Dear Campus Community,

The Fall 2014 semester is coming to a close and we have had many students visit CASE! We were very excited to add new members, Justin Berg, Coordinator of AccessABILITY Resources (AR), and Angela Smith, MERITS Coordinator, to our CASE Team. Justin has led the efforts in working with our students with disabilities. This includes coordinating testing, developing accommodations plans, being an advocate, and an all-around disabilities guru! Please watch your emails and SharePoint for information and requests from this area.

Angela was welcomed into the MERITS family team this semester as well. She has worked in a part-time capacity with a caseload of MERITS students. Angela joined Jennifer Golden and is led by Michael Cobbins, Assistant Director of Educational Support Services. Please feel free to stop down and meet our newest team members.

Peer Educator Training took place on Saturday, September 20th. Peer and Professional tutors, MERITS Mentors and CASE Staff participated in this exciting event. The day started off with George McDonnell from the Schoharie County Youth Bureau conducting ice breakers, interactive activities and diversity training.

This Fall we had 25 Peer, 7 Professional, and 5 FYE Tutors in CASE. They tutored multiple topics and had a wide variety of hours. Please check the CASE Webpage for more details.

Committed to the Community: SUNY Cobleskill Student Receives ACT Scholarship for Excellence and Student Initiative

Mackenah Simmons, a SUNY Cobleskill Animal Science bachelor’s degree student, was one of only five students within the State University of New York system who received the 2014 State University of New York Association of Council Members and College Trustees (ACT) Annual Award for Excellence and Student Initiative Scholarship. An honorary luncheon was held on Saturday, October 25, 2014, at Fort William Henry Hotel and Conference Center in Lake George, NY. Simmons was recognized for her excellence in academic performance and extraordinary commitment to the SUNY Cobleskill campus and community.

Encouraged by Brian Kaiser, SUNY Cobleskill Director of the Center for Community Engagement, to apply for the annual ACT Excellence and Student Initiative Scholarship – Simmons possesses a passion for community engagement, and takes her leadership responsibilities seriously. “Mackenah represents the kind of well-rounded, fully engaged student that we strive to create. She excels as a student, leader, volunteer, and mentor and is a real asset to the college,” remarks Brian Kaiser.

Read the complete article at http://blog.cobleskill.edu
We're on the web!
http://www.cobleskill.edu/case

Meet the Work Study Wonders of CASE!

My Journey

By Willis Feliz

MERITS has really helped me in the time that I have been here. They have a strong support system and people who are always there for you. If it were not for MERITS, I would not be in this terrific school. I struggled in high school because I did not take the work seriously. This is my last chance, and all I'm trying to do is make my parents proud of me. I am proud to be a MERITS student and continue this journey we are all on.
News from MERITS

By Michael Cobbins

The MERITS Staff was excited to welcome back our first MER-ITS Pre-Freshmen Academy students and our Non-Academy MERITS Enrichment Program students. We look forward to providing support and services, so our students will continue to grow and excel through their experiences here at SUNY Cobleskill.

The programs created an atmosphere for all students that encouraged persistence, academic progression, retention and graduation through focused support and utilization of resources.

The programs were dedicated to developing and sustaining an academic environment that embraced all students and provided a sense of community. Our goal was to provide services and programming that enhanced academic and social life on campus. We collaborated with faculty, staff, academic departments, and campus organizations to encourage and stimulate all students to high endeavors, community awareness, and positive social interaction.

Every new student wants to succeed. Success is measured in many ways. Here at the SUNY Cobleskill MERITS Program we envision a type of success where individuals are at their best socially and academically.

Welcome to the MERITS Family

By Michael Cobbins

Angela Smith is a SUNY Cobleskill alumnus with a Bachelor’s Degree in Business Administration. She comes to the MERITS Program with almost 20 years of experience in human services work as an employee, board member, and volunteer; work which has included community and family court mediation, and domestic violence advocacy and program management.

Through these experiences she has developed a strengths-based philosophy that involves striving to treat all people with dignity and respect while empowering them to reach their full potential. Angela is the mother of two daughters and lives in Cobleskill with her husband, Brian, and their Chihuahua, Buford.
Pin Oak Stud Farm Internship

By Stephanie Salvato

Hello Tigers! My name is Stephanie Salvato and I’m a Senior majoring in Animal Science with a concentration in Horses. My hometown is South Glens Falls, New York. This is just 20 minutes away from the historic Saratoga Race Course, where I grew up around horses and had an interest in horse racing since I was 6 months old! My favorite racehorse is the legendary, unbeatable Cigar.

As a student, I have gained knowledge and skills of working with, caring for and riding horses. Last semester I had an amazing experience seeing two horses being born and training them at the Equine Center on campus. Also, this summer I won a scholarship at Saratoga Race Course from the New York Breeding and Development Fund for students who are highly interested in having a career in the breeding and racing industry. What a joy it is! My biggest dream is to work on a Thoroughbred breeding and training farm in Kentucky. Well, that dream is coming true!!

