

# alumni FOCUS

get caught in the act of helping others

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## Adriane Hoke

### MODEL OF SUCCESS

WYOMISSING, PA | RMCTC CLASS OF 1993  
PROGRAM: *Cosmetology*

**CAREER INFO:** *Student Recruiter, Reading Hospital School of Health Sciences*

When she was a teenager at Reading High School, **Adriane Hoke** enjoyed her moments in the spotlight working as a runway model. After several twists and turns, her life has led her back to being a model of a different kind—a role model for today's students.

From 1990 to 1993, Hoke attended the Cosmetology program at Reading-Muhlenberg Vocational-Technical School, as RMCTC was called back then. Although learning about hair and make-up was a natural complement to her modeling, Hoke didn't feel passionate about cosmetology as a career choice. However, in her senior



year, while helping the younger students learn their skills, she discovered an interest in teaching, which she would pursue after graduation by enrolling in the Early Childhood Education program at Kutztown University.

Before she left the “Vo-Tech,” Hoke made her time there count. In her junior and senior years, she served as president of VICA, the student organization now known as SkillsUSA. **Patricia Rhodenizer**, who has been the VICA/SkillsUSA advisor for 24 years, remembers that “Adriane wanted to be involved in everything. She was ‘spunky,’ punctual, and reliable.” Hoke credits her VICA experiences for teaching her valuable life lessons about leadership, professionalism, teamwork, and community service.

After college Hoke worked as a waitress, pre-kindergarten teacher, and secretary before accepting her current position in 2006 as student recruiter for Reading Hospital School of Health Sciences. In that role, she talks with high school juniors and seniors about the many opportunities awaiting them in healthcare careers. She keeps very busy visiting schools, attending college fairs, giving tours, and reviewing the academic files of prospective students.

Although her career has not followed a straight-line path, Hoke has arrived at a place where the lessons of her youth are producing obvious results. Today, she counsels students on the advantages of maintaining good grades, completing the right academic courses, and pursuing their goals. “You have to remain focused,” she advises, because “what you do in high school affects what you do in college, and what you do in college, affects what you do in life.”

## board members

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### MISSION STATEMENT

The Reading Muhlenberg Career and Technology Center, in partnership with our diverse community, sponsoring districts, and business and industry, is committed to providing quality career and technical education, resulting in opportunities for students to gain employment, pursue post-secondary education, and develop an appreciation for lifelong learning.

**Teri Baller** has been appointed work-based learning coordinator. She previously served RMCTC as Information Technology Web Design teacher from 2000 to June 2012. Baller also serves as advisor to the National Technical Honor Society. She holds Vocational II Certification and Cooperative Education Certification from Temple University.

**Melisa Diehm** has rejoined the RMCTC faculty as the school's first Service Occupations Education teacher; she taught Early Childhood Education from 2007 to 2009. Diehm earned a bachelor's degree in family consumer science from Immaculata University and a master's degree in education from Cabrini College.

It is the policy of the Reading Muhlenberg CTC not to discriminate on the basis of gender, disability, race, color, and national origin in its educational and vocational programs, activities, or employment as required by Title IX, Section 504 and Title VI.

## faculty news

**Christopher Evans** has been hired as instructional assistant in the Service Occupations Education program. Previously he served the Governor Mifflin and Reading school districts. Evans earned a bachelor's degree in education from Kutztown University.

**Jeffrey Kohrman** has recently been appointed technology support specialist. He is a graduate of Reading High School and Reading Muhlenberg Career & Technology Center. Kohrman also attended RMCTC's Information Technology-Web Design program as an adult student.

**Joel Myers** has been named Information Technology-Web Design teacher. He had served RMCTC as technology support specialist from 2007 to August 2012. Myers earned bachelor's degrees in English and computer science, both from Shippensburg University.

## Reading Muhlenberg

### CAREER & TECHNOLOGY CENTER

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MODEL OF SUCCESS

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## Reading Muhlenberg

### CAREER & TECHNOLOGY CENTER

# TECHtalk

DECEMBER 2012

## New Program: Service Occupations Education



*Elizabeth Cabral and Alejandro Abrea practice their institutional cooking skills.*

The classroom is striking: commercial-grade kitchen and laundry, professional janitorial tools and supplies, and a modern, efficient warehousing and distribution system; but what is really impressive about the new Service Occupations Education program is the quality of the learning that takes place there.

