



LTC LAUNCHES NEW
MICROCERTIFICATE PROGRAMS



PROCESS TECHNOLOGY
STUDENTS HAVE NEW
SIMULATOR



ROTAR TAKES OVER LADY
STATESMEN AS INTERIM COACH

LINCOLN TRAIL COLLEGE




STATE OF ILLINOIS APPROVES FUNDING FOR LTC TECHNOLOGY CENTER

Governor JB Pritzker announced that 15 Illinois community colleges will receive more than \$103.5 million from the State of Illinois to expand existing facilities and construct new buildings. Lincoln Trail College and Olney Central College are among the schools selected to receive funding. Lincoln Trail College will receive \$8,370,000 for the construction of a Technology Center, and Olney Central College will receive \$2,307,300 for the construction of an Applied Technology Center.

“It is hard to overstate the impact that these projects will have on these two colleges,” said Dr. Ryan Gower, Chancellor, Illinois Eastern Community Colleges. “At Lincoln Trail College, some of our technical programs are still being taught in buildings constructed in 1969 that were intended to be temporary structures.” Gower says those temporary buildings lack the physical space and infrastructure to allow faculty to use modern instructional technology.

The Applied Technology Center at Olney Central College will house classrooms and laboratory facilities for the Associate Degree in Nursing, Associate in Applied Sciences- Radiography, Phlebotomy, and the Basic Nurse Assistant training programs.

“The faculty and staff at OCC greatly appreciate the State of Illinois supporting our Allied Health programs and working to ensure we can train healthcare workers in the most up to date technology and curriculum for our rural area,” said Rodney Ranes, President, Olney Central College. “The enhanced experiences this will provide to our students cannot be measured and will have a direct impact on our area healthcare agencies who are looking for skilled,

career prepared employees.”

The newly designed space will allow the faculty to incorporate simulation technology into the program that Raney says will significantly enhance the experience for the Nursing students at Olney Central College and Allied Health students from across the IECC District.



The Technology Center at Lincoln Trail College will house several technical programs including Process Technology, Construction Technology, Welding, Broadband Telecommunications, and Computer Security and Forensics. The center will also house a new University Partnership Center that will allow area residents to earn degrees from select four-year colleges without leaving home.

“The cost of earning a four-year degree is becoming a real barrier for students,” says Gower. “Much of the cost is related to relocation and housing in a new community. Our University Partnership Center will eliminate the need for area students to leave our community to earn a four-year degree. With the classroom technology that is available today, it is possible for LTC students to remotely join instruction at participating institutions from across the country.”

The decision to release this funding in a time when state budgets are tight has been met with questions. “As the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect the economy of every state in the nation, it is more critical than ever that we continue to invest in the state’s educational institutions so they can continue to provide resources that advance livelihoods and spur the economy,” said Governor JB Pritzker.

This is a sentiment shared by Dr. Gower. “Our colleges should be regional magnets recruiting students from a wide area to live in our communities while they study. IECC students eat in our restaurants, they shop in our local stores, and hopefully, they stay to work with area employers after graduation. As colleges close to the Indiana border, there is a role for us to play in reversing the trend of outmigration from our communities. Investing in our colleges is one of the best ways to strengthen our local economies. I’m deeply appreciative of the support we have received from Senator Dale Righter and the State of Illinois.”

LTC LAUNCHES NEW MICROCERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

Lincoln Trail College is offering two new certificate options this fall that can be completed in as little as one semester. The microcertificates are in Special Events Management and Public Service Management and students will be able to take all of the courses online.

“I’m really excited about this new opportunity at Lincoln Trail College for Fall 2020,” says Lincoln Trail College Dean of Instruction Brent Todd. “We’re rolling out two of our certificate programs which we call microcertificates. We have one in Public Service Management and one in Special Events Management. While these could be treated as standalone certificates, each one is only six credit hours, we’re really treating them as an opportunity for students to add something to an existing program of study.”

Todd says some students might be majoring in one area but have an interest in learning more about another area. He says the new microcertificates can be treated sort of like a minor.



Special Events Management will give people the knowledge and skills they need to plan, prepare, and host a special event. It will cover topics like project management and organization, marketing, design and décor, logistics, site selection, and budgeting.

“As our students prepare for careers, we know it is not unusual for them to be asked to host some sort of special event,” says Todd. “This certificate will give them the tools they need to excel with that event.”

Public Service Management will give people the knowledge and skills to work in the public sector, including public boards and committees, administrative positions, working in the not-for-profit sector, and other civil service positions. It will cover topics like implementing policy, management of public funds, public policy processes, data tools, and strategies of managing meetings. Todd says he believes the certificate will be beneficial for people already serving in public service roles as well as people interested in pursuing public service.