I recently visited Pin Oak Stud Farm in Versailles, Kentucky where I was accepted to an incredible internship working and caring for broodmares and foals. I will also have the opportunity of traveling to racetracks at Churchill Downs and Keeneland to learn more about the racing industry over the course of 7 months, as well as, seeing the most historic race of all time, the Kentucky Derby!!! This farm is sitting on 900 acres of pure Kentucky bluegrass, and is the home of four Thoroughbred racing champions! My love, passion and gift for horses is a big part of my life, and will now lead me to a big, bright future.

Above: Saratoga Race Course for College Day receiving her scholarship

New AccessABILITY Resources Coordinator

By C. Justin Berg

grew up in Wyoming County in western New York. I graduated from SUNY Brockport with a major in Radio TV Broadcasting and minor in Theatre. After Undergrad I attended Canisius College and graduated with my Masters in College Student Personnel Administration. I have spent the past 10 years working in higher education and because of this I have traveled up and down the east coast. My last two positions being a student success coach at a rural community college in western New York and as a student rights advocate at Western New York Independent Living. I am excited to be working for SUNY Cobleskill and I hope to see everyone around campus.

My name is C. Justin Berg. I

PLEASE e-mail tests to dss@cobleskill.edu.
This semester Cram Jam will be held on Sunday, December 7th. CASE will be open for 24 HOURS during this CRAM JAM session. CASE will also be open on Monday, December 8th through Thursday, December 11th from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m.

We invite everyone to take advantage of these extended hours to utilize the many services that CASE offers. Stop in to see one of our peer or professional tutors, use one of our quiet study rooms or many computers for independent study.

The testing center will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. during CRAM JAM. Just a reminder that we ask students to complete the test request form and schedule their exams at least 48 hours in advance.

As always, refreshments will be served. Don’t miss the opportunity to be part of this worthy event!

Left: Professor Anne Rogan stopped by to work with students
Right: Professional tutor Jennifer Golden worked with a group of Chemistry students

The MERITS program has helped me grow as a student. This is my freshmen year and I have learned how to use all the campus resources. I am glad to know I am welcomed in a place around campus other than my dorm building! I love spending my time down in CASE and meeting new people! It really has made my first semester here great. I can’t wait to see what next semester has to offer for me and all the other students in the program!
A Mentor’s Perspective

By Nicole Haugh

Since I have become a MERITS Mentor, I have gained a new appreciation for the staff who work “behind the scenes” in one’s academic career. I also have realized that one should never take for granted opportunities that are given to them, as you never know what life could be like without them.

Tutor Training Fall 2014

By Wendi Richards

Tutor Training this Fall was held on Saturday, September 20 and what a beautiful day it turned out to be! We had 15 tutors participate along with 5 Professional Staff members. The first workshop was presented by George McDonnell. He took our group from strangers to friends within minutes. This interactive workshop was both mentally stimulating and physically challenging! At one point we were told to touch a certain color, it could be on a person or anything in the room without breaking the bond with our other hand. This taught us how to be creative (and flexible!). We had to rotate through groups of people and tell them a few things about ourselves. This really broke the ice! George’s Workshop won top honors among the most liked session of the day. Next we had a fantastic lunch catered by Justine’s. The tutors also heard from Cheryl Buxamusa who presented about Diversity and from Wendi Richards about Beginning and Ending a Tutor Session. We rounded out the day with a Q & A group discussion of “best practices” and “I have a student who…….” this was also one of the top session as rated by the tutors. It was helpful for them to discuss any issues or concerns they were having.
NOVEMBER WORKSHOPS

11/12 - Study Skills by the MERITS Team at 9:00 a.m. in CASE

11/18 - Organizational Skills by Wendi Richards at 4:00 P.M. in Library 209

DECEMBER WORKSHOPS

12/3 - Test Prep By the MERITS Team at 3:00 p.m. in CASE

12/4 - Technology and Disabilities By Justin Berg at 4:15 p.m. in CASE
WHERE IS CASE?
CASE is located in the lower level of the Van Wagenen Library.

WHEN CAN YOU USE CASE?
There is staff available starting at 8am. Everyone is welcome to use CASE for quiet study whenever it is open. Tutoring services are available Sunday through Friday.

WHAT IS CASE?
CASE is the Center for Academic Support and Excellence, a central location for student support services.

WHO IS LOCATED AT CASE?
AccessABILITY Resources, MERITS and Retention Programs, professional and peer tutors, and mentors are all housed in CASE.

WHAT SERVICES DOES CASE PROVIDE?
- Free tutoring
- Study groups
- Writing Assistance
- Staff to help you get on the right track with study skills, time management, or simply to find a specific location on campus.

CASE STAFF
Derwin Bennett, Director
Wendi Richards, Assistant Director
Michael Cobbins, Assistant Director of Educational Support Services
C. Justin Berg, Coordinator of AccessABILITY Resources
Jennifer Golden, MERITS Coordinator
Angela Smith, MERITS Coordinator
Meghan Tracy-Zarecki, Administrative Assistant

CASE Hours
Monday - Thursday
8:00a.m. to 9:00p.m.
Friday
8:00a.m. - 4:45p.m.
Saturday
Closed
Sunday
4:00p.m. - 9:00p.m.