

ITASCA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

News about students, staff and upcoming events • www.itascacc.edu

This month at ICC

- Mar 3**
- Learning Windows Vista, 9 a.m.-noon. Cont Lrng Ctr Dntn.*
 - Using Windows Vista, 1-4 p.m. Cont Lrng Ctr Dntn.*
 - Tai Chi Ch'Uan Yang Style, (Mondays & Thursdays, Mar 3-Apr 10), 5:30-7 p.m., Davies Theatre.*
 - Art Furniture, (Mar 3 & 17, Apr 7, 14, 21 & 28), 6-9 p.m., 105 Davies Hall.*
- Mar 5**
- SeniorNet Class: Educational Software for the Very Young, noon-1:15 p.m. 231 Davies Hall.*
- Mar 6**
- Career Fair for area H.S. Juniors, 9 a.m.-1:40 p.m., Itasca campus.
- Mar 10**
- Spring Break (Mar 10-14)
 - SeniorNet Class: Spreadsheets, (Mar 10, 11 & 12), 10 a.m.-noon. 231 Davies Hall.*
 - Learning Access, (Mar 10 & 17), 6-9 p.m. Cont Lrng Ctr Dntn.*
- Mar 11**
- Learning Word 2, (Mar 11 & 18), 1-4 p.m. Cont Lrng Ctr Dntn.*
- Mar 14**
- Understanding File Management, 9 a.m.-noon. Cont Lrng Ctr Dntn.*
- Mar 18**
- Midsemester
- Mar 21**
- No credit classes
- Mar 26**
- Learning Excel 1, (Mar 26 & Apr 2), 1-4 p.m. Cont Lrng Ctr Dntn.*
- Mar 28**
- Experience Itasca-Campus Visit Day, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Backes Student Center.*
- Mar 31**
- Understanding Office 2007, 1-4 p.m. Cont Lrng Ctr Dntn.*
- *Pre-registration is requested.

Itasca Examines the First-Year Student Experience

The administration, faculty and staff at Itasca Community College continue their work on "Foundations of Excellence in the First College Year" (FoE), a detailed analysis of all aspects of college life relating to a student's first-year experience.

The project is a blueprint for building the first year of college as the foundation for undergraduate education. Based upon the analysis, ICC will then follow a course of action designed to improve first-year student learning and success.

"This is a large and important undertaking," stated Dr. Barbara McDonald, ICC dean of academic affairs. "The first weeks and months of the college experience have a tremendous impact on a student's entire college career and future opportunities."

"This study will help us make sure we're doing everything we can to support new students and get them on track for success," she said.

The process began in late 2006 when Dr. McDonald worked with the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (HLC) to organize a northern Minnesota community colleges self-study workday. Following this session, a team of Itasca administrators, faculty and staff attended the annual meeting of the HLC in Chicago, Ill. These meetings and several other campus-wide discussions identified a number of issues related to student learning. Recurring topics included learning communities, concurrent enrollment, student preparedness, critical thinking, and ICC's Associate in Arts degree.

"In listening and responding to our faculty and staff discussing the challenges of a new generation of learners, Foundations of Excellence seemed to provide an excellent framework for examining how we might best serve students in their first year of higher education," said Dr. Mike Johnson, ICC provost.

Foundations of Excellence involves nine areas of self study: philosophy, organization, learning, campus culture, transitions, all students, diversity, roles and purposes, and improvement.

Campus members serving on these nine committees assess the college's



Members of the ICC Foundations of Excellence task force for the two-year self study are, seated (l-r), co-coordinator Teresa Alto, Tracey Roy, Chad Haatvedt and Dr. Mike Johnson; back, Trika Smith, Brenda Fairchild, Dr. Doug Olney, Becky Niemi, Ann Vidovic, Dr. Barbara McDonald, co-coordinator Steven Bean, Annie Erickson and Ron Ulseth. Not pictured: Pat Leistikow, Gwen Litchke, Candace Perry, John Rothstein and community representative Wendy Roy.

strengths and weaknesses, and the gathered information will be put into a comprehensive report that uses the results for institutional change and improved student outcomes through examining such areas as initial contact with students through admissions, orientation, and all first-year curricular and co-curricular experiences.

The information also will be applied to ICC's upcoming re-accreditation by the HLC and its onsite visit in spring 2009. Evaluations of all higher-education institutions are completed by accrediting agencies every 10 years.

"Accreditation is important to students, faculty and staff for many reasons," explained Provost Johnson. "For example, it allows students to transfer credits to other accredited institutions. It enables students to obtain financial aid and other services. It also allows ICC to participate in federally-funded projects and recruit high quality faculty and staff."

At Itasca, the Foundations of Excellence task force is being led by faculty members Steven Bean and Teresa Alto, with the committees for the nine focus areas comprising a broad representation of the campus community.

"We consider these nine areas to be the lenses through which we examine and evaluate what the college does to

shape the new-student experience," said Bean.