Both certificates will be offered online to provide students with additional flexibility. He says experts from Lincoln Trail College along with the University of Illinois and Princeton University will teach the classes.

“At Lincoln Trail College, we strive for excellence,” says Todd. “I’m so excited to announce that with our Special Events Management certificate we are bringing in experts from Princeton University and the University of Illinois to deliver this program.”

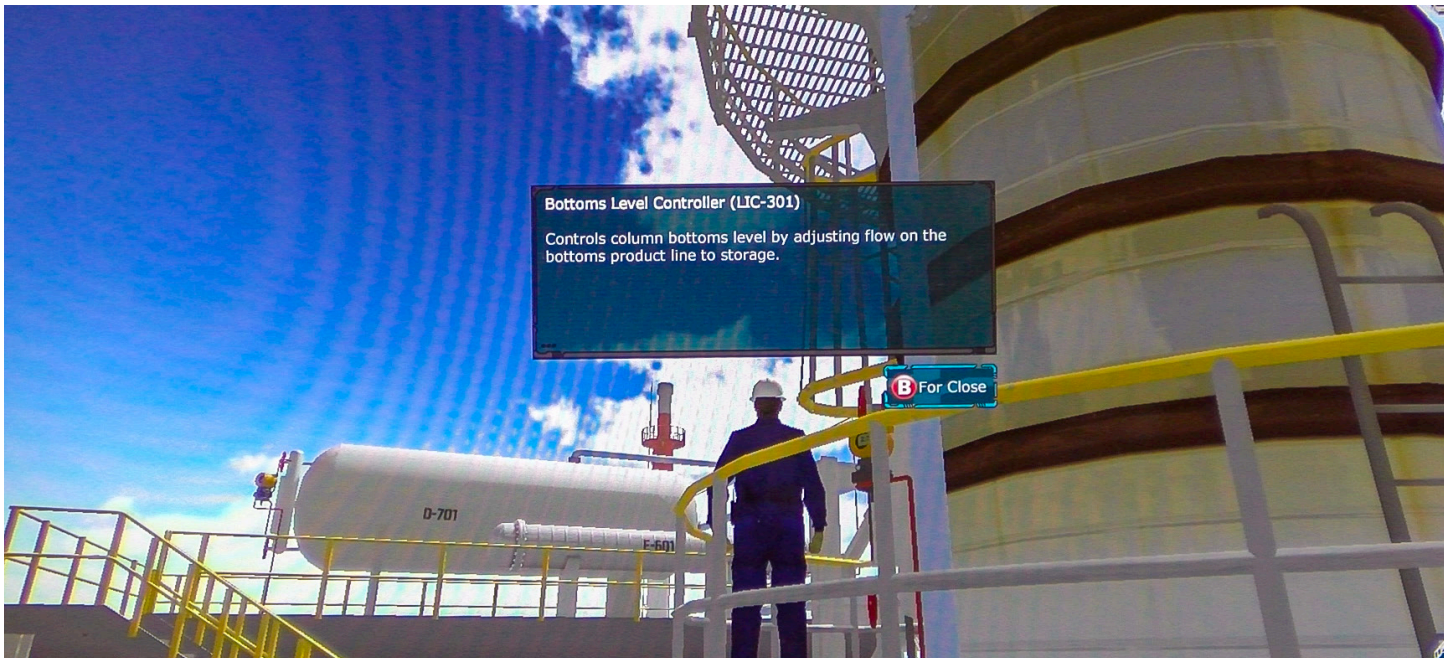
Todd says the online format will also make it easier for people in the community to take advantage of the microcertificate programs. “We’ve designed our microcertificates to appeal to a wide array of students. Whether you are currently in our classroom and you’re working toward another degree or you’re a community member interested in public service or special events, this program is for everyone.”

Todd says there are no prerequisites for either Special Events Management or Public Service Management and anyone is eligible to enroll. He says either certificate could be completed in as little as one semester.



See a video version of this story on YouTube.
Watch the LTTV video:
<http://www.youtube.com/LincolnTrailCollege>

PROCESS TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM ADDS NEW SIMULATOR



Lincoln Trail College Process Technology students have a new tool to help them prepare for their future careers. The new virtual outside operator program simulates working outside in a facility like a refinery.

Process Technology Instructor Tina Lindley says the simulator is very accurate to what people can expect when they are on the job, especially at a refinery. The simulator has the look and feel of a video game and students can use a video game controller to move around in the simulator and complete tasks.

Lindley says the simulator will be a valuable asset to help students gain the skills they need to prepare for jobs. “It has different modules and different pieces of equipment that might be within the process industry. Before we had this program, we were limited to talking about these things between me and the students. I would tell them what I would have done in that situation. Now they can see it and do it.”

Lindley, who spent her career in the process industry before coming to Lincoln Trail College, says the simulator does a very good job of showing what work is like in a refinery. She says it will also match up with other simulators they currently use in the program.

