beginning to be able to offer many scholarships to new and returning students each year. These scholarships, generously supported by community donors, provide students with a range of financial support.

Community colleges represent an incredible value for students without sinking below a mountain of debt. With small class sizes, convenient scheduling options and incredibly passionate faculty, community colleges are the smart choice for your higher education.



moving forward >>> toward your goals

Mountwest Community & Technical College has classes and degree programs to move you toward your new goals. Choose part-time or full-time, day or evening classes. Start small with a certificate or jump right into an associate degree and transfer to a four-year institution.

Mountwest’s small classes, comprehensive services and caring teachers are here to help you learn – and change. Not sure what’s next? Take a look at this A-Z listing of Mountwest programs. You never know, something unexpected might catch your eye. And change your life.



Mountwest A-Z Listing of programs offered by Mountwest – Call 1.800.676.5533 for more information, or visit www.mctc.edu.

Area of Study	Degree	Prepares You For	Salary
Accounting	AAS, Certificate	entry level accounting, auditing clerk, bookkeeper	\$22,330 – \$30,350
Administrative Assistant, Executive	AAS	business offices, problem solving, computer software	\$31,600 – \$41,570
Administrative Assistant, Legal	AAS	legal offices, problem solving, computer software	\$36,990 – \$66,720
Administrative Assistant, Medical	AAS	medical offices, problem solving, computer software	\$26,630 – \$37,110
Agricultural Science	AAS, Certificate	agricultural work, inspecting, animal breeding, equipment operating	\$16,530 – \$38,188
Air Conditioning/Refrigeration	AAS	heating, air conditioning, refrigeration mechanics	\$34,819 – \$42,702
American Sign Language, Deaf Studies	AAS, Certificate	interpreter training program, effective communication with deaf persons, translator	\$20,550 – \$64,292
Animation and Game Developer	AAS	design software, programming, modeling and animation, designing and developing games	\$31,500 – \$43,500
Automotive Technology	AAS	automotive service technicians	\$29,910 – \$39,665
Aviation Technology	AAS	aircraft pilots and flight engineers	\$25,380 – \$114,400
Banking and Finance	AAS	bank and finance terminology, computer software for financial institutions	\$23,316 – \$64,521
Biomedical/Instrumentation Technology	AAS	maintaining, troubleshooting, and repairing medical equipment	\$27,680 – \$45,750
Bioscience Technician	AAS	basic research, development, and testing	\$20,800 – \$31,200
Board of Governors	AAS	adult learners to meet occupational goals	N/A
Building and Occupational Trades	AAS	construction management and contracting	\$53,430 – \$92,350
Business Administration	AAS	business management, sales, project planning	\$31,880 – \$58,630

Area of Study	Degree	Prepares You For	Salary
Call Center Supervisor	AAS	entry level positions that lead to supervisory and management positions	\$38,118 – \$66,764
Certified Coding Specialist	Certificate	becoming familiar with coding systems, medical terminology and medical background of anatomy and diseases; prepares student for National American Health Information Association exam	\$20,650 – \$32,990
Child Development Specialist	AAS	assisting those already in child development field to obtain credentials and degree	\$15,267 – \$20,092
Clinical Assistant	AAS, Certificate	multi-faceted role within a clinical laboratory	\$21,840 – \$31,200
Culinary Arts	AAS, Certificate	a variety of culinary establishments as a sous chef, garde manager, kitchen supervisor, and restaurant manager	\$29,097 – \$106,930
Dental Assistant	AAS	preparing patients for treatments, assisting dentist with procedures, taking x-rays, developing film, and preparing administrative office duties	\$24,835 – \$36,275
Dental Laboratory Technology	AAS, Certificate	making and repairing dental appliances such as dentures, crowns, and braces	\$24,254 – \$40,997
Early Childhood Education	AAS	childcare work, child daycare services, and preschool employment	\$16,765 – \$20,821
Electronics Technology	AAS	installation technician, electronics technician, electronic sales, biomedical technician	\$27,680 – \$45,750
Firefighter	AAS	firefighter, firefighter supervision	\$20,197 – \$60,757
General Building Construction	AAS	general building construction	\$30,000 – \$43,000
General Studies	AA	transferring to a four-year institution	N/A
Geospatial Studies	AAS	technical skills with image and image-processing software products, working in business, communications, defense, education, engineering, government, health and human services, natural resources, transportation, and utilities industries	\$28,610 – \$46,080
Graphic Design/Graphic Communication	AAS, Certificate	graphic design work for print shops, computer design firms, publishers, and advertising agencies	\$30,600 – \$53,310
Health Information Technology	AAS	technical knowledge and skills necessary to handle medical, administrative, ethical, legal accreditation, and regulatory requirements of the health care delivery system	\$20,650 – \$32,990
Health Science	AAS	allows those with allied health experience to pursue a degree in their field	\$21,970 – \$49,010
Hotel/Lodging Management	AAS	hotel and resort management, tourism and travel services, and recreation services industry	\$28,640 – \$51,030
Industrial Management	AAS	position of supervisory leadership such as assembly supervisor, machine shop supervisor, operations supervisor	\$28,282 – \$71,010
Interior Design	AAS	employment with architectural firms, interior design firms, kitchen design firms, department stores, and furniture stores	\$30,890 – \$53,790

