

# DMACC West Campus Connects Students with Technology

Creating more effective learning solutions to equip students for success in today's ever-changing workplace is a priority at the Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) West Campus in West Des Moines.

"We're all about innovation, and we want to inspire students as we encourage them to become critical thinkers," said Dr. Anthony Paustian, provost of the DMACC West Campus.

Opened in the fall of 2001, the DMACC West Campus offers three basic programs, including liberal arts, business and information technology (IT)/telecommunications. The campus now serves 1,500 students, including those enrolled in technology programs, and those pursuing arts and science degrees as they prepare to transfer to a four-year college or university. Partnerships with the local business community have contributed significantly to the success of the West Campus, which keeps ahead of the rapid changes occurring everyday in technology.

"A number of companies invested heavily in us in the early years," said Paustian, who noted that the school's early adoption of hand-held technology, e-books and more made national headlines and contributed towards a goal of becoming a paperless campus. "These investments have allowed us to become a leader in wireless technology and develop into a mobile campus that promotes Web-blended learning, giving students the flexibility to utilize online education systems like Web CT while benefiting from on-campus instructors."

This spirit of innovation is reflected throughout the campus, from the Megabites Café with Web-surfing stations and a wireless environment, to the classrooms named after famous inventors like Einstein, Edison and Ford. The campus is also distinguished by its state-of-the-art IT labs and instructors who are teaching cutting-

edge information on soft switching technology.

The West Campus is also distinguished by its extensive beta testing. In fact, many of the technological innovations that have now become widespread throughout the DMACC system, such as Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), were first tested at the West Campus. The West Campus continues to work with a number of technology-solution providers who rank among the best in their respective areas of expertise, said Paustian, who noted that the West Campus is also challenging traditional paradigms of education to better serve its students. Through its concierge service, for example, the West Campus combines best practices from the hospitality industry to help students succeed. "The concierge service is much more than receptionists at the front desk," Paustian said. "The staff can answer questions related to issues on and off campus, and they help students in any way possible."

## FOCUSING ON THE FUTURE IN WEST DES MOINES

Locating the DMACC West Campus in West Des Moines has made it easier to strengthen many of these services and partnerships. "This contemporary, urban area features an expanding corporate sector, as well as a lot of residential growth," said Paustian, who noted that a large percentage of the campus's students come from West Des Moines.

Paustian is also pleased that the DMACC West Campus has successfully partnered with the City of West Des Moines on a number of initiatives. "The City is excellent to work with, and we try hard to make West Des Moines a leader in technology training."





DR. ANTHONY PAUSTIAN