The program provides students the opportunity to gain employability skills and explore careers in the fields of custodial, institutional food, and commercial laundry

services, and the distribution of goods. Students learn hands-on skills in the lab and participate in related activities throughout the school, as well as field trips to area employers. Instruction stresses workplace safety, good work habits, and the ability to work cooperatively.

“The goal is to help students with special needs gain the skills required to earn specific job titles and obtain employment,” explained **Melisa Diehm**, instructor. Examples of occupational titles the students may earn include food preparation worker, cafeteria attendant, dishwasher, janitor, laundry worker, and stock clerk.

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## FROM THE director



It will soon be time for ninth-grade students to register for the 2013–2014 school year, and we would like you to consider the many exciting opportunities available at the Reading Muhlenberg Career & Technology Center (RMCTC).

RMCTC is a results-oriented school! We care about fulfilling our mission of transitioning students into the workforce and/or post-secondary education, and we work hard to ensure students have the opportunity to pursue their dreams.

## Service Occupations continued...

“We work the classroom like it is a job site,” said Diehm. The “job” entails punching in at the time clock, checking on assigned tasks, completing specific jobs, punching out, and recording the activities of the day. Results of completed tasks are clearly seen in the classroom and throughout the building. The school’s sizable inventory of office supplies, for example, is sorted, labeled, and organized by the students in a meticulous fashion that some big-box stores should imitate. As new computer equipment arrives at the school, the class receives it, checks it against the packing slip, logs it into the system, and delivers it to its proper destination. Furthermore, the students prepare and deliver meals and snacks to the children in the Head Start classroom each day and provide laundry service to such programs as Culinary Arts and Cosmetology.

Diehm and **Christopher Evans**, instructional assistant, have extended the students’ learning by setting up a simulated bank and school store. The students

earn “paychecks” for their work, cash them at the “bank,” and use their earnings to purchase items from the store, thus learning some money-management skills in the process. “A whole real-life experience within the classroom is what we’re aiming for,” said Diehm.

Although the program just started this academic year, RMCTC’s administration and staff recognize its value and are confident of its growth. “Employers have a need for workers with the skills taught in this program,” said Patricia Nies, special needs facilitator. Signs of success are already in evidence in the classroom. “I love my job,” declares Diehm. “The program is exciting, and the students love coming here every day.”



*Makea Quick, left, and Krishna Kapadia prepare outdated computer equipment for recycling.*



## Holiday Greetings!

Last year, 78 percent of senior students received “advanced” status on the National Occupational Testing Institute’s technical assessment and were awarded the Pennsylvania Skills Certificate from the Governor of Pennsylvania. Overall, 91 percent of seniors were “advanced” or “competent,” representing one of the highest scores recorded in the state. Indeed, students at RMCTC are learning—so they can start earning!

I realize this is an important decision. The more information you gather and analyze, the better prepared you will be to make an informed decision. Where can you find information? This newsletter is a good place to start. You can also visit our website [www.rmctc.org](http://www.rmctc.org) and explore opportunities available in each of the school’s 30 pro-

grams. Likewise, visit our Facebook page and “Like” us to receive weekly updates of interest about our programs and student life at RMCTC. Finally, if you are interested in a high paying career in manufacturing, I would encourage you to visit [www.careersin2years.com](http://www.careersin2years.com). This website was designed by local industry to help encourage students, just like you, to consider a career in manufacturing.

I strongly encourage you to consider submitting an application to RMCTC. You’ll be glad you did!

*Gerald P. Witmer Jr.*

*Gerald P. Witmer Jr.  
Administrative Director*

if not us, who? if not now, when? make a difference.



## work-based LEARNING

## Fast Forward to Nursing Careers

*Seniors Chantel Madera, left, and Jaydalis Cruz are eager to begin their careers in the expanding field of healthcare.*

Choosing what you want to be when you grow up is a decision most young people face sooner or later. Some have known what their future work would be since they were children. Others experience a career epiphany when something or someone has a dramatic impact on their lives. Either way, two RMCTC seniors now find themselves headed in the same direction.

