G.O.A.L. Program Fall 2009 Open House held on August 12th

More than fifty adult and returning students joined MC staff and faculty for the first G.O.A.L.-sponsored Adult Student Open House. The Open House was designed to give new students an idea of what kinds of resources are available to them at Montgomery College, as well as to give students the opportunity to attend breakout sessions on topics including Time Management and Study Skills (led by Student Services Specialist Gillian Reid-Nelson), Financial Aid (led by Director of Student Financial Aid, Dorothy Elford), Distance Learning (led by Counseling Chair Anthony Solano) or Career Planning (led by Professor Tamesha Robinson). In addition, representatives were available from Counseling and Advising, the Assessment Center, Student Life, the Library, Student Support Services, and Financial Aid to discuss the services they provide and to answer student questions. To end the program, one former and three current MC adult students hosted a panel discussion to speak with students and answer questions about their own experiences at MC. If you were unable to attend the Open House but would like to learn more about the information provided, please email goal@montgomerycollege.edu.

Welcome Back Reception

SEPTEMBER 10th * 4:30 – 6:00 PM

Stop by the new Adult Student Lounge for our Welcome Back Reception. Come by before or after class for refreshments, a chance to meet other G.O.A.L. students. We hope you’ll enjoy the new space designed specifically for the MC-G adult students, and make plans to join us throughout the semester for study sessions, coffee breaks, networking events and other campus happenings!

Upcoming Events at MC

- **September 7** – Labor Day. College Closed.
- **September 10** – Welcome Back Reception for Adult Students. 4:30 – 6:00 PM. G.O.A.L. Office, SA 159.
- **September 14-18** – Welcome Week, Office of Student Life
- **September 24** – Blood Drive by INOVA. 8:00 AM – 2:00 PM. HT Building.
- **September 30** – Renaissance Scholars Information Session. 5:30 – 6:30 PM. HT 216.

G.O.A.L. September Study Dates

SA 159

4:30 – 7:00 PM

Friday, 9/18 and Thursday, 9/24

Grab your books, notes and a study buddy and come to the G.O.A.L. Adult Student Lounge (SA 159) for some quiet study time, a cup of coffee and light refreshments. Use this time to read, finish homework or meet with classmates for group projects.

Check the G.O.A.L. calendar for all Fall semester study dates.
Hello, Patricia! Tell us a little about yourself...

My name is Patricia Osei Matey. I am originally from Ghana in West Africa. I am employed full-time as an Administrative Assistant, supporting high level executives at a business consulting corporation in Gaithersburg, MD. I am also married with two children: Maureen (9) and Samuel (3). In spite of my busy schedule, I strive to juggle my hectic parental duties and remain focused on my ultimate goal of earning my General Studies and Clinical Nursing degrees at MC.

What activities are you involved in outside of school and work?

My family, friends and my Christian faith are my biggest solace and support. At Miracle Temple Assembly of God, I provide ushering and sanitary services in the sanctuary, and then I finally take the Word with me. I also give back to my community by making various donations to institutions, such as the Fraternal Order of Police and the Women’s e-news. I also volunteer my time to support the PTA of Fox Chapel Elementary School, I advocate for innovations for Plum Gar Recreational Center and I have played a role in the Science Bowl quiz competition at Montgomery College. With my qualification as a CNA/GNA, I also plan to volunteer in the adult community by providing care to seniors.

What is the biggest challenge for you as an adult student?

The impact of my overall responsibilities and the level of my physical and psychological stress is the biggest challenge. Definitely, age is a core factor as I move along. I am more than 40 years old and my physical energy to sustain the weight of my load diminishes at a certain point. But the tip of the iceberg is my ultimate objective of reaping the abundance of benefits from the present struggle in achieving success for me and others. That is what keeps me going.

What are your plans after MC Graduation?

I have always seen the sky as the ultimate limit. As my next phase, I have recently been accepted to the University of Baltimore, and aim to pursue my Bachelor’s degree in Health Systems Management. That is my next phase.

What is your advice for other adult learners?

To my peers, colleagues and fellow students, my biggest advice is to entreat you to abstain from negative thoughts and not be discouraged. It is never too late to learn. As a foreign student, I had a zero credits when I decided to start school at MC – an un-regrettable decision, I pride myself with having earned more than 60 credits and I am scheduled to graduate in Fall 2009 with my first degree in General Studies. The biggest picture is to aim and strive for the best. Please do note rule out the excellent accommodation and wide range of great resources that the MC faculty has put in place to curb some of the difficulties surrounding the progress of the adult students’ education. As President Obama once stated, “The path may be steep...” but do not fail to forge ahead.
...That Having the Right Information Can Save You Hundreds on Textbook Costs?

Tip #1: Buy Online. Many websites offer new and used textbooks at a portion of the price of the textbook manufacturer. Online book shopping offers students the opportunity to sell their books at a higher rate than the campus bookstore offers, and allows them to buy books at a lower cost as well. One website, www.directtextbook.com, allows students to type in the ISBN number (or title, author, etc) of a certain book, and will give prices (including shipping) for 30 or more online sites like these*:

- Half.com
- Alibris.com
- Abebooks.com
- StudentStore.com
- Biblio.com
- Valorebooks.com
- TextbooksRUs.com
- Amazon.com
- eCampus.com

Using these sites, we were able to find a $60 book for $40.37, a $38 book for $23.75, a $47 book for $15.25 and a $33 book for $19.50. That equals a savings of $79.13 – even when you include shipping, you’ve still found a great deal!

The downside: You have to wait for the books to be shipped, so you have to order early. And all smart-shopper rules apply – buying online can always be risky if you aren’t careful.

Tip #2: Rent Your Books. Websites like Chegg.com and BookRenter.com allow you to rent books at a discounted rate (the $38 book, above, was listed at $19.57 on Chegg). And because 20 million trees are destroyed annually for book production, Chegg will plant a tree for every book you buy, rent, sell or donate – that’s a great incentive!

The downside: You pay less for the books, but you still have to return them, which means no financial recovery when you’re finished with the book.

Tip #3: Check Your Local Library. Sometimes faculty will put a copy of your textbook on reserve in your campus library, which can be helpful if it is a text you will use on a limited basis, or if you only need it for a week or so while you wait for books ordered online to come in. The local public library may also have the books, particularly if they are not actual textbooks, but literature or other materials.

The downside: Limited availability and accessibility. If another student in your class finds the library books first, you may have limited access to them during the semester.

Tip #4: Talk to Your Professors. Because new editions of some textbooks are printed nearly every year, students can end up being forced to buy new even though relatively little information has been changed. Check with your professors to see if it is possible to use a textbook that is one edition older. This alone can sometimes equal a savings of over $100.

The downside: If the new information in the book is critical or a lot has changed since the last edition, faculty may prefer that you purchase the new book. Also, an older edition may have pictures, chapters or figures on different pages, so following the syllabus for reading assignments might become more difficult.

Tip #5: Understand Your (New) Tax Benefits. The former Hope Credit, which provided $1800 in partially-refundable tax credit for tuition expenses, has been revised by the Obama administration. Now called the American Opportunity Credit, the maximum credit amount has risen to $2500, students can factor in cost of books/materials and the credit can be claimed for four years instead of two. Find more information on the IRS website:


*Montgomery College does not endorse any website listed above. This list is for informational purposes only.