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In Touch
Alexandria
TECHNICAL COLLEGE
One of America's Premier Technical Colleges

ATC
Graduates
Shatter
Glass Ceiling



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* Associate in Applied Science (AAS) and Associate in Science (AS) degree

**Associate in Science (AS) degree

Would you like to suggest a story for *In Touch* Magazine? We welcome your comments and suggestions. Here's how to get in touch with the editorial staff:

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For information about Alexandria Technical College programs, visit www.alextech.org.

Alexandria Technical College is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission and is a member of the North Central Association and Minnesota State Colleges & Universities System.

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This information will be made available in alternative format, such as larger print or cassette tape, upon request.

ATC is an equal opportunity employer/educator.



Questions and Answers with President Shellito



What are the current challenges for Alexandria Technical College (ATC)?

The most dominant challenge is the financial situation that has impacted the state and the nation. With Minnesota's \$4 billion shortfall, the college is challenged to achieve even greater levels of efficiency and effectiveness but with limited resources. Our college identified early on that the money shortfall was coming. We built a reserve at a modest rate while continuing to invest in innovation and technology. Through the years we have invested well in our grounds and facilities, which should carry us two or three years.

What is the future direction for the college?

First, we will continue to be a "college of the community." It's no longer K-12 education; now it's K-lifelong learning. We must make sure we fulfill that role and serve our economic area.

The college will also continue to increase faculty training resources to ensure the highest industry standards are being delivered. Also, our equipment will remain current and leading-edge to support our community and employers. We are preparing enrolled students for a career track in high-tech, high-wage-paying industries.

Furthermore, through our expanded General Education component, we provide opportunities for post-secondary enrollment option students and those working toward a four-year degree. Students can come to ATC and earn General Education credits that are transferable, while saving in tuition costs and expenses.

By supporting the region, the community is successful, it grows, the college grows, and there's a greater opportunity for its youth and residents.

What are some great accomplishments happening at ATC?

We are very proud of the partnerships technical programs have made with industry. Prime examples are the Center for Automation and Motion Control (CAMC) program with its international leadership role, Marine and Small Engine Mechanic's partnership with Arctic Cat, Diesel Mechanics' partnership with Caterpillar and Ziegler, and Interior Design's work with the National Kitchen and Bath Association (NKBA).

ATC has also partnered with area high schools to help them as they go through financial struggles by sharing resources and expertise. Recently, the college held the regional Business Professionals of America (BPA) conference, hosting 200 high school students.

Final Thoughts

It's imperative everyone understands ATC's success is because of our faculty and staff. It's not the building; it's not the curriculum. The faculty and staff make students become more technically competent, more socially responsible, with a heightened civic consciousness of their role in our future. We build leadership and future leaders here at Alexandria Technical College, as our two featured alumni, Mari Johnson and Terese Amazi, will help illustrate in this *In Touch* issue.

INSTRUCTOR PROFILE



From Law Office to Classroom

*By
Christine
Hollermann*

Mavis Pattee, a former FBI employee and paralegal, brings extensive experience and knowledge of the legal field to Alexandria Technical College as a Legal Administrative Assistant instructor.

While attending college, Mavis applied for a job with the United States FBI and passed its rigorous tests, as well as extensive background checks. At the age of 18, she packed her small-town suitcase and moved to Washington, D.C., where she worked for the National Crime Information Center of the FBI and dealt with confidential records containing major crimes committed in the United States. After a year with the FBI, Pattee returned to Minnesota and began working in a law office as a legal secretary. She returned to college and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Paralegal from Moorhead State University. She has 20 years of law office experience, ten as a legal secretary and ten as a paralegal.

For the past three years, Mavis Pattee has been ATC's Legal Administrative Assistant instructor. According to Pattee, the legal field is much more than just working for law firms. With the Associate in Applied Science (AAS) degree, a student is qualified to work in courthouse offices, sheriff and police departments, abstract offices, finance companies, and insurance offices. She adds that even large corporations can be a potential job opportunity, as they often have their own legal offices.

"There is a BIG demand in the legal field," states Pattee. In the past three years, she has had 100% placement of her Legal Administrative Assistant graduates. "I try to give my students as much exposure to their field as I can." Each November, first- and second-year students take a field trip to the Twin Cities. While there, students tour places

such as the State Capitol, Minnesota State Office building, Minnesota Supreme Court building, Minnesota State Bar Association, Hennepin County Government Center, Ramsey County Courthouse and Jail, various law firms, as well as legal placement agencies.

Overall, Mavis has found changing her career from paralegal to instructor a "...fun and challenging change in direction. It's a whole other learning process." For Pattee, teaching legal skills and actually performing the skills are very different. "I don't know how you could teach about the legal field without having worked in it first," she states. The challenge in teaching is determining how to deliver the legal skills to students. According to Jessie Suess, a current Legal Administrative student, "Mavis works with students until she's sure they know the material, and she's also very knowledgeable in the field."



Student interaction and feedback are important to Pattee.

In her spare time, Pattee enjoys gardening, reading, and golfing. She dreams of golfing an entire round of golf one day. "After nine holes I've swung so many times that I'