What happens when a life-long “class clown” takes a Community Education class in stand-up comedy? Laughs, of course. And for Cindy Foster, a chance to live her life’s dream. In the months since tackling that class, Cindy has presented some of her comedic shows and competed in the qualifying round of “New England’s Funniest Comic” at Melegari’s in Northampton.

Cindy Foster is a self-described 47-year-old lesbian and hockey mom from Greenfield who lives to make people laugh but always dreaded public speaking. In Fall 2012, when friends suggested she take Jerry Caruso’s Intro to Stand-Up Comedy class at GCC, Cindy wasn’t surprised. Growing up and in her 20s, she went to Los Angeles and considered comedy as a career, but instead, Cindy has worked as a social worker and a stay-at-home mom.

Although she thought the way into comedy was to go to New York City or Los Angeles, Caruso’s class opened a door that has her, as she said to me, “Livin’ the dream.” She’s talented, she has a creative side. For a reason-able fee, you could have an opportunity that truly opens up a whole new path in your life.

Looking back, Cindy said, “If it wasn’t for that class, I would have missed my calling. When you get the GCC Lifelong Learning Guide in the mail, you’re opening up your dreams book. A lot of people think what I thought, ‘I just do this to pass the time.’ Look closely at what captures your imagination. It may be that you really have a creative side. For a reason-able fee, you could have an opportunity that truly opens up a new path in your life.”

Cindy is on that new path. Although she brought the way into comedy was to go to New York City or Los Angeles, Caruso’s class taught her the skills and business of stand-up comedy. Most important, the class and end-of-class performance gave Cindy the confidence to turn her talent for humor into work. In New Year’s Eve, Cindy performed with the “Queer Queens of Comedy” at the Calvin Theater in Northampton alongside Puppy Chumfry, Jan Harris, and Michelle Balan. Cindy also has performed with Kelli Dunham at Diva’s Nightclub and was the opening act for Pride Week at the University of Maine in Orono.

Dean for Community Education Bob Barba said, “Cindy Foster’s story demonstrates what I love about Community Education and the assertion that personal enrichment is every bit as important as workforce development, and that there is absolutely no distinction between them when they are done well. Cindy didn’t foresee a career as a stand-up comic. She, like most of our students, wanted to try something new. She’s always been interested in and to get out of the house. Amazing things can happen when you get out of the house. Cindy opened a door that has her, as she said to me, ‘Livin’ the dream.’ She’s my new role model.”

Cindy is a funny woman, yet she has serious advice for everyone she meets: “One class re-directed my life thinking ‘I wish I would have…’” She’s “The New Model.”

Cindy is a funny woman, yet she has serious advice for everyone she meets: “One class re-directed my life thinking ‘I wish I would have…’” She’s “The New Model.”

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Class Clown + Community Education Class = Laughs… and Living a Dream

By Mary McClintock, ’82

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Cindy Foster

“When you get the GCC Lifelong Learning Guide in the mail, you’re opening up your little hopes and dreams book.”

Cindy Foster

nurses’ pinning Ceremony

Main Campus Dining Commons

Honoring nursing program graduates

A reception with light refreshments will follow.

• Commencement

Sunday June 2, 12 Noon

East Lawn, Main Campus

Honoring graduates from all programs

A reception will follow in the Dining Commons. Graduates and their guests are invited to attend.

• Reserved seating is provided for graduates participating in the ceremony.

• Commencement speakers include President Robert Pura, faculty speaker Dr. Anne Wiley, and a graduating GCC student.

• Both events offer open seating. Admission tickets are not needed. Please plan to arrive early if you have a large group and want to secure seating together.

• If someone in your party needs a seating accommodation due to a mobility issue, contact Student Life at (413) 775-1200 by May 24, 2013.

For information: www.gcc.mass.edu/commencement/