



Eastern-in-the-News



MOTHERS AND CHILDREN WILL GRADUATE COLLEGE TOGETHER THIS MAY

Moorefield, WV — April 28 — “One time, when I asked a fellow student a personal question, my daughter told me to ‘hush up,’” said Arthur’s Dreama Kelley, recalling a dramatic moment in a local college classroom last semester. “She stopped short of calling me ‘Dreama,’ but I did get several ‘Mom!’s,” Kelly chuckled, “followed by energetic eye-rolls.”

After spending several semesters together at Eastern WV Community and Technical College, Kelley and her daughter, Taryn Whetzel, of Fisher, will graduate together at the college’s third annual Commencement, May 5.

From Taryn’s point of view, having Mom at her side in the same classroom sometimes proved to be “a pain, because she was always on me about homework,” she said. “But I did appreciate her bringing me a different perspective, and sometimes she understood things that I didn’t.”



Mothers And Children Will Graduate College Together This May: Arthur’s Dreama Kelly, and her daughter, Fisher’s Taryn Whetzel, will both graduate May 5 at Eastern WV Community and Technical College’s third annual Commencement.

Sharing different perspectives turned out to be a two-way street, because Mom Kelly recalled that at least one Eastern instructor suggested that Taryn tutor her mother in math.

“We have had a few classes together – both online and live classes,” said Kelly, who also serves as executive secretary to Eastern President Charles Terrell.

“I tried not to embarrass her too much, but I’m sure I managed to do so anyway – especially in the Psych class discussions, when I related back to personal experiences of my children’s formative years.”

Another Duo

Kelly will graduate with a WV Board of Governors (BOG) Adult Completion Degree (AAS) in Social Sciences, and Whetzel with an Associate in Arts (AA). Mom is already “working on my

next degree through Liberty University,” and will earn another diploma next December with a BS in Psychology Crisis Counseling. Daughter Taryn aims to use her Eastern degree as a first step towards a nursing career.

Eastern will award diplomas this spring to a second mother-and-offspring duo too—Cindy and Glenn Alt of Petersburg — both of whom will graduate with degrees in Information Technology (I.T.).

In Mom Cindy’s case, make that *three* degrees.

“When I first came to the college they were just starting the I.T. program,” she explained, “so while they were building it, I was taking other classes just to fill in my schedule.”

“And I ended up with so many extra courses that about six months ago I realized I was able to get two more degrees.” In addition to the AAS in I.T., Alt will graduate with an associate in science (AS) in I.T. as well as a second AS in Business.



Mothers And Children Will Graduate College Together This May: Cindy Alt, and her son Glenn, both of Petersburg, will graduate together May 5 at Eastern WV Community and Technical College’s third annual Commencement.

Going to college with son Glenn — who will graduate this May with an AAS in I.T. — turned into a good-natured, two-way competition that enabled them to boost each other through their coursework.

Study Partners

“We practiced for tests and studied together,” Glenn said.

Outscoring his mother on a history test 100 to 96 was a special achievement for him, Cindy recalled. “And that was the second time he did it,” she said.

“Yes, but she ended up beating me in total score for that class,” Glenn acknowledged.

As more and more adults decide to take the plunge and return to school, the odds of finding mother and grown-up child sharing the same learning assignments and classrooms can only increase.

“One of the biggest changes on the college scene these days is the impressive rise in the number of adult students,” said Robert ‘Buck’ Eagle, Dean for Academics and Student Services at Eastern WV Community and Technical College.

Today, “38-percent of those enrolled in higher education are over the age of 25, and one-fourth are over the age of 30,” the Atlantic Monthly reported last fall, citing the federal Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

“At Eastern, we’ve always had a special interest and concern for those whom we think of as adult or ‘non-traditional’ students,” Eagle said. “So to a large extent, we’re already set up for it.”

That foresight is starting to pay dividends, he noted, especially since “the older students will become the new norm and the new majority at college,” totaling some 61-percent of all college students by 2019.

\$7,000 More

“Already, the department of Labor reports that, on average, an associate degree on a worker’s resume brings in \$141 more each week than a high school diploma. That works out to more than \$550 each month,” Eagle calculated, “and almost \$7000 extra per year that a college-educated worker can earn.”

And it seems that a good many students nowadays have done the math, since more than 50-percent of all college students today are not pursuing the traditional four-year Bachelor’s degree, but instead are enrolled in programs that lead to a college certificate, a workforce credential or an associate degree.

Like her son Glenn, who graduated Petersburg High School in 2008 and decided to go to college “to try to further myself and get a good job,” Cindy Alt came to Eastern to improve her standing in the job market.

“Bob MacPhail [former coordinator of the Potomac Highlands College Tech Prep Consortium] once told my son to get all the certifications he could get, and put them in a box,” she recalled, “and then he could write his own ticket for the future.”

Taking that advice to heart, after graduation she plans to continue her learning towards a master’s degree in I.T., with an eventual aim to return to her own computer services business in Petersburg and to teach I.T. classes.

Strengthening qualifications for the job market also played a key role in Dreama Kelly’s decision to return to school.

“Psychology and Sociology courses are very interesting to me,” she said, “but mostly I like helping people and hope to make a positive difference in our community through my next degree.”

For more information about Eastern’s financial aid opportunities, programs of study, workforce training and community education, call toll free: 877-982-2322; or check the College’s website: “www.easternwv.edu”.

Serving the residents of Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Mineral, Pendleton and Tucker counties, and fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College is a comprehensive and equal opportunity community and technical college bringing the resources and assets of Education That Works to the families, communities and employers of the Potomac Highlands.