"We're looking at everything that impacts the first-year student," added Alto, "from classroom teaching and placement testing to assessment, orientation, and financial aid - every aspect of the college."

Bean and Alto said they are pleased and inspired by the commitment, support and level of participation of ICC faculty and staff in the self-study process.

By conducting the first-year experience study at the same time as ICC prepares for re-accreditation, the task force intends to get the maximum possible benefit from the time and information contributed by participants.

Said Provost Johnson: "As educators and learners, we are embarking on a dual-purpose journey - one that will help us develop an aspirational model to better serve a new generation of students, and one that allows us to examine critical issues that will be addressed in our Higher Learning Commission self-study. By combining our efforts under the Foundations of Excellence project, we will engage in meaningful and purposeful work to improve the teaching and learning experience for our present and future students."

Alumni Profile:

Velma (Comstock) Brooke, Class of 1936

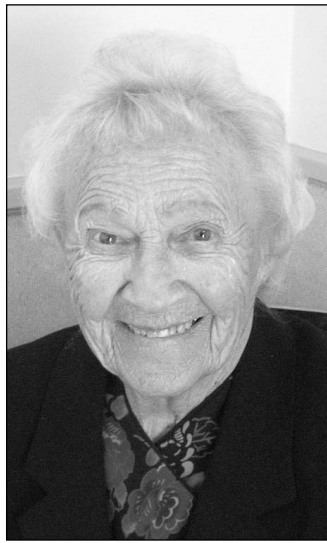
Velma Brooke, Class of '36, attended Itasca during the height of the Great Depression. Although students didn't have yearbooks or other "extras" at school, they had lots of fun. Velma sang in the Glee Club, was a member of Iota Kappa Kappa, and enjoyed the well attended dances that were held at the end of the school day.

After graduating from Itasca, Velma worked for two years in the Coleraine dental office of Dr. George Dore. She then moved to Minneapolis, attended the Minneapolis Business College, and worked in a bank for \$60 a month. She soon took a better-paying job as secretary to the assistant controller for Minneapolis St. Louis (MSL) Railroad.

Deciding she needed more excitement in her life, Velma enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1943. She was sent to serve in a recruiting office in Denver, Colo., for three years, and has lived there ever since.

It was in Denver that Velma met her husband, Charles Brooke. Together they raised four children: Robert, Norman, Fred, and Elizabeth.

Velma has many good memories of family weekend camping trips to Rocky Mountain National Park and to the Seattle World's Fair in 1962. Velma and Charles traveled worldwide, visiting



Velma Brooke

Europe, Korea and Tahiti, and took many cruises in the Carribean. They had been married 45 years at the time of his death in 1991.

Velma presently enjoys her annual involvement in the Salvation Army summer camp near Estes Park, Colo.

When she was 85 years old, her camp experiences included climbing a 25-foot pole and riding a zip line down the mountain. She has also taken a number of river cruises. Her next cruise will be in April with son Fred on the Columbia River.

While visiting this winter with her sister-in-law, Grace Comstock, in Coleraine, Velma remarked that she'd "forgotten how cold it gets in northern Minnesota!"

Class Act Presentation



Karen Teff, a high school math teacher in the Deer River school district and Milken Educator Award recipient, spoke to students in the Class Act Teacher Education program at Itasca Community College. Last December, Teff achieved national board certification through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, which documents advanced teaching knowledge, skills and practices through rigorous assessment. At ICC, Teff discussed how to be a successful teacher, the requirements of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, and why she chose to pursue this certification. Each year, Class Act students document their classroom experiences through portfolios and the same five core propositions utilized by Teff. The core propositions are: teachers are committed to students and their learning; teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students; teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning; teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience; and teachers are members of learning communities. Pictured are, l-r, Adam Still, Kaitlyn Hendricks, Meagan Wichterman, Mitch Williams, Dana Stein, Megan Zubke, Karen Teff, Tom McBride, Maria Saunders, Crystal Orazem, Kayleen Henke, Heidi Cass, Autumn Bullock, Sam Robertson and Tony Potter.

ICC Students Set to Study in Europe

Seventeen Itasca Community College students and instructor Glen Hodgson will depart March 8 to study at Svendborg College in Svendborg, Denmark, for the second half of spring semester. Itasca has a longstanding exchange program with Svendborg College. Each fall, a cohort of Danish students from Svendborg College study at Itasca for part of the semester, and Itasca sends a group to Svendborg in the spring. This year Itasca students in the program take classes in European language and culture, physics, and engineering as well as other core classes. The program also includes a 10-day European trip to Paris, Barcelona and Florence. Pictured with Hodgson (center front) are, seated l-r: Thomas Kokal, Kevin Schultz, Jake Schuster and Shayne Lempia; standing: Karen James, Heidi Hutter, John McKnight, Brent Hagen, Jacob Oetterer, Amber Mikulich, Zach Vrchota, Rodney Whight, RJ Burich, Brianna Frey, Ben Gunvalson and Wil Lenius; not pictured: Courtney Caruso.