Lindley believes that with the interface being so similar to a video game, students will be very excited to learn while using it. “I’ve wanted this for a while. I think the students will absolutely be excited about it. Just having the game controller will excite them and I think they’ll be able to pick it up right away.”

She says she sees the new simulator as just a start. She’s hoping to be able to add additional modules to the simulator and over time, Lindley says she’s hoping to be able to add even more hands-on components to the program.



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ORIENTATION SESSIONS HELP STUDENTS PREPARE FOR NEW YEAR



Lincoln Trail College is planning to hold orientation sessions for new students and dual credit students as the College prepares for the start of the Fall Semester August 20. Most of the orientation sessions will be conducted online.

The orientation sessions are intended for new, incoming students to help with their transition to college says Director of College Access Tona Ambrose. “Orientation is a way for students to meet other students along with faculty and staff, become familiar with campus services, and ask questions about the college-going culture.”

Orientation sessions begin August 6 and students will have a variety of options to choose from through August 19. Each online orientation course will last for two hours and will be conducted by Zoom. Students will need audio and visual computer capabilities and internet service for the online orientation. Cell phones can also be used if the free Zoom app has been downloaded.

“Students should contact their Lincoln Trail College advisor to select the day and time that works best for them,” says Ambrose. “The online course called GEN 1103 will then be added to their schedule. The students should also watch their IECC emails because we will send information and Zoom links to these email addresses.”

Ambrose says that students will receive 0.5 credits once they complete the assigned online orientation tasks. A complete schedule of the orientation sessions is available on Lincoln Trail College’s website, www.iecc.edu/ltc, under the calendar section of the site.

There are in-person sessions available for students who cannot complete an online orientation. These are primarily for students who do not have access to the proper technology or the internet. There are a limited number of seats available in these sessions and registration is available by contacting an advisor.

Meanwhile, Lincoln Trail College will offer a special orientation session intended for students taking dual credit classes. Faculty and staff will cover a variety of college onboarding topics during the Dual Credit Orientation to help ensure students are successful when taking classes and transitioning to LTC. The session will also give students a chance to ask questions. Dual Credit Orientation will be offered online and is also open to parents and guidance counselors. It will be offered on August 10 from 6-8 p.m. An in-person option will be available on August 11 from 6-8 p.m. but is limited to nine students only. Since it has limited seating, the in-person session will be limited only to incoming dual credit students.

LTC PREPARES FOR NEW YEAR



Illinois Eastern Community Colleges is preparing for the return of students to the classroom when the Fall Semester begins August 20. The Presidents and Deans at Frontier Community College, Lincoln Trail College, Olney Central College, and Wabash Valley College have been following the guidance of the Illinois Community College Board and the Illinois Department of Public Health and are taking proactive steps to prepare for the return of students.

The four colleges in the district will use a variety of ways to teach students this fall. Many IECC courses will continue to be delivered in a face-to-face format like they were before the pandemic. Face-to-face class sizes may be smaller, or the classes may be relocated to larger spaces that allow for social distancing. In all instances, these classes will adhere to IDPH guidelines and use of facial coverings will be required when social distancing is not possible. “From the onset, we have had two guiding philosophies,” says Chancellor Dr. Ryan Gower. “First, is to deliver the distinctive, interactive, and personal educational experience our students desire. Second, to do so in a fashion where we are protecting the health and well-being of our students, faculty, and staff. It is a delicate balance.”

IECC will also offer some classes in “hybrid” and “flex” teaching formats. In hybrid courses, students will attend in-person classes one or two days a week and then engage in remote learning on days when they are not in class. In flex courses, students will go to class on certain days, and on other days they will attend the class virtually remotely using Zoom, Teams, or another form of video chat. Flex teaching is similar to hybrid, with the exception that it allows for real-time student-to-student and teacher-to-student interaction.

A few IECC courses will be delivered in remotely way. In these courses, students will join the class virtually in real-time with the instructor and fellow classmates. In these courses, interactions will take place using Zoom, Teams, or another form of video chat. “While a few of our courses are built this way from the beginning, we are working to add the capacity to make this option available for any IECC student who indicates to us that their life circumstances would make this form of instruction necessary,” says Gower.

He says IECC is also looking ahead in the semester to help faculty members prepare. “I have spent many hours on the phone with presidents from other community colleges and consulted with epidemiologists and public health officials to discuss our plans for Fall, Spring, and Summer. There are many different options and approaches, but across the board, all parties are anticipating significant difficulties as we enter the traditional cold and flu season. Even if we do not see an increase in cases in District 529, we will see an increase in COVID symptoms which are very similar to flu or the common cold.”