moving forward >>>
toward your goals

Area of Study	Degree	Prepares You For	Salary
Law Enforcement Specialty	AAS	deputy sheriff and city police positions	\$34,410 – \$56,360
Machinist Technology	AAS, Certificate	rigorous demands of the manufacturing sector, manual machinist, CNC machinist, industrial sales, auto plant worker, machinist shop, and fabricator	\$23,067 – \$35,484
Manufacturing Engineering Technology	AAS	reading and creating blueprints, generating CNC programs, and assisting or leading a design team	\$35,000 – \$47,000
Maritime Training	AAS, Certificate	rigging barges, maintaining barges once underway, and performing routine maintenance on towboats and barges	\$25,000 – \$90,000
Massage Therapy	AAS	employment in doctors' offices, chiropractors' offices, hospitals, physical therapy offices, medical clinics, and massage therapy practices	\$20,342 – \$49,545
Medical Assistant	AAS	administrative duties and clinical duties in physicians' offices, clinics, and hospitals	\$21,970 – \$36,210
Medical Transcription	AAS, Certificate	administrative and transcription office tasks	\$25,313 – \$35,484
Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer	Certificate	analyzing business requirements, designing and implementing the infrastructure for business solutions, based on the Microsoft Windows platform and Microsoft Enterprise Server software	\$43,828 – \$81,494
Mine Inspection	AAS	mine safety inspection	\$32,593 – \$47,652
Network Systems Administration	AAS	network administrator, network engineer, systems support technician, network designer, and network security systems designer positions	\$43,828 – \$81,494
Network Systems Development	AAS	network administrator, network engineer, systems support technician, network designer, network security systems designer	\$43,800 – \$81,400
Network Systems Security	AAS	network administrator, web designer, systems support technician, network designer, security solutions designer, help desk technician, hardware technician, software technician, and software applications	\$43,800 – \$81,400
Painting and Allied Trades	AAS	earning a degree and credentials for individuals already working in the field	\$24,100 – \$39,600
Paramedic Science	AAS, Certificate	providing emergency medical treatment and stabilization, rescuing of persons entrapped in life-threatening situations, transporting critical patients, supporting and assisting law enforcement agencies, and public education and training	\$21,290 – \$35,210
Paralegal Studies	AAS	interviewing, case investigation, preparation of pleadings, and legal research	\$34,910 – \$59,370
Pharmacy Technician	AAS	routine tasks to help prepare prescribed medication, counting tablets, labeling bottles, administrative duties, stocking shelves, and operating cash registers	\$21,970 – \$41,800
Physical Therapist Assistant	AAS	home health care, rehabilitation hospitals, nursing homes, acute care hospitals, skilled nursing skills, outpatient departments, private practice offices, and school systems positions	\$33,840 – \$49,100

E-ZStart

E-ZStart begins the week of January 28, 2013. For more information, please return the attached card or contact Veella Grooms at (304) 710-3386 or grooms@mctc.edu.



