MESSAGE FROM THE SSSP DIRECTOR

I want to welcome students back for the Spring Semester. I hope you had a good break, are refreshed and ready to go. I want to remind students to do your Financial Aid application as soon as you get your taxes done. For next fall you must have received your Financial Aid award, before the drop for non-payment day or your classes will be dropped.

Here are some other keys to success.

HELPFUL KEYS TO COLLEGE SUCCESS:

1) Maintain a positive attitude: be a good listener, strive for your dreams, keep in mind what your goal for life is, do your very best daily (because each and every day does count).
2) Read what you are given: read your syllabus- this way you will know what is going on, how much each test counts, if you can mathematically pass at any given point, etc. Look back at your college catalog. It contains many benefits. You won’t know they are there, unless you look!
3) Remember that college is not a contest: you don’t have to compete for your grade! Learn at your own pace. If you don’t understand something, don’t be afraid to ask.
4) Join the clubs and activities: Make friends, talk to everyone. Don’t let the faculty scare you. You pay their salary, they work for you.
5) Be on time for class: The most important facts are covered within the first ten minutes! Being late to class disrupts the professor and your classmates. Be responsible!
6) Last, and most important...... Go to Class! Class attendance does have a major effect on your grade!

SSSP GAME NIGHT SCHEDULE

SPRING SEMESTER 2007

Friday, January 19 - UCR Cafeteria
Friday, February 2 - UCR Cafeteria
Friday, February 16 - AT103
Thursday, March 1 - UCR Cafeteria
Friday, March 16 - UCR Cafeteria
Friday, March 30 - SSSP Tutoring Area
Friday, April 13 - UCR Cafeteria
Friday, May 4 - UCR Cafeteria

Game night activities will take place from 4:30 - 6:30 p.m. on each of the above dates.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA TRANSFER VISIT

SSSP will be traveling to the University of Minnesota in the Twin Cities on Monday, February 19th, which is President’s Day, a non-class day for RCTC students. However, the U of M will be in session that day so our visit will give students a true picture of student life on the Minneapolis campus.

The visit will include lunch (a stipend of $7.00 will be provided for each student), a tour of campus, and transfer admissions talks from the College of Liberal Arts and the College of Biological Sciences.

If you are interested in this college visit and you can make a commitment to the date, please see your advisor to get a seat on the bus.
FEAR OF SUCCESS

We all know about the fear of failure because we have all experienced it in one form or another. Failure is familiar. Some of us may not even be surprised when we fail. Sadly, we may even expect it. Why do we not succeed at least as much as we fail? Are we at some level afraid to succeed?

In his article "Working with Fear of Success," (http://www.lazaris.com/publibrary/pubfear.cfm) motivational speaker Lazaris, who only goes by one name, explores the dynamics behind that fear.

Lazaris argues that success can be scary if we give it the wrong meaning. Thinking that success will make you smarter or better than others gives it a value or "weight" it should not have.

Secondly, success can be frightening because it upsets the "natural" order of things. When you are successful, you step outside the norm. Sometimes it sets you apart from yourself if you have had more experience with setbacks than achievements.

Next, Lazaris says that success brings "chaos." He argues that we naturally crave routines and absolutes: "the always’s and never’s, the black’s and white’s." Success is in direct conflict to negative beliefs we have about ourselves.

Finally, success is scary when your motivation to be successful is wrong. Pursuing success to vindicate oneself, show others how worthwhile you are or win their approval are what Lazaris calls a "faulty foundation" on which many try to build success.

A young lady who joined the Student Support Services Program last semester was very fearful of how she would do academically in college. After high school, "life happened" and before she knew it, it was seven years since she had been in an academic setting. Understandably, she was fearful, uncertain, cautious, when she signed up for classes.

When I checked in with her after she had had a chance to take a few tests, she looked like the proverbial cat who had swallowed the canary. Much to her surprise, she was doing quite well. We’re talking A’s and B’s in math and science courses here. Interestingly enough, she was downright embarrassed by her success. She wasn’t expecting it, but it wasn’t an accident either. She studied consistently and prepared for tests the best she could. She took advantage of her instructor’s office hours. Her interest let them know she was serious about school, which in turn put them in her corner and made them partners in her success.

Success is achievable, conquerable and enjoyable. What is keeping you from it? Talk to your advisor today about what it takes to succeed at RCTC and beyond.

