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**For River Falls Community Newsletter**

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## **CVTC Offers Free Adult Education Services**

Chippewa Valley Technical College's River Falls campus is known for its outstanding programs like Nursing Business Management, Criminal Justice, Residential Construction, and more. But did you know that CVTC also serves the community with Adult Education Services – and that they are free and open to the public?

That's right, you can prepare for your General Education Diploma (GED) or High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED) tests at the River Falls campus. You can also get help preparing to return to school before enrolling in a CVTC or university program, learn basic computer skills, or improve your English skills. It's all free and the open lab format allows you to set your own schedule and start and finish when you want.

As of Dec, 2, the River Falls campus was serving 17 students working toward their GED or HSED, or receiving other adult education services, according to Holly Hassemer, dean of academic development and services at CVTC. An additional five students were attending English Language Learner classes.

Of course, the numbers are constantly in flux due to the open nature of the services, Hassemer said.

The lab at 500 South Wasson Lane is open 9-4 Monday through Thursday and 9-1 on Fridays. People can call for an appointment, or just show up.

"We help community members who want to use computers in a more up-to-date fashion," Hassemer said. "Some want to learn how to use Microsoft Word or how to use email, some things most of us take for granted. In our college prep services, we help people who want to go back to school learn how to use computers, read textbooks, or take notes in class. It's open to everyone, but it's mostly used by returning learners who may feel some anxiety about going back to school."

GED and HSED students are handled in a similar fashion, but with a little more structure.

"We will help them go through an orientation so they know what to expect," Hassemer said. "For the next step, they typically enroll in classes that are held at the River Falls Public Library on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9-1. These classes are ongoing, with no specific start or finishing dates. People start when they are ready and finish when they are ready to take the tests."

For those with testing anxiety, there are ways to earn a GED or HSED without testing, but they typically take longer, Hassemer added.

The adult education lab at the River Falls campus was expanded as part of a \$1.5 million building expansion and remodeling project completed in 2018.

“We saw an increased need for student academic services, and we were outgrowing our current spaces,” said Shelly Olson, executive dean of health, emergency services and River Falls campus. “We continually assess the needs of the River Falls community and the surrounding area and respond to those needs.”

Photo caption:

CVTC adult education instructor Debbie Freitag, right, helps student Michele Delong-Reiter in the Adult Education Services lab at the CVTC River Falls campus.

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