



Spotlight on the Learning Center

The Employee Engagement and Wellness Committee is introducing Department Spotlight feature stories to help create awareness and to recognize the efforts of our coworkers. Department supervisors are invited to complete the questionnaire.

Learning Center Director Denise Lindsley shares this information about her team.

Main Departmental Responsibilities:

The Learning Center's goal is to assist students in their journey to becoming better independent learners. Students can work with tutors at the Texas Township Campus, Arcadia Commons Campus and virtually through Zoom. Tutors are available at various extended hours, seven days a week. Tutoring support is offered on a drop-in basis at the Writing Centers and Math Centers and by appointment at the Course Specific Center.

In addition, the Learning Center houses the Office for Student Access (OSA). The OSA staff offers services to learners who experience academic barriers due to a disabling condition or other learning barrier.

The Learning Center's work aligns with the three Strategic Goals in the Strategic Plan (2023 – 2027): (1) holistically supporting learner's educational goals, (2) embedding diversity, equity, and inclusivity, and (3) leveraging broad expertise and forming intentional partnerships to best serve the community.

The Learning Center **holistically supports learner's educational goals, with special attention to part-time learners**, by encouraging all learners at any level of academic preparedness and at any stage in the learner's educational journey to use our services.

The Learning Center ***embeds diversity, equity, and inclusivity*** by creating a collaborative and inclusive culture where all learners feel welcomed. Our staff have a variety of backgrounds, cultures, and academic areas of expertise.

The Learning Center ***leverages expertise and forms intentional partnerships to best serve the college community***. Our staff are members of the Kalamazoo Literacy Council and ESL of Southwest Michigan. These partnerships serve as catalysts to better prepare our learners prior to and throughout their college experience. In addition, our staff is confident that these partnerships contribute to our learners' readiness for the rigors of college so that they are able to successfully achieve their academic goals.

Proudest Moments:

Our proudest moments are our individual accomplishments. At the Learning Center, we love to see students meet their individual goals such as acing a specific test, passing the class they were worried about taking, or being accepted into their specific program after completing prerequisite courses. We not only love to see our students meet their individual goals, but we also take pride in watching our tutors learn, grow and thrive.

Our tutors have become K-12 teachers, accountants, engineers, college instructors, nurses, doctors, pharmacists, librarians, chemists, authors, directors, statisticians, bio-statisticians, executive directors and police officers. Did you know that one of our former tutors helped develop the COVID-19 vaccine at Pfizer? The Learning Center is often a first job for many, and we enjoy seeing how our former tutors contribute to their communities.

Busiest/Least Busy times of the year and current challenges:

Our busiest times start about three weeks into the semesters and continue to the week before the end of the semester. One of the challenges the Learning Center has is hiring new tutors, especially in accounting and economics, areas in which the concept of time, money and expertise is clearly understood.

Another challenge is getting students to take advantage of our great, free-of-charge, accessible tutoring resources. Collaboration among every faculty and every staff member is a potential marketing opportunity. So, please tell them about our services. Or even better, walk your learners to us.

Surprising or Interesting Facts:

The Learning Center is part of a larger department that includes the OSA and the Testing Centers. At the Learning Center, we honor and recognize the diversity of the department. Employees come from eight countries and we collectively speak 12 languages including: Arabic, American Sign Language, Bangla, English, French, German, Japanese, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish and Urdu.

Favorite ways to celebrate a job well done:

At the Learning Center, we have reason to celebrate often. Our favorite celebration is at the end of each semester. We recognize our staff and students and their accomplishments, celebrating with food and camaraderie. We often reflect on how far they have come and what lies ahead for their amazing futures. Over the years, our tutors have earned associate, bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees.