Area of Study	Degree	Prepares You For	Salary
Police Science	AAS	West Virginia State Police, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and federal marshal positions	\$28,100 – \$56,000
Program Developer	AAS	network administrator, web designer, systems support technician, and network designer positions	\$43,800 – \$81,400
Public Library Technology	AAS, Certificate	employment as a library assistant, library technician	\$20,200 – \$34,200
Public Safety	AAS	law enforcement or security work	\$34,410 – \$56,360
Radiologic Therapy	AAS	employment in hospitals, clinics, commercial radiological laboratories, physicians' offices, mobile radiological services	\$36,100 – \$52,400
Respiratory Therapy	AAS	employment in nursing homes, nursing units, outpatient centers, rehabilitation hospitals, acute care hospitals, home health, and physician's offices	\$37,650 – \$50,800
Surgical Technology	AAS	working in hospitals, physicians' offices, dentist offices, outpatient care centers, and ambulatory surgical centers	\$31,400 – \$45,250
Web Development	AAS	network administration, web designer, systems support technician, network designer, security solutions designer, help desk technician, and hardware technician positions	\$43,800 – \$81,400
Welding	AAS	building equipment contractor, school maintenance, repair shop, self-employment, manufacturing industry, construction industry, and utilities industry positions	\$30,326 – \$47,754



what's
your goal?

Earn a Bachelor's Degree Without Leaving Mountwest

Have you completed your associate degree from Mountwest or are on your way to reaching that goal and wondering what's next? Now you can continue your education without having to pack up and move to a university campus by earning a bachelor's degree at Mountwest.

Thanks to a partnership between Mountwest and Ohio University, an associate degree is just the beginning for many students. The collaborative program recognizes credit for the classes taken while earning an associate degree, giving you a solid foundation toward a baccalaureate degree.

"At Mountwest we want to provide a full-spectrum educational opportunity for students, and our partnership with Ohio University helps us do that," said Mountwest President Keith Cotroneo.

Flexibility is the key! Students can take some courses at the Mountwest campus, paying Mountwest's tuition rate, and others from Ohio University Southern across the river at the Proctorville Center or the Ironton campus. On-campus tuition at Proctorville and Southern is just \$222 per semester credit hour (\$225 for non-Ohio residents), and online tuition is only \$240 per credit hour (\$243 for non-Ohio residents). Students can even take classes from both Mountwest and Ohio at the same time.



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"Degree requirements work out so that students can finish about half of their bachelor's degree courses at Mountwest and the rest from Ohio University," said Stephanie Burcham, Ohio University's Community College Partnership Director for Mountwest and Director of Ohio's Proctorville Center.

The program currently includes three degree programs: the bachelor of technical and applied studies, for those who earned an associate degree in any applied or technical area, the bachelor of applied management, for those who earned any associate degree, and the bachelor of criminal justice, for those who earned an associate in a law enforcement area. A minor in communication may also be earned in conjunction with any of the bachelor's degrees. The partnership hopes to add additional bachelor's programs in the next two years.

Of course, the traditional transfer process is available for students who earn A.A. and A.S. degrees. If a student desires to transfer to a campus, Ohio University has six from which to choose, Athens—the main residential campus, and five regional commuter campuses: Chillicothe, Eastern (St. Clairsville), Lancaster/Pickerington, Southern (Ironton)/Proctorville Center, or Zanesville.

To learn more, contact Stephanie Burcham during a campus visit, by phone at 740.547.3794 or via email at Mountwest@ohio.edu or visit www.ohio.edu/mountwest.

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The Board of Governors Associate in Applied Science and the Degree Completion Agenda

Have you ever been told, “I would recommend you for advancement, but you don’t have a degree?” That’s what I was told while serving in the Army and countered with, “but I have three years of college and a lot of experience.” The immediate response was, “You may have taken a lot of courses, but you didn’t complete anything!” This was and still is a valid argument to individuals who have taken or earned college credit, but have yet to earn a degree.

