



MRCTC Alumni News!

A message from Dr. Tina Royer, MRCTC Provost

Greetings Alumni!

It is a great time to be a part of Mesabi Range Community & Technical College! It's a happenin' place that shows no signs of slowing down. Our enrollment is up, new programs are proving to be extremely successful, we are connecting with the community in countless ways, students are satisfied with their learning experiences, we are sending a group of education and early childhood education majors to Northern Ireland in June in the college's first ever study exchange program, and this year the college has twice been recognized nationally for the consistently high quality learning and service programs it offers to all. Wow—that is a mouthful, yet only scratches the surface of who we are and what we do as a college. You have reason to be very proud of your ties to Mesabi Range, and we at the College fully understand that you are the very reason we are so proud of, and love our work.

The College Alumni Association Board has undergone some significant changes this year. There are a number of new faces to the board, which means a new approach to doing business. Many thanks are owed the board members who have chosen to step aside—for now—to let other alumni guide the planning and actions of the association. Ray Bennick, Dr. Kathleen Sulentic, and Bill Wirtanen served the association well during their many years of service to the board. Without their enthusiasm, commitment, and hard work the board would not be in existence today. Now it is time for Courtney Edwards-Johnston, Mary Gorman, Ed Cremers, Nathan Krause, Marie Jarvi, and Cassandra Rogers to take up the torch of service to alumni for the good of the college and its future. The board has created an ambitious strategic plan that they are currently implementing, so I believe your alumni association is in great hands!

Earlier I mentioned that MRCTC has been recognized nationally. Let me take this time to inform you of these well-deserved honors. Every year the college participates in a national College Student Survey on Engagement (CCSSE) program that is designed to measure the importance and level of satisfaction in a number of learning experiences in college. Currently, there are over 1200 two-year colleges in existence across the United States and approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of them partake in this annual survey. A publication, *The Washington Monthly*, decided to examine five-year historical trends (2001-2006) and factors of the colleges involved in this study to identify the top performing 100 two-year colleges in the nation. Factors that were measured included student engagement in the classroom, in clubs and activities outside of the classroom, student/faculty interaction, persistence, graduation and transfer rates, student satisfaction, and so on. When the study was completed, Mesabi Range College ranked 28th! Not bad for a small, rural college in Northeastern Minnesota! We can certainly celebrate this great accomplishment, but we will not rest on our laurels—our goal is to be number one!

I am very proud of my ties to Mesabi Range College and work hard to maintain the integrity, high quality, and relevancy of the programs and services offered to its diverse learners. I encourage you to stay connected or re-connect to your college, and you can do so in a number of ways. Visit our website at www.mesabirange.edu to check in on all the latest and greatest news, information, and learning offerings. Contact a member of your Alumni Association Board to get information on your classmates, former teachers, and other friends. Best of all; get involved with the Mesabi Range College Alumni Association. It will make a positive difference in your life and better ensure the continuation of offering current and future students the quality learning opportunities you experienced and they deserve!

Go Norse!

Mesabi Range College Norse Athletics

The winter basketball season is winding down for the MRCTC Norse and Lady Norse. Currently, the men are 6-4 in the conference and 13-10 over all. The Lady Norse are 3-6 in the division and 8-16 overall.

This season both the men and women have had an NJCAA national player of the week. Ryan Ostendorf (Virginia, MN) and Shelby Slygh (Cotton, MN) were chosen by the NJCAA as the players of the week. This is a nice individual honor for them and a reflection of their efforts on the court. Both are excellent students and represent Mesabi with class and pride. They are truly what we want in our student-athletes.

The Mesabi Norse have been led this year by Ryan Ostendorf's 17 points per game and 10 rebounds. He could be one of a very small group of Norsemen ever to finish a season averaging double figures in scoring and rebounding. Corey Mountain (Albrook, H.S.) is second on the team in scoring with 14 points per game average. Quentin Barfield (Milwaukee, WI) is the floor general for the Norse and averages 11 points per game and leads the MCCC in assists per game with 8. Finally, Trevon Taylor (Duluth, MN) averages 11 points per game. Andy Kochneff (Cloquet, MN), Deo Tecker (Maple, WI), Paul Williams (Saginaw, MN) Kyle Patillo (Ecorse, MI), LeRen Bound (Milwaukee, WI) and John Anderson (Somerset, WI) make up the final roster spots for the Norse. It has been an exciting season for the Norse as they close in on another MCCC Post Season State tournament entry. It will be the 14th in Coach Tom Stackpool's 18 years at Mesabi.

