

Misericordia

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that I could finish my education," she said. "You know, education is addictive - once you start, you never want to stop."

Both Sitar and Sabaluski had to adjust to the campus and student body.

"Everyone knows everyone else here from last year and went through the process of learning their way around the campus together. Coming from another school, I found myself at a slight disadvantage making friends and learning my way around," Sitar said.

Sabaluski was concerned that she wouldn't be comfortable with students the same age as her children.

Both had to learn to budget their time, since both work as well as attending school. They spend at least three hours studying for every hour in class, they said.

Most other students face similar situations, especially commuter students, Sitar said. "Your main focus is learning as much as possible. If you want it, you have to work for it. There isn't a lot of time to think about hanging out."

"My three children love seeing me going to school. Now it's their turn to ask me if I've done my homework," Sabaluski laughed.

College has grown dramatically, with more in planning

Michael Joseph, Misericordia's dean of enrollment management, attributes the college's success with students like Sitar and Sabaluski and its 90 percent student retention rate to its specialized programs in the growing health care field and opportunities for financial aid.

Of the college's 1,800-member full-time and part-time student body, 96 percent receive some form of financial aid for their \$9,960 yearly tuition, from the state and federal governments and college-sponsored scholarships, grants and work-study programs, Joseph said.

The college's full-time enrollment has increased a good 50 percent during the past six years, while the 609-member resident population has increased

14 percent over last year.

In order to accommodate students now tripled up in dormitories, the college is building more housing.

The college began to admit male students in the late 1970's, and has seen its male enrollment triple during the past six years.

Other recent additions to the campus include student townhouses and the Anderson Sports Center.

"All this growth has been anticipated and carefully planned," Joseph said. "Our main challenge is to grow both in the quality of life and education and in the quantity of students served. Space won't be a problem for several years yet."

Besides offering courses in the health care field, business and the humanities, the college has recently reintroduced required courses in French or Spanish and set up learning support programs which supply free tutoring and counseling for educationally disadvantaged students, or any student wishing to improve their grades.

The health sciences, including physical therapy, radiography and nursing, account for 48 percent of the enrollment.

Graduate programs include nursing, an advanced master's degree in occupational therapy and master's degrees in education and organizational management, part of the human resources field.

Community programs include the summer Shakespeare workshops, the Cultural Diversity Task Force, comprised of members of the area's minority community, sports programs and children's activities.

College president Dr. Carol Jobe said that the college plans to begin wellness programs and an institute for cultural diversity, an outgrowth of the Cultural Diversity Task Force, very soon.

"Our commitment to the arts, training women for leadership roles in society, our mentorship program and community involvement are all valuable assets," Dr. Jobe said.



Bay Window 10th anniversary

The Bay Window Shops, located on Overbrook Road in Shavertown, are celebrating their 10th anniversary. Begun by Ann Parkhurst when she bought a barn frame because it was "too cheap to resist," the cooperative venture includes antiques, collectables, reproductions, crafts, folk art, and more, much of it made by local artisans. Shown above, from left, Pat Price, Old Quilt Creations; Alice Niskey, The Doll Cottage; Ann Parkhurst.

Literacy program begins 10th year

For the 10th consecutive year, the Adult Literacy Program is running their classroom facility located in the Daniel J. Flood Skills Center, 53 Blackman Street, Wilkes-Barre.

Sponsored jointly by the Luzerne Intermediate Unit 18 and the Luzerne County Human Resources Development Department (LCHRDD) it provides people 18 years of age or more the opportunity to earn their G.E.D. high school equivalency diploma.

Since the program's inception, 1800 people have received their G.E.D. and the opportunity to better themselves educationally, financially and socially. Many have gone on to institutions of higher learning. Last year, a participant was selected as one of the 10 Adult Basic Education

students of the year in Pennsylvania.

The program under the guidance of certified instructors is conducted five days per week, Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. at the Blackman Street location. There is no charge for eligible students to complete the program in as little time as two weeks. Final testing

for the G.E.D. is done on site and is scheduled bi-monthly or sooner, based upon individual need.

For information to enroll call 822-1101 extension 243 or visit the center and ask for G.E.D. Here is an opportunity many of you have been waiting for. Call or visit and get started on your own personally tailored program leading to your G.E.D.

New children's health program available

At a time when affordable health insurance is a major concern for many people, surprisingly few persons have enrolled their children in a new state program that provides free and reduced health care coverage to eligible Pennsylvanians ages 13 and younger.

According to Sen. Charles D. Lemmond (R-20), only 4,633 children have been enrolled in the state's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) since it was launched four and a half months ago.

The program, which provides free and reduced health care coverage to children of eligible low-to-moderate-income families, still has room for 25,000 to 27,000 more children through next July, Lemmond noted.

"Many people today are finding it difficult, if not impossible, to afford health insurance. Yet, there has not been a major response to the CHIP program so far. Perhaps people are unaware the program exists, or maybe they just assume they don't qualify. I encourage people to check the eligibility guidelines, however. They may be eligible and not know it," Lemmond stated.

In northeastern Pennsylvania, including Lemmond's district, only 482 children are enrolled in CHIP to date.

"Surely, there are many more

families in our area, and I hope they take advantage of this program. The state has instituted CHIP to help them. The money is there; it's just a matter of eligible families signing up their children," Lemmond remarked.

Lemmond explained that CHIP is aimed primarily at children of working parents who cannot afford coverage or do not receive adequate health care benefits for their children from their employers.

Children eligible for CHIP will receive free or reduced coverage that includes physician visits; immunizations; up to 90 days hospitalization; and dental, vision and hearing care. Also included are prescriptions with a \$5 co-payment.

Those eligible for the program are as follows:

—A family of four with children up to age 6 - can receive free coverage with an annual income up to \$26,548. Free coverage is also available to children 6 or younger in families of three that earn no more than \$21,977, and families of two whose annual income does not exceed \$17,466.

—Families that have children ages 9 to 13 and do not meet eligibility requirements of the state's Medical Assistance Program are eligible for free coverage. That's an annual income below \$14,350 for a family of four.

—A family of four with an in-

come ranging from \$26,548 to \$33,723 a year can receive half-price health insurance for children up to age 6. A family of three can earn up to \$27,942, and a family of two can make as much as \$22,161 - and still receive subsidized coverage.

Anyone who would like to sign up should call 1-800-KIDS-199 for an application. Eligible children are accepted into the program on a first-come, first-served basis.

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