Fortunately, Mountwest Community & Technical College has the Board of Governors Associate in Applied Science (BOG) degree. The BOG is perfect for those individuals needing to quickly earn a degree to remain competitive for promotion or career advancement. This program maximizes previously taken college coursework (to include transfer courses), nationally recognized challenge exams, industry and military training, and portfolio credit to fulfill degree requirements.

This degree is unique in that it requires 21 credit hours of general education coursework and an additional 39 credit hours of non-specified elective coursework. Elective courses are selected by the student to help them in their future employment and/or educational goals. The 21 hours of general education courses ensure that our graduates have the knowledge and skills that employers have identified as important for today’s workforce: effective communications, critical thinking, basic computer software knowledge, and working well with others.

The Board of Governors Associate in Applied Science meets the needs of many adult learners. Fred A. Kuhn, one of our first BOG graduates, currently employed at ALCON as a Process Engineer stated:

“I was in a position where I needed my degree for advancement and the BOG program seemed to have been custom tailored for me. Having served in the Marine Corps, I received college credit for portions of my training, and I was also able to transfer previous college courses I’d taken. Being an adult student returning, the most crucial thing seemed to be my time. This program allowed me to receive my degree very quickly, minimizing the impact to my family life. While I am currently continuing my education, this degree allowed me to attain my current position and use it as a foundation to build upon.”



Beyond completing a degree, why should one consider starting or returning to college?

1. Recently you may have read or heard about the College Completion Agenda. It has come to the forefront because research indicates that the United States is soon to face a national education crisis: an upcoming shortage of trained/educated individuals to maintain our current levels of productivity. According to a recent Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) report there is currently a 3-6 percent annual shortfall of post-high school trained employees. This shortfall is occurring as demand for individuals with 1-2 years of college is increasing. If this trend continues, by 2018 our nation will face a workforce shortage of 3 million trained employees.
2. Research on degree completion and salaries indicate that every time an individual earns a college degree their personal income increases. Of course the earlier one earns a degree the better that person’s lifetime income. Additionally, more recent research indicates a positive correlation between educational attainment and an individual’s long-term health.
3. If you have a family, the chances of your children completing college improve with a good parental role model. SREB reported that on a national average the four year graduation rates of colleges rarely exceed 35%. There is no better time than the present to change your children’s future by demonstrating the value of a degree.
4. If your employer desires that their employees have a bachelor’s degree, the BOG is an excellent intermediate step (providing faster, positive results and recognition), and of course after graduation you can transfer to any of our College’s partners to seamlessly earn a bachelor’s degree. Once earned the BOG credential can be listed on a resume and used for seeking jobs or promotion.
5. With one of the nation’s highest per capita rate of military service, West Virginians are known for being patriotic. Often forgotten by our veterans is that they have earned college credits for both their military training and experiences. Those credits will apply towards earning the BOG degree. There is no charge for our college to review military transcripts, apply those credits towards the degree and develop an individualized educational program.
6. Local employers provide their employees highly specialized training. This training is frequently company specific, but requires a high level of subject matter mastery. Mountwest is working with local employers to determine if workplace training is of sufficient depth and rigor to become eligible for the awarding of college credit through the Workforce Development Institute. There are a significant number of courses taught by companies that meet the criteria for college credit.
7. Mountwest is a publically supported institution and strives to contain the cost of college courses. Our online course costs are extremely affordable at \$127 per credit hour. For on-campus students driving to take a class, we offer free parking, so there is no hassle in finding a spot and getting to class.



By Steve Brown, Dean of Business, Technology, and Workforce Development

Start Here



Finish Here



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College Partners Program

ohio.edu/mountwest

If your dream includes earning a bachelor's degree, Mountwest Community & Technical College can help you realize that goal through a partnership with Ohio University. The college partners program recognizes credit for classes you take while earning your associate degree, giving you a solid foundation toward your baccalaureate degree. The partnership also provides an opportunity to continue taking some classes at Mountwest and others from Ohio University across the river at their Proctorville, Ohio campus, Southern Campus in Ironton, Ohio or online.

Learn More:
mountwest@ohio.edu
740.547.3794