Applied Learning Initiative (ALI)

Today, all students need a challenging academic course of study in high school that provides the skills and knowledge required to succeed in postsecondary education and to get a good job in the new economy.

The Applied Learning Initiative (ALI), a partnership between the Northeast Higher Education District, Iron Range Resources and 22 area high schools, has been designed to meet that need. This collaborative endeavor was initiated in

an attempt to renew career and technical education in the high schools in order to prepare students for the workforce in Northeastern Minnesota. In addition to the schools, college and high school faculty, business and industry partners and trade unions have come together to provide this opportunity to area students.

For the first time in several years, automotive and industrial technology, healthcare, pre-engineering, and construction trades' classes have been offered to high school juniors and seniors at the college and high school campuses. In the fall and spring of this academic year, Mesabi Range Community & Technical College provided classes in Introduction to Medical Fields and Healthcare Technology (college credit classes): CPR, Responding to Emergencies, Career Exploration, and Job Search. Introduction to Nursing—a four credit college course—provided students the opportunity to explore the nursing profession and acquire CNA certification. Students were bussed from surrounding school districts to the Eveleth campus to attend morning and afternoon classes taught by college faculty.

At International Falls High School, students were enrolled in Principles of Carpentry I through Mesabi Range College and currently are taking classes in Principles of Carpentry II and Cabinet Making. Introduction to Industrial Maintenance—a three credit Industrial Technology college course—is taught at the Virginia and Babbitt high school campuses during spring semester. Students from surrounding school districts are bused to these locations.

Programs and courses that have been established for the 2007-08 school year are only the tip of the iceberg. In Phase Two of 2008-09, course offerings will be expanded to include more courses in Healthcare, Industrial Technology, Construction Trades, Business and Entrepreneurship and Educational Assistant.

The 2007 Legislature considered and passed an appropriation of one million dollars annually to support ALI design, development and implementation and provide a sustainable enhancement of the education and training of our young people for generations to come. The Initiative represents educational reform that transforms partnerships, practice, and communities to ensure our region and state's capacity to be a viable place to live, learn, work, and grow.

MRCTC Theatre...

Back and Better than Ever!

Mesabi Range Community & Technical College theatre is growing and expanding in ways that may not be immediately apparent to the casual observer. First, Mesabi's theatre program is still delighted to offer area elementary students reading-focused children's theatre performances. Just this fall, students filled Mesabi's theatre to see Aladdin work his magic. What is so marvelous about this production is that before students come to see the play, they read the story so they are "primed" for the action that takes place on stage. The performance of Alice in Wonderland took place on February 21, 22, 23, and 24.

Performances aren't all we've been about in the theater program. This year the Beginning Acting class had the opportunity to spend the day with students majoring or minoring in theatre and communication at UWS. Our students were treated to an upper-level theatre class, two-hours of theatre and improvisation workshops (including some stage combat), a full tour of the campus, an instructional tour of backstage as the technical director, stage manager, and crew prepared for their evening's performance, the performance itself, and then a forty-five minute visit with the cast after the performance. It was an incredible opportunity, and we were treated like royalty! Spring semester's Introduction to Theatre class will also be traveling to UWS for another exciting day of workshops and a performance of Rumpelstilzkin.

Also this year, Mesabi Range College Theatre hosted the One Act Play Festival on January 19th. This festival provides area high schools, preparing their one act play for competition, an additional rehearsal and much-desired feedback. We intend to expand our festival next year by including even more high schools. In addition, Mesabi Range College Theatre will be hosting the Sub-Regional One Act Play Competition next year!

Finally, Mesabi Range College Theatre is exploring the possibility of offering a production on campus during Virginia's All City Reunion in July. It would be a great reason to come to the campus to enjoy a performance and reunite with friends from the community and friends from the college.



Mesabi Range students practice improvisation techniques on a recent trip to UWS.

