A Successful Journey to the Five Colleges

GCC Transfer Students:

made these graduates’ journeys to their impressive baccalaureate institutions possible, in most cases where there was no other pathway. Each of these students felt they couldn’t dare aspire. Our data show that GCC transfer students do as well or better than students who start at four-year colleges. These ‘Fantastic Five’ students are following in the footsteps of the thousands of GCC alumni who have transferred to four-year colleges. In so doing, they also pave the way for future GCC transfer students.

By Mary McClintock, ’82

Greenfield Community College serves everyone in the community, whatever their goals, whatever their life circumstance: Students who seek to enter the workforce right out of GCC and those seeking to continue their learning at GCC, a four-year degree and beyond. Traditional college-aged students, dual-enrolled high school students, and older, non-traditional-aged students. Single parents, people in recovery, mid-life career changers, life-long learners, and more. GCC President Bob Puss said, “About half of GCC’s graduates transfer on to a four-year college. Many are attending colleges to which they previously thought they couldn’t dare aspire. Our data show that GCC transfer students do as well or better than students who start at four-year colleges. These ‘Fantastic Five’ GCC graduates are examples of the diversity of GCC alumni who continue on in higher education. GCC’s commitment to access and excellence made these graduates’ journeys to their impressive baccalaureate institutions possible, in most cases where there was no other pathway. Each of these students is following in the footsteps of the thousands of GCC alumni who have transferred to four-year colleges. In so doing, they also pave the way for future GCC graduates.

Meet These ‘Fantastic Five’ who were Transferred to the Five Colleges:

CELY O’CONNOR, Palmyra, 27 years old

Attended GCC: 2007 – 2009, CT 26

Transferred to: Smith College, graduated with a B.A. in Mathematics in May 2010

Currently: Staying true to M.S. in Mathematics Education at UMass of Massachusetts Amherst. Will graduate in May 2013, working as a research assistant on an adaptive mathematics tutoring system project at UMass Computer Science department.

How GCC helped her get to where she is today:

“My professors at GCC were inspiring and supportive. They helped me realize my potential and ability for mathematics. This degree provided me the support and knowledge I gained at GCC.

“GCC has been the cornerstone of my academic pursuits.”

By Evelyn Stankowski

HILARY MATLAIEN, Milford Falls, 22 years old

Attended GCC: 2008 – 2009, GPA 3.8

Transferred to: Hampshire College, studying Dance and Biology, working at Hampshire College-Sci. Core Center, will graduate with Bachelor’s degree in May 2014

How GCC helped her get to where she is today:

“What a wonderful place. I got all I needed to perform well in dance. I learned how to think of the body in different ways. I received the support and encouragement I needed to continue my education.”

“GCC faculty and staff showed me I have the ability to thrive and excel.”

By Jazmin Powell

JACOB (JAKE) POWERS, Northampton, 26 years old

Attended GCC: 2009 – 2009, GPA 3.7, served on GCC Board of Trustees as student representative, graduated GCC’s project for student-entrepreneurship.

Transferred to: Amherst College, majoring in English focusing on creative writing, will graduate with Bachelor’s degree in English in May 2013

How GCC helped him get to where he is today:

“GCC was an open door for me and my dream to continue my education. As a high school drop-out, Amherst college was an opportunity that I had dreamed of for years. I had the support and encouragement I needed to make this dream a reality and know that the ability to thrive and excel beyond what I ever thought possible. I have carried these lessons forward to Amherst College and continue to excel, building upon the solid foundation I established at GCC. After graduation, I plan to take time off to travel and write before applying to an MFA program.”

By Jenne Bergeron

JENNIE BERGERON, Pelham, 26 years old

Attended GCC: 2010 – 2011 with a break to work, travel some of the U.S. and earn a GED.

Transferred to: Mount Holyoke College, currently a senior Russian-Polish scholar majoring in Environmental Studies with a minor in Technology, Society and Environment and an English Minor, will graduate with Bachelor’s degree in May 2013

How GCC helped her get to where she is today:

“GCC has been the cornerstone of my academic pursuits. GCC’s supportive and inspiring environment allowed me to continue my education while taking on a variety of non-traditional challenges. I received the support, guidance and encouragement I needed to continue my education while working full-time. I am currently building a research project and am excited to work in the field of environmental policy.”

“GCC has been the cornerstone of my academic pursuits.”

By Jazmin Powell

GREG SCOTT, Sunderland, 19 years old


Transferred to: Hampshire College-Sci. Core Center, will graduate with Bachelor’s degree in May 2014

How GCC helped her get to where she is today:

“I came to GCC as a non-traditional student with very little direction trying to navigate my way through the college application process. The GCC staff were so helpful and I could tell they really cared about their students. Where I learned that once you learn about the state of the world, you can never go back.”

By Mary McClintock, ’82

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By Jacob (Jake) Powers

“I would not be where I am today without the experience, support, and knowledge I gained at GCC.”

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10

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