**Chantel Madera** has been interested in nursing ever since she was a little girl. That’s why it made perfect sense for her to enroll in the Health–Nursing Careers program. “The CTC has given me more opportunities, more experience, and a quicker route to my career,” explained Chantel. “At RMCTC, I can follow my own path.”

That path has led Chantel to a work-based learning experience at ManorCare Health Services in Laureldale. After spending her weekday mornings at Reading High, she works a four-hour shift at ManorCare in the evenings and at mid-day on weekends. Her co-op has been a positive learning

experience. “The staff members are friendly and are quick to help me if I have any questions,” said Chantel.

After graduating from Reading High, Chantel plans to continue her nursing education. She has set her sights on earning an associate’s degree in medical assisting and a bachelor’s degree in nursing. Her confidence comes from knowing what she wants and working toward it. Chantel sums it up this way, “I do all my work and complete my goals.”

**Jaydalis Cruz** first felt the call to nursing when her grandmother needed care. It was then that Jaydalis realized that becoming a nurse was something she could do for her family. Now that she is a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) and working at ManorCare on co-op, she is certain about her career choice. “I love my job. I love helping others. I was meant to be a nurse,” she stated.

Jaydalis enjoys the personal contact she has with the residents of the nursing home. She assists them in bathing, feeding, using the bathroom, and attends to other needs as well. “I always try to project a positive energy when I walk into the room and when I communicate with the family,

even though doing so can be challenging because of my shyness,” admitted Jaydalis.

In spite of encountering some challenges on the job, Jaydalis credits her RMCTC program with providing her with valuable preparation for her work. She is especially grateful for the skills she learned during clinical activities and from her instructor. “Mrs. Bowers told us that the patients always come first; they’re the priority,” explained Jaydalis.

Even though she knows that co-op can be a big step for a teenager to take, she recommends it highly. “Who wouldn’t love doing what they love to do while earning money too?” she asks. With logic like that, a plan to earn a college degree, and a desire to help people, Jaydalis appears poised for success in her chosen career field.

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get caught in the act of helping others

## staff PROFILE



## Teri Baller WORK-BASED LEARNING COORDINATOR

During her 13 years of teaching computer applications and web design, **Teri Baller** felt responsible for the hundreds of students that passed through her classroom. Now that she is RMCTC’s new work-based learning (WBL) coordinator, she has expanded her sense of ownership to include the entire student body. “They’re ALL my students, and they’re awesome,” Baller said, while not even attempting to hide her excitement and pride.

Baller’s new responsibilities include promoting, coordinating, and ensuring the success of Reading Muhlenberg’s program of work-based learning activities, such as co-ops, internships, and clinical experiences. She works closely with employers to foster positive relationships with them, to find new opportunities for students, and to be sure that the WBL arrangements are win-win experiences for companies and students. She obtains student referrals from teachers and meets with qualified students to discuss job requirements and prepare them for interviews. She

visits job sites and convenes a meeting once a month to keep in contact with students during their WBL experiences. In addition, Baller handles the paperwork and recordkeeping required to keep the operation running smoothly.

“Every day is different, and I never know what is going to happen next,” are two of the reasons why Baller enjoys her job. “I love it,” she proclaims. She also enjoys the public relations aspect of it, which involves meeting people and encouraging them to consider hosting or hiring a student for a work-based learning experience. Her calendar is full, and she goes through a lot of business cards. “No matter where I go, there is always someone who could hire our students, so I’m always making that pitch to people,” said Baller.

Her monthly visits to WBL sites provide Baller the opportunity to go into the community, talk with employers, and see how the students are doing on the job. “I’m very impressed with the reports we get about our students,” she said. “They are well prepared to enter the field, and they’re doing a good job.”

If you know of a company that could benefit from being a work-based learning site while giving a skilled student an opportunity to learn, and possibly earn, on the job, please contact Teri Baller at 610-921-7337 for more information.