ENHANCEMENT WORKSHOPS

This semester SSSP staff will provide enhancement workshops from noon – 1 p.m. on each of the following days in CC408, 4th floor College Center above cafeteria. Pizza will be provided for those attending the workshop. Space is limited. Please sign up with Deb by calling 285-7230.

January 16 – Time Management facilitated by Othelmo da Silva
January 17 – Grammar Rock facilitated by Jennifer Schnaedter
January 23 – Grammar Rock facilitated by Jennifer Schnaedter
February 1 – College Transfer: How to Make a Smooth Transition and Minimize the Effects of “Transfer Shock” facilitated by Leslie Albers and Teresa Tolmie
February 6 – Scholarship Writing facilitated by Teresa Tolmie and Jennifer Schnaedter
February 27 – Study Abroad Opportunities facilitated by Leslie Albers and Janell Holter

FINDING AND FUNDING STUDY ABROAD OPPORTUNITIES

If you have ever wondered about how you can travel to new places and earn college credit all at the same time, this workshop is for you. Come and learn about the benefits of participating in study abroad, the types, locations, and lengths of programs, and creative ways to fund the experience.
SSSP CLUB IS NEW FOR YOU!

With so many options, it can be difficult to figure out where a student should get involved. My name is Shamil and I am a student at RCTC. Getting here was only half of the problem I faced one year ago. Becoming a college student involved accepting a challenge and gave me many opportunities to make my time here as productive as it possibly could be. Of course, college is more than just a place to study; I tried to make my time at the college enjoyable, to meet other students and gain many different skills. My first year at RCTC was very stressful because I had many unanswered questions and few friends. There were many places that I could go with different questions, but I found there was not one place where I could get help for these types of problems. I faced problems like:

- How I should manage my time.
- What classes I should or should not take at the same time so I would not feel overloaded.
- Which professors presented the materials in a way that I would get the most out of it including a better grade?
- I needed a club that did not meet often during the school year because I wanted to get involved, but I did not have a lot of time to invest in it.

In December, a club that can help other students to find answers to their questions finally arrived! That place is the Student Support Services Club and I was honored to become elected as president. Our club strives to include a variety of different activities. You do not want to miss what our plans are for this year such as:

- Workshops that will help you succeed in math and science courses. For example, as a math tutor, I am going to hold “TI-83 My Graphing Calculator” workshops in the third week of January.
- Game nights where different professors and staff members will be invited to play games with students in a friendly atmosphere.
- Meetings that discuss how to manage time as a college student, how to stay focused on goals and making smart choices.

Each of these events will give you a chance to meet new people and make new friends. SSSP Club meetings are scheduled the first and third Thursdays of each month. Dates for events can be found on the bulletin board in SSSP and http://www.rctc.edu/student_support_center/html/sssp.html

We look forward to seeing you at our events and encourage you to get involved in the Student Support Services Club!

SSSP SHINING STAR RECEPTION

Mark your calendar for Thursday, April 19 and plan to attend the annual SSSP Shining Star Reception. The Shining Star Reception is an event where we celebrate our accomplishments during the past academic year. It is also an opportunity for us to recognize and to honor our members who are graduating and transferring. Our Shining Star Reception will also include a student art exhibit to showcase student works and projects from the past year and we will serve food from around the world. Plan to attend, share and celebrate with us!

SPRING BREAK IN MANKATO?

Thought about where to go next after RCTC? Considering a four-year degree? Heard about Minnesota State University Mankato and thought it might be the right fit?

Come along with SSSP on Tuesday, March 6th, and visit the MSU Mankato campus. You won’t have to miss any classes because that is our spring break. However, Mankato will be in session so we will tour the campus, meet with representatives from Admissions, the Multicultural Center and MSUM Student Support Services, learn about academic and student life opportunities, and even have lunch in the student cafeteria.

Contact your advisor right away if you’d like to be part of this campus visit.

This material was compiled through a grant from the US Department of Education. However, the contents have not been reviewed by the Department and no endorsement should be inferred. RCTC Student Support Services Project is 100% federally funded at $361,162 annually. The Rochester Community and Technical College Student Support Services program is part of the federally funded TRIO programs that provide opportunity for students to prepare and be successful in higher education.
SSSP FAFSA PRIZE DRAWING

Getting Started - TRIO-SSSP is again holding a rewards drawing for those who get their Financial Aid in early. Bring in your confirmation page or copy of your signature page to your advisor and get your first drawing entry ticket.

Getting Done - If you receive your award letter before July 27, 2007 and bring a copy to your advisor you will get two more drawing entry tickets.

Getting the Money - At 4:00pm on Friday July 27th we will draw for the winner of a $200.00 gift card to the RCTC Bookstore.

Here is all you have to know to GET IT DONE!!!!!

- RCTC school code - 002373
- RCTC FAFSA priority filing deadline - April 15
- Federal Student Aid Information Center - 800-433-3243

To apply for grants, loans, scholarships, and/or College Work-Study from RCTC for the 2007-08 academic year, complete the following:

1. Students & parents obtain a PIN number to file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) electronically. Why file on the web?
   a. Electronic filing is faster and more accurate than filing a paper application.
   b. FAFSA on the Web edits your application before you submit, ensuring your data is ready to be processed.
   c. Using a PIN number replaces the need for your manual signature.

2. File the FAFSA at FAFSA on the Web before March 1, 2007.
   a. The completed FAFSA will be your application for all possible types of need-based financial aid from RCTC, Pell grants, and state scholarships.
   b. The FAFSA should be completed as soon as possible after January 1, 2007. If actual tax information is not available, the student (and parents) should complete the FAFSA using estimated data. Priority consideration as an on-time applicant is dependent on the date the FAFSA is received by the Department of Education’s processor. You should submit your FAFSA so the processor receives it by April 15, 2007

3. Federal tax returns and other documents. Student Financial Services (SFS) may request verifying documents to complete your financial aid application. This is a federal requirement in many instances and is not usually an indicator of a problem with your application. A signed copy of parent, student and/or spouse 2006 IRS 1040, 1040A, or 1040EZ, as filed with all applicable schedules, is frequently requested. If the student will not file a tax return, they may submit a Non-Tax-Filer Statement to SFS. This form, appropriately completed, will satisfy the tax return requirement. A verification worksheet may be requested.

Your Financial Aid application for 2007-2008 must be completed early and you must have your award by July 27, 2007 to guarantee you will not be dropped for non-payment.
This is the second of two articles regarding the creation of success in college through responsibility and decision-making. The first article dealt with Victims and Creators. Victims make excuses, blame, and complain instead of taking action to create positive outcomes for themselves. Creators, on the other hand, take responsibility for finding the best options that will help them achieve their desired outcomes. Creators believe that they have choices.

We can manipulate our future success by making wise choices. Therefore, we need to develop a strategy for choice management. Choices faced by college students include choosing a major, whether or not to drop a class, deciding to attend full-time or part-time, and whether to go out with friends or stay home and study. The Wise Choice Process is a set of steps created by teacher, writer, and consultant on student success strategies, Dr. Skip Downing. Dr. Downing developed the Wise Choice Process in order to enable students to create positive outcomes in their lives. Downing says that by going through the Process, students show that they believe they have the ability to change the outcomes of their lives and that this can be very empowering.

Here are the six steps in the Wise Choice Process:

1) **What is my present situation?**
   Consider only the facts in this step. Be objective. Do not blame; rather just explain what exists. For example: “I stayed up all night writing a big paper for English 1118. I was sure that I would get an A or a B on it, but I got a D. I’m mad!”

2) **How would I like my situation to be?**
   One cannot change what has happened in the past, but one can look at ways to create a better outcome for the future. For example: “I would like to write ‘A’ papers.”

3) **Do I have a choice here?**
   The answer is always yes. Victims believe they have no choices. Creators know they can find better ways to get the results they want. “Yes! I have a choice!”

4) **What are my possible choices?**
   Brainstorm here. List all possible choices that you could have. Do not judge your possibilities; simply list them - even if they seem outrageous. For example:
   - “I could drop the class and take it next semester with a different instructor who might give me better grades.”
   - “I could complain to the dean about how mean my instructor is.”
   - “I could complain to my classmates.”
   - “I could talk with the instructor and get suggestions for improving my writing skills.”
   - “I could get a tutor.”
   - “I could develop a plan so I start writing my papers earlier; then I will have time to make revisions.”

5) **What is the likely outcome of each possibility?**
   Look at each choice and predict the outcome of it. Here are the likely outcomes of the choices listed in step four:
   - **Drop the class:** You would have to take the class again. That means even more time and money spent on school in addition to the four credits you would drop this semester.
   - **Complain to the dean:** The dean would probably ask if you had spoken with the instructor first.
   - **Complain to classmates:** It would be a chance to vent your frustrations, but it would not help you improve your grade.
   - **Talk with the instructor:** Your instructor will know that you care about your writing. The instructor may have suggestions as to how you may do better or s/he may suggest resources you can access for help.
   - **Get a tutor:** This will probably help you with your next paper.
   - **Develop a plan:** Good time management is often a way to improve writing skills, especially for big projects like papers.

6) **Which choice(s) will you commit to doing?**
   This step allows you to decide on the choices that will allow you the optimal outcome. In a sense, this is where you make a promise to yourself to act positively on your own behalf. In a case where you have no favorable choices, choose the one that leaves you no worse off than before or creates the least unfavorable outcome. For example: “I will speak with my instructor about my grades and get suggestions on how I can be a
better writer. Then I will develop a timeline that allows me to create outlines and drafts and have a tutor help me along the way so I can consider suggestions and make proper revisions to my next paper."

When you use the Wise Choice Process to make decisions, you are assuming that you can change the outcome of your situation. The Wise Choice Process is a tool we can use to keep us on course for success in college. We all face problems or obstacles on the pathway toward our goals. Some of these obstacles are external and some exist within us. We can choose to let our obstacles overwhelm us or we can choose to take positive action that will create the outcomes that we desire. The choice is yours. Be a Creator.

RCTC SCHOLARSHIPS
The RCTC Foundation scholarships are available in the RCTC Counseling Center. Deadline for the scholarship application is March 15, 2007.

SSSP IRIS FRIED SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE
March 15, 2007
Applications are available from your SSSP advisor.

Spring into Action with . . . .
. . . RCTC tutoring!
Welcome back! Tutoring, both drop-in as well as one-to-one begins on Tuesday, January 16. Remember, to get signed up for tutoring, you must first meet with your advisor to obtain the tutor request form. Your instructor and advisor signatures are required on this form prior to being assigned a tutor. During the first week of classes, students are encouraged to work with their instructor's office hours or form study groups.

STUDY SKILLS TIP: Assignment Calculator for Writing Papers
Got a big paper or project to do this semester? Not sure where to start or how to go about it? Never fear! The Assignment Calculator is here!

The University of Minnesota has developed an on-line assignment calculator where students can put in the date of assignment and the assignment's due date. The student can also enter the subject area, everything from Accounting to Zoology! The calculator then processes the request and gives a detailed step-by-step agenda of what to do and when to do it. Try it the next time you need time management tips on that big assignment!

Check it out at:

http://www.lib.umn.edu/help/calculator/

ACADEMIC TIP OF THE MONTH: Class Repeat Requests Can Improve Your GPA
Per RCTC Policy: Generally, students are allowed to repeat courses for the purpose of passing or improving grades. Some programs may have specific guidelines regulating when courses may be repeated and any potential impact on continuation in that program. Credits may be counted toward graduation only once. Students must complete a "Class Repeat Request" form and submit it to the Admissions and Records Office in order to have only the higher grade counted in the computation of their overall grade point average. The forms are located by the Admissions and Records office. Ask your advisor if you need help completing the form.
Mark Your Calendar

January
12  Last day to drop for spring semester
15  No Classes - Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
16  Time Management Workshop, noon, CC408
17  Grammar Rock Workshop, noon, CC408
19  SSSP Game Night, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m., UCR Cafeteria
23  Grammar Rock Workshop, noon, CC408

February
1  College Transfer: How to Make a Smooth Transition and Minimize the Effects of “Transfer Shock”
2  SSSP Game Night, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m., UCR Cafeteria
6  Scholarship Writing Workshop, noon, CC408
8  No Classes - Student Success Day
16  Scholarship Writing Workshop, noon, CC408
19  SSSP College Visit to U of M, Twin Cities Campus
20  No Classes - Staff Development Day
27  Study Abroad Opportunities Workshop, noon, CC408

March
1  SSSP Game Night, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m., UCR Cafeteria
2 - 11  No Classes - Spring Break
6  SSSP College Visit to Minnesota State University, Mankato
15  RCTC Scholarship and SSSP Iris Fried Scholarship Deadline
16  SSSP Game Night, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m., UCR Cafeteria
30  SSSP Game Night, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m., SSSP Office Area

April
13  SSSP Game Night, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m., UCR Cafeteria
19  SSSP Shining Star Reception, CF206/208, 5:00 – 6:30 p.m.

May
3  RCTC Scholarship Award Night
4  SSSP Game Night, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m., UCR Cafeteria
10  RCTC Graduation, Sports Center 7:00 p.m.