State of the Art Patient Simulation Manikins Enhance Education
By Mary McClintock, ’82

Greenfield Community College’s nursing and paramedic students are learning their professions on state-of-the-art patient simulation manikins thanks to two federal grants and collaboration with other community colleges and area hospitals. The new adult and baby SIMs (Simulated Instructional Manikin System) manikins simulate a range of medical conditions and respond just like human patients, providing a truly interactive learning environment. Cheri Ducharme, Program Coordinator of GCC’s Associate Degree Nursing Program said, “SIMs manikins allow our faculty to develop and identify gaps in their training, and work to improve, all in a controlled environment. (When our students encounter real clinical situations, they can’t say ‘I’ve been here before!’ have ‘been there before’ and know how to react. The manikins help them learn how to make treatment decisions accurately and quickly.)

GCC’s nursing and paramedic education programs have simulation manikins for many years, but earlier manikins were less sophisticated. Ducharme said, “For the past five years, we have used manikins for teaching skills such as checking vital signs. These new manikins can do much more. Instructors can program conditions to simulate illness and changing physical symptoms based on the treatment the manikin receives.” The new manikins produced by Laerdal, cost $73,000 for the adult and $40,000 for the baby manikin.

To create an effective educational environment, you need more than sophisticated technology, you need faculty development, too. Ducharme said that GCC’s faculty development is a priority this year to provide essential skills to their students. Ducharme and John O’Brien, the STAT Patient Simulation Technician, have become experts in training instructors on how to use these manikins. They have also trained GCC’s four-year Sonoma State Community College faculty, Berkshire Community College, and partner employers, including Baystate Franklin Medical Center. In the next few years, GCC’s patient simulation capabilities will be expanded to the three community colleges.

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What does “close to real” mean for future paramedics and nurses using GCC’s new manikins? O’Brien sums it up, saying, “Students and area health professionals using this technology in their training means that our loved ones and community members will receive the best possible care from paramedics and nurses.”

Dawn Josefski, Director of GCC’s Nursing Program, said, “Because the new manikins do not need to be plugged into a wall, instructors can manipulate them from another room, situations and environments appropriate to emergency medical situations are unmitigated. Without the instructor present, students must rely on their own knowledge. The digital and video review help students on their own progress in proficiency. The new manikins create situations as close to real experiences as possible.”

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Ducharme at ducharme@gcc.mass.edu. For more information contact 413-775-1809.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS
Living the Dream & Bright Light Awards
Greenfield Community College hosts nominations for the “Living the Dream” and “Bright Light” awards. The award seeks to recognize both adults and young people who have carried on the ideals of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in the community. Nominations for both awards should be made in the form of a letter to President Robert L. Pura, GCC, One College Drive, Greenfield, MA 01301. The deadline is Friday, December 4, 2009. Awards will be presented on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, January 18, 2010. For more information, contact Herb Hentz at 413-775-1809.

Upcoming Events
Successful Job Search: Everything You Need To Know
Saturday November 14, 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Downtown Center Campus
Successful Job Search: Everything You Need To Know
Wednesday, November 18, 4 to 6 p.m.
Downtown Center Campus
The 13th Annual Gem, Mineral and Fossil Show and Sale
Saturday November 14, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Greenfield High School Lower Avenue at 25 Silver Street Sponsored by the Pioneer Valley Mineralists
Adults $3.00, Seniors 70 and older $2.00, Children under 13 with an adult come in free.

Choose a Calling Not a Career: Careers in Real Estate
Thursday November 19, 12:30 p.m.
Main Campus, East Building, Room 107

The 10th Annual Gem, Mineral and Fossil Show
Saturday November 14, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Greenfield High School Lower Avenue at 25 Silver Street Sponsored by the Pioneer Valley Mineralists
Adults $3.00, Seniors 70 and older $2.00, Children under 13 with an adult come in free.

More than a dozen vendors will be displaying and selling minerals, gems, crystals and fossils along with locally produced craft items. There will be free face painting for kids as long as they last and it is a great way to start your holiday shopping. "What’s not to love about a day like this!" says show organizer, Richard Lefebvre. It's a fun outdoor event.

Associate Degree Nursing Information Session
Thursday, November 19, 4 to 6 p.m.
Downtown Center Campus

The Killick Society

The Killick Society

Please join us for the alumni reunion meeting Thursday November 19 at 5:30 p.m. at the GCC Downtown Center. Everyone is welcome. Go online now to join the GCC Alumni Association and sign up for AlumNet, GCC’s online community! Visit gcc.mass.edu/alumni

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