Meet the new MRCTC Alumni Association Board Members!

Ed Cremers:

I am currently an elementary teacher at the Roosevelt Elementary in Virginia. I like to stay active coaching baseball and football. I am an alumnus of Virginia High School (1997) and Mesabi Community College (1999), in which I was involved in varsity baseball, intramural sports, and student life committee. After MCC I enrolled at St. Cloud State University and graduated Magna Cum Laude in 2002. I am currently pursuing a master's degree from St. Mary's University and enjoy committee work on the Blue Pride Committee, Mesabi Alumni Association, and Virginia football boosters.

Courtney Edwards-Johnston:

I grew up in Eveleth and I graduated from Eveleth-Gilbert High School in 1998. I moved on to MRCTC and earned my A.A. degree in the spring of 2000. Once I earned my A.A. I transferred on to the College of St. Scholastica where I completed my Bachelor of Arts degree in Humanities with an emphasis in Communication and International Studies in the spring of 2002. During this time I was fortunate to have a full time internship working in Mesabi Range's admissions department with Brenda Kochevar, which was an awesome experience!

I am currently living in Virginia with my husband, Dan Johnston and our 2 dogs. I work at Hibbing Community College as an Academic Advisor and Campus Activities Director and I really love my work! Mesabi Range was a great stepping stone for me to get to a career I truly enjoy. I hope by being an alumni board member I can help future students to reach their personal and professional goals.

Nathan Krause:

I was raised in Gilbert/Rural Gilbert, and I attended high school at EGHS. I opted to attend MRCTC for my 11th and 12th Grades, where I completed my A.A. and received my high school diploma. During my time at Mesabi Range I was a student senator, I volunteered in the computer lab, and joined the college on a trip to Europe. I later decided to join a Bachelor's cohort offered by The College of St. Scholastica at the Mesabi Range Campus. My father owns the Eveleth Scene and Gilbert Herald newspapers where I currently work. I also work part time at a local accounting office and volunteer for the MRCTC Theatre Arts Department.

Joining the alumni at Mesabi Range will allow me to give back to the place that gave me so much, and continues to help me now. It will allow me to give back to the community and assist those who normally wouldn't have access

to our fine college. I don't have any great expectations, just to lend a helping hand. The best way to better the future and bring about change is to participate in the process.

Marie Jarvi:

My name is Marie Jarvi. I graduated from Virginia High School in 2001 and went on to receive my A.A. degree from Mesabi Range Community & Technical College in 2003. As a student of Mesabi Range, I worked in the Enrollment Services/Admissions Office where I absolutely fell in love with this college! I had the finest mentors in my two supervisors, Brenda Kochevar and Sue Twaddle, who continually encouraged me to pursue my dream of becoming an employee of Mesabi Range. I then transferred to the University of Wisconsin-Superior and received my Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration with a management concentration.

I have worked in many different departments on both campuses of Mesabi Range. Through those experiences, I have learned an incredible amount of how this college works as well as built relationships with and respect for the faculty, staff, and administration! Currently, I am the Academic Coordinator in the Upward Bound Program at Mesabi Range College and serve as the Vice President of our Alumni Association Board! Go Norse!!

Cassandra Rogers:

Hello, my name is Cassandra Rogers. I am originally from Embarrass. I attended high school at Mesabi East in Aurora, graduating in 2000. In the fall of 2000, I started college at Mesabi Range Community and Technical College to work on my Associate of Arts degree. In 2002, after graduating from Mesabi, I transferred to Bemidji State University to complete a Bachelor of Science degree.

I became a licensed teacher in 2006 and started subbing at area schools across the Iron Range until I was offered a long-term substitute position teaching Math at Virginia Secondary School. While I was very excited to have a "classroom of my own," it wasn't permanent. I continued searching for that "real" job, and found it working with Upward Bound Math/Science at Mesabi Range in Virginia.

Upward Bound Math/Science is a new program at the college. It is only the second program in the state of Minnesota, the other being at The College of St. Scholastica. It's great to be working with such an elite program, especially one at the college I started out at. I look forward to working with the Alumni Association and getting to know our members in the time to come.

<http://www.mesabirange.edu/>



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