Professional Skills Center helps students upgrade certifications

By John S. Adams

Perhaps you’ve never heard of the Professional Skills Center. Operating right here at Syracuse North, it offers certifications in medical coding, phlebotomy, and electrocardiogram, or EKG and is run as a separate entity, according to PSC Healthcare Coordinator Lauren Kisselstein. It also offers pre-licensing courses for obtaining one’s state insurance license, all of which are separate from the regular college degree programs.

One PSC course takes place Monday evenings, when students practice sticking each other with needles as they prepare to earn certifications in phlebotomy. To receive their Certified Phlebotomy Technician (CPT) credential, they must do five butterfly blood draws, 20 “straights” (with a straight needle) and 10 capillary or finger sticks, as well as an internship of 40 to 120 hours.

I am the school mom; I don’t know how I adopted the school, [but] they come to me when they need something.

Elly Ouellette

Michelle Paglia, left, practices drawing blood from her mother Elly Ouellette in the Professional Skills Center.

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Every week they practice drawing each other's blood. It's a good thing they like each other.

Since graduation Michelle has worked for the Sandy Creek School Based Health Center for Northern Oswego County Health Services Inc., an organization which operates health centers in Fulton, Oswego, Parish, Mexico, Pulaski and Phoenix, as well as six school-based clinics.

“I love working with the kids,” Michelle said. “They're easier going than adults. I get to work with a big range of people—elementary through high school. And I get to watch them grow.”

Michelle assists three health care professionals: a doctor, nurse practitioner and a dental hygienist. She draws blood, and monitors vitals such as blood pressure and heart rate. The clinic also provides well-child checks.

Elly also works for the Pulaski Health Center, only she’s at the Pulaski High School, where she doubles as the school mom.

“I am a natural, nurturing mother,” Elly said. “I am the school mom; I don’t know how I adopted the school, [but] they come to me when they need something,” she said. “I never realized how many needy kids were up there until I started doing this.”

Elly provides clothing, including socks and coats, snacks and school supplies to needy students in addition to her medical duties in the clinic. People donate items to her all the time, she said. And students know whom to call on when they have a need.

Michelle and Elly expect to earn their CPT certifications by July, and then they both plan to go on for nursing degrees.

Up the hall, in another class, students study for certifications as professional coders.

Samantha Kolbasook graduated from BSC in 2014 with an associate’s degree in medical administrative assisting, but returned to the PSC to upgrade her qualifications to Certified Professional Coder. She had graduated as a certified biller with her MAA.

Samantha describes the nine-month program as “somewhat a refresher” since it includes clinical foundations and anatomy; it is still challenging nonetheless. “It’s pretty much what I learned in three semesters jammed into one,” Samantha said. The program, which runs from March to November, will enable her to earn higher pay. As a BSC graduate, she is permitted to take the course free of charge except for books and testing fees.

Josalee Lapp, a friend of Samantha’s, came to the PSC from a local community college where she spent two years, but did not graduate.

“When I was looking into this medical coding program this seemed like the best option,” Josalee said. “And there is lots of support.”
By Christine Rabice

You may have seen some new posters hanging on the wall across from the Career Services department and wondered what they were all about. Bryant & Stratton College has always worked to make our students’ education as streamlined and efficient as possible. We help students map out a career path and find beneficial internship experiences, all with the support of faculty and staff who are there with them every step of the way. We even offer continuing career preparation support after you’ve graduated. This is what makes us unique.

We now have a name for what we do—CareerLifePrep.

CareerLifePrep is broken down into four components: Path, Pro, Plus and Team. Each one of these components allows us to deliver on our promise of CareerLifePrep to our students.

CareerLifePrep Path started with your first visit to Admissions, where you learned about our programs and found your best direction based on your skills and interests. Our financial aid department helped you navigate the financial aid process and feel comfortable with the affordability of college. CareerLifePrep Pro happens in the classroom, where you learn those extra skills employers are looking for, like the ability to problem solve, collaborate and communicate, through everyday curriculum and specific classes. You are able to establish a network of professional contacts and we even make sure you get real-world experience through internships.

CareerLifePrep Plus provides our students with ongoing support long after graduation. Alumni can come back at any time for help with job searches, interviewing, networking and affordable continuing education.

And finally, CareerLifePrep Team is just what it sounds like. From day one we surround you with your own “people” from admissions, financial aid, career services and academics. Everyone is dedicated to your success and helping you find your way to a fulfilling job and life.

Career-LifePrep truly speaks to the college’s mission, and we are excited to be able to share this new name that incorporates everything we are about.
Awards ceremony recognizes outstanding students

Several students were recognized June 14th for outstanding achievement during the Winter 2016 semester. These include clockwise from top: Victoria Wheeler, 4.0; Kayla Coates, 4.0; Gabrielle Obranovich, 4.0; Amanda Liszka, Dean’s List, and Robin Hiserodt, Dean’s List. Recognizing these students are program directors Steve Kempisty, Rachelle Hanson, William Deforest, and Sherri Pearsall.

Photos by Ann Sorrendino
English students build catapults, then write about process

Students from Deb Lum’s English 250 class build catapults from popsicle sticks, and fire marshmallows at a target in the hall. They then write process analysis essays to describe the experience. Clockwise from top left: John Goldthwaite and Dylan Kimball; Katie Ingison and Devin Gerard; Katie Ingison, and Mark Crilley.