Gower says all four colleges in IECC are preparing faculty and staff to move many face-to-face classes to remove instruction after the Fall break. He says faculty needed this guidance now to allow for adequate time to plan and prepare to prevent the same hasty transition that happened in March.

Students still have the opportunity to register for Fall Semester classes at each of the four colleges in the district. “We understand that parents and students are still very uncertain about going off to college in the fall,” says Gower. “I’ve spoken with many students who are attending IECC Colleges because they feel safer staying closer to home. Our excellent programs and low cost of attendance make us an obvious choice.” Students can learn more about programs offered by IECC visiting www.iecc.edu or by calling any one of the colleges to set up an appointment with an advisor.

LTC PHI THETA KAPPA EARNS MORE AWARDS



Lincoln Trail College's Alpha Iota Epsilon chapter of Phi Theta Kappa earned more awards. The chapter was named an Outstanding Chapter in the Illinois Region and earned an Outstanding College Project Award and an Outstanding Honors in Action Award.

"Last year was a banner year for our Phi Theta Kappa chapter," says co-advisor Kim Schucker. "We were listed in the top 100 chapters in the nation, which was a first for us. The active members and our officers in our chapter chose projects of interest to them and worked very hard to complete them with high standards and it paid off. I am so proud of them all and thankful to have had such good students to work with."

For its college project, LTC's Phi Theta Kappa chapter worked on helping increase the College's social media presence. The students developed contests that consisted of people liking LTC and LTC PTK social media channels and having people share content and tag other people. The students measure the increase in their social media presence based on the contests. As a part of the contests, PTK awarded prizes provided by LTC's Recruitment Office and the Office of the President.

The Honors in Action project researched the cancel culture. They researched the psychological aspect of why people cancel other people and why people are so quick to follow someone else's lead without thinking through the facts. They also found examples of people and companies that were canceled. They first asked students if that should have happened and then gave the back story and then asked the students again to see if they changed their minds.

"The students should be very proud of all their hard work and the research they put into our college project and honors in action project," says co-advisor Carrie Brown. "In addition to being named a top 100 chapter internationally, our chapter's recognition regionally is a testament to the endeavors our PTK students did this past school year."

Earlier this spring, the Alpha Iota Epsilon chapter at LTC was named one of the top 100 chapters at PTK's annual convention. There are approximately 1300 Phi Theta Kappa Chapters around the world. In addition to that, Dr. Ryan Gower was recognized with a Paragon Award, which recognizes college presidents who show strong support for student success by recognizing academic achievement, leadership, and service among high-achieving students.

ROTAR TAKES OVER AS INTERIM WOMEN'S BASKETBALL COACH



Adam Rotar was named the Interim Head Women's Basketball Coach for Lincoln Trail College. Rotar had served as the Assistant Coach for the team since 2016. He replaces Scott Sparks, who stepped down this summer so he could spend more time with his family.

"I am excited and thrilled to lead the Lady Statesmen," says Rotar. "It's a unique situation to be in now from a different seat, but with the same goals in mind: to rise back to the top of the conference, and to get back to where the program last won a regional championship in 2010."

Before coming to Lincoln Trail College, Rotar was the head coach of the Toledo Elite AAU basketball team and served as a national evaluator for Blue Star Basketball. Rotar had also served as the Head Women's Basketball Coach at Rainy River Community College and served as an assistant at Lourdes University, Colorado College, and Cal Poly Pomona. He also served as a video coordinator for the men's basketball team at the University of Missouri under Quinn Snyder, who is now the Head Coach of the Utah Jazz.

He is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, where he earned a degree in Organizational Communications. Rotar earned a

Master of Science in Exercise and Sport Science with an emphasis in Sport Administration from the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse.

Rotar says he was initially surprised when Sparks told him about his decision to step down. "When I got the call from Coach Sparks that he was going to resign to spend more time with his sons, I was shocked but understood what he was doing. Coaching takes up a lot of your time. Quality time was being taken away. Over the four years I have been here he is a good man to his sons, and I think that just weighed heavily on him. I wish him the best with his new journey and the time he gets to have with his sons. After the initial shock, I didn't give it much thought other than continuing to do what I was hired to do. From that point on things just started to sort itself out."

In addition to having success on the court, Rotar says he has other goals for the program. "I want to continue to have strong academic achievement for the team. We've had a team GPA of over 3.0 in five of the last six semesters. I also want to continue helping our players achieve personal growth in their time here. We strive to bring in a quality group of young ladies and I want them to leave as better people, contributing to society as productive citizens by giving back, being good people, and excelling at their profession. The best thing we can do is keep our goals simple and demanding without compromise."

Rotar says he's in the process of evaluating the program and is making operational changes. He says the year will present some unique challenges not only for himself but for Lincoln Trail College women's basketball. In the meantime, he says he's looking forward to having his student-athletes arrive to campus in less than a month and preparing for the season.