

Making the Right career choice

For many people the idea of actually “choosing” their career seems foreign. Most people would likely say their career “chose” them. There could be many reasons for this. They may have attended college many years ago when men and women stayed in what were deemed “traditional” male and female careers. Or, maybe they never had the opportunity to attend college and simply took a job that would “pay the bills.”

Today, the line of “traditional” careers based on gender has blurred, and finding a job that will “pay the bills” without any post-high school education is difficult.

If you’re considering a career change and don’t know where to begin, Moraine Park Technical College can help. At Moraine Park, career assessment is a strong specialty, and our Career Center instructors, who all hold advanced degrees, are on hand throughout the year to help every step of the way. Classes and services are available to assist graduating students, job hunters and career changers.

“Moraine Park’s free services offer support for anyone who is facing a career change or who wishes to build their academic skills,” says Patty Warfield, careers instructor with the Career Center at the Beaver Dam campus. “We are here to help boost confidence and to help individuals make informed decisions about their future. Services are provided in individual and small-group formats and are designed to meet the individual needs of the student.”

“People seek out our services for a variety of reasons,” says Mary Pat Thompson, careers instructor at the West Bend campus. “They may be anticipating a major change in their lives and often there are other changes happening simultaneously that affect their career choice. It can be confusing to know where to begin. As career instructors, our job is to be good listeners and then move forward from there.”

Moraine Park’s careers instructors administer a wide variety of assessments to provide career

direction. In a class or individually, they introduce students to valuable resources at each of the campuses respective Career Centers, as well as online resources, to examine and narrow their options, including career descriptions, labor market projections, educational requirements and salaries. They also meet with students one-on-one to ensure they are on track to realistically meet their goals. As graduation approaches, help with résumé writing, preparing for interviews and organizing the job search is also given.

Rhonda Bird-Roehrig, careers instructor at the Fond du Lac campus, says most students enter the Career Center with lots of questions and little focus. “Fortunately, in most cases, we are able to answer their questions and help them get a better sense of direction,” she says. “They leave with a better understanding of how and where to find career resources available to them to make good career decisions.”

One common misconception about the Career Centers is the notion that one visit will provide a “quick fix.” “Career planning takes time and commitment,” stresses Thompson. “It’s important to consider all of your options and to do diligent research before making a choice.”

Warfield says she encourages the people she meets with to make a plan, lay out their dreams and goals and to project into the next decade. “Most people are very receptive to the idea of careful planning in order to make the most of their tuition and time.”

All three agree it is very rewarding to see a person begin the career planning process full of uncertainty, then gain confidence and ultimately begin a new career. “We may experience helping a high school student and seeing them light up when they uncover options they never considered, or witness a returning adult who has been faced with many life challenges complete the process and succeed,” says Thompson. “It’s very fulfilling, sometimes humbling, but never boring.”

To “discover your career passion,” contact a Moraine Park Careers Instructor today. Visit www.morainepark.edu/careers. **CF**



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“Moraine Park Career Center Instructors (left to right): Patty Warfield, Mary Pat Thompson and Rhonda Bird-Roehrig.”

Moraine Park Career Centers Open Year Round

For hours, check our Web site:
www.morainepark.edu/careers

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**Moraine Park Careers Instructors
recommend these career Web sites:**

www.morainepark.edu/careers

www.careervoyages.gov

www.jobstar.org/tools/resume/samples.php

www.online.onetcenter.org