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Contact: Mark Gunderman, Communications Specialist
Chippewa Valley Technical College
Desk: 715-831-7288
Cell: 715-210-4714
mgunderman1@cvtc.edu

CVTC Starts New Year with New Business Area

Major remodeling on second floor also creates space for student groups

Eau Claire, WI – Students returning for the fall semester at Chippewa Valley Technical College found some substantial changes at the Business Education Center campus in Eau Claire, with some areas looking much more like a modern college or business office.

A major remodeling project on the second floor of the college's main campus turned what once looked like an older high school hallway into one of the most modern, attractive and functional parts of the college. A large portion of the north hallway on the first floor, housing early childhood education and information technology programs also had a major upgrade.

"This will be one of the best resources for students at the Business Education Center," said Rachael Winterling, a Paralegal student and president of the Student Government Association. "The second-year students will be thinking that it's nothing like they remember it."

"The new business center mirrors a contemporary office setting, and the comfort of this type of space will help them transition from the campus to internship to employment," said Lynette Livingston, dean of business and academic initiatives.

The centerpiece is the LINC – Learn, Innovate, Network and Collaborate – a large open common area visible from the hallway through glass partitions for student networking and group meetings. Learning spaces are designed in various sizes to accommodate new program delivery types. The technology-rich area includes a state-of-the-art digital media lab. In an open technology lab, students can engage in group assignments and access the software needed for their course work.

The business area also includes a board room, a tax accounting project room, staff office space, three new classrooms and improvements to corridors and restrooms. A portion of an exterior wall was removed and replaced with a large window, allowing for natural light in the hallway and providing a comfortable lounge and study space.

"Student clubs and organizations will be able to utilize the collaboration areas," Winterling said. "They will also have storage areas to house all their fundraising and event materials."

Livingston, who was involved in planning the project, was excited to see the approximately \$2 million project completed after 14 weeks of construction during which the entire second floor was closed.

Livingston said she was amazed when she first saw the completed work. “I couldn’t wait for the faculty that has been asking for this kind of space and the students who will benefit from it to start using it.”

“It was just like – Wow,” said Cole Ackley, seated in the LINC area by a glass wall. A liberal arts student from Eau Claire, he attended classes on the second floor for two years. “I didn’t know they were doing this until yesterday. Before it was just a bunch of classrooms and right here was a brick wall.”

Ackley anticipates making good use of the lounge area this semester. “I hate being in the big open Commons area downstairs. I usually hung out in the library. But I can study here. Most of my classes are up here anyway.”

The newly remodeled areas are not the only things new at CVTC as a new academic year begins. New programs in Healthcare Navigator and Supply Chain Management are holding their first classes, following Gas Utility Construction & Service, which started in June. Culinary Management, which started last August, welcomes new students as the returning students prepare to become the first program graduates in May.

With over 97 programs offered both online and on-campus, Chippewa Valley Technical College delivers superior, progressive technical education which improves the lives of students, meets the workforce needs of the region, and strengthens the community. CVTC programs are designed with input of business and industry to prepare graduates for today’s jobs, with 95 percent employed within six months of graduation and associate degree graduates earning an average annual salary of \$46,816.

Cutlines:

LINC photo

CVTC instructor Dan Burns prepares to teach a class on Strategic Management in the new LINC area on the second floor of CVTC’s Business Education Center. Liberal use of glass walls and windows allows for an open feel and for people to observe what is going on in the classrooms.

LINC Lounge photo

A lounge area surrounded by glass walls in the LINC area on the newly remodeled second floor of CVTC’s Business Education Center provides a space for students to network, study or relax between classes.

SGA photo

The newly remodeled second floor of CVTC’s Business Education Center has space for student groups. Here, a Student Government Association group meets in one of the conference rooms on the first day of the new semester.

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