



February: A love/hate relationship

February arrives adorned with hearts, but by the time Valentine's Day passes it begins to lose its allure. The shortest month of the year typically feels the longest with the cold weather and cloudy skies, but here we are at the end of the month! Mid-terms mark the start of the downhill



run to the end of the semester and, for many, graduation. So thank you, February, for reminding us that we are tough, we will make it through, and our hard work will be rewarded.

Program Highlight: Nursing

CNCC Alum: Erica Yantzer



This month brings a double feature, highlighting both the CNCC Nursing program and its fearless leader, Alumna Erica Yantzer.

It was a bit of luck that connected Yantzer to CNCC. While she had been living in Steamboat Springs and Craig for many years, her plan was to go to Nursing school in Rock Springs, Wyo. where she could stay with family while she studied. A radio advertisement announcing the addition of a Nursing program at CNCC caught her ear and changed that path. Yantzer started nursing school with the start of CNCC's Nursing program in 2003. She graduated with the

first Nursing class in 2005.

Recalling her time in the program, Yantzer fondly recalled classmates and mentors Marilyn Bolden and Marilyn Hehr. She laughed that the class motto was "nothing is set in stone," a nod to the fact that new programs tend to change as they develop. Her graduating class presented faculty with a piece of sandstone with the motto written on it in marker.

After graduation, Yantzer began her career as a public health nurse in a Prenatal Plus program that provided young mothers with education and guidance to help them access the resources needed to raise a healthy child and maintain their own health. Because her drive to become a nurse began with a drive to work in OB/Labor and Delivery, Yantzer moved on to work at The Memorial Hospital in Craig in OB and the medical/surgical units. Her career path led to OB work in Montrose and Glenwood Springs, long term care in Steamboat Springs, and finally, back to CNCC as a Nursing instructor. As her career developed, Yantzer earned a master's degree in Nursing from Walden University.

At CNCC, Yantzer began as a part time instructor, moved into a full time instructor position, and now directs the Nursing program. This semester she is also teaching some courses in the program.

When asked what is special about CNCC's Nursing program, Yantzer touted the high level of care the instructors have for the students. "Instructors provide a lot of one-on-one attention," said Yantzer. "Faculty genuinely care about students and they take into account the life circumstances of each student."

Speaking of the students, Yantzer admires their perseverance and resiliency. "Their strength is unreal," she exclaims. "These students have so much going on in their lives and they just keep going."

The most difficult part about the Nursing program is the workload. "This program is all-consuming," explained Yantzer. "It is very difficult to balance the needs of your personal life with the demands of nursing school. The plus side is that you develop bonds with your classmates that are lifelong and you get a life-changing career."

Asked what is next for the CNCC Nursing program, Yantzer said that the program is expanding. "We are growing to include larger classes so we can meet the needs of our communities. We will also be adding the BSN program, with the target start date set for Fall 2020. I am hoping that as we grow, we will see other alumni come back to CNCC to teach."

The CNCC Nursing program has many partners in NW Colorado including Memorial Regional Health, Yampa Valley Medical Center, the VA and Saint Mary's in Grand Junction, the Steamboat Group, Northwest Colorado Health, local schools and more. New partnerships are being worked out as the program expands.

Asked about what she loves most about being director of the Nursing program, Yantzer said it was the challenge she loves. "This job challenges me every day. I have a strong belief that if you are not uncomfortable, you are not growing," said Yantzer. "I am growing. I also love having the opportunity to advance my career. There are no barriers."

Yantzer has never believed in barriers. She had five children under the age of eight when she attended nursing school (She now has 7 children and two grand children.) She is seriously considering starting work toward a doctorate in nursing. It is obvious that that Yantzer possesses that same resiliency and perseverance that she admires in her students. CNCC is proud to have her as an alumna and as an employee.

Student Feature: Adam Cooley



Adam Cooley moved from Anderson, SC to Colorado Springs to enjoy the mountains and backpacking. His travels then took him to Steamboat Springs and finally Moffat County where he has lived for the past two years.

Cooley, now 28, did not take the traditional path to college, but he is now just a semester and a half from completing an associate of science degree. He has a strong interest in both chemistry and physics. He gives strong credit to Tyler Bridges, Gateway Coordinator; Dr. Liz Johnson, science faculty; and Sue Mock, lab tech, for helping him along his journey both academically and personally.

Outside of the classroom, Cooley is a volunteer tutor in math and science, founder of the Symbolic Logic Organization (otherwise known as Logic Club), and active in the eSports Club. Cooley is also hoping to be inducted into Phi Theta Kappa, the two-year college honor society.

A recipient of a Chevron Scholarship, a General Foundation Scholarship, and a Colorado Opportunity Scholarship, Cooley also takes advantage of the Moffat County tuition buy-down. He is grateful for the support as he has plans to continue his education at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels and either teach at a university or do research.

To those whose donations have helped support his studies, Cooley gives his thanks and offers a promise. "I really want to express my gratitude," said Cooley. "I know that it is hard to give money and not know if the person who receives it will squander it. I promise that I am going to do my best and do right with it."

Scholarship Feature: Chevron Scholars

Chevron values education. That is one reason they support education and

vocational training in areas where they operate. Education and training are central to improving livelihoods and sustaining long-term economic development.

The primary goal of the Chevron General Scholarship at CNCC is to assist students who have demonstrated the desire, ability and determination to complete an academic program at Colorado Northwestern Community College and who, without financial assistance, would be unable to do so.

In 2018, Chevron donated \$24,000 toward CNCC scholarships. The 2018-2019 CNCC Chevron Scholars include:

Cameron Aragon – Math/Systems Engineering

Nathan Allred – Nursing

Amy Baier – Dental Hygiene

Alexis Bennett – Dental Hygiene

Leah Carlson – Equine Training and Management

Adam Cooley – Sciences (Chemistry/Physics)

Anna DiDario – Dental Hygiene

Marissa Espy – Nursing

Cassandra Garza – Dental Hygiene

Brooklyn Hickey – Dental Hygiene

Taylor James – Dental Hygiene

Kevin Kohlbrenner – Psychology/Social Work

Kristie Lewis – Early Childhood Education

Tori Saxton – Dental Hygiene

Congratulations to each of these students and a HUGE thank you to Chevron for their support!

PaleoArt Exhibit

CNCC's Paleontology folks have been working with the Craig Art Council to expand community outreach and share their passion for dinosaurs. Paleo Art is a burgeoning field in paleontology and we thought this would be a fun way to reach out to the community and get our very own paleontology students involved. At Craig's annual Art Walk, CNCC hosted a Paleo Demo room, exhibiting a multimedia, interactive display of what we do. Over 200 people came through the demo room in 3 hours and the Art Council enthusiastically invited us back next year.



The Paleontology Summer Dig will have a donation site on Experiment.com beginning March 8 and running through the end of the month. The site will be part of a Paleontology Grant Challenge. The program that gets the most donors (not the most money!) will win an additional \$1,000 toward their cause. Donors to this cause will be

kept in the loop on the project throughout the summer. The link for the challenge will be posted on CNCC's Facebook and LinkedIn pages and included in the March 2019 newsletter.

Foundation Dinner Tickets Still Available!

YOU ARE INVITED TO

*15th Annual
Foundation Dinner
Fundraiser*

at

**Colorado Northwestern
Community College**

SATURDAY, MARCH 30, 2019 5:30 P.M.

**THE COLORADO ROOM
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Check out our open positions at:

<https://cncc.edu/employment-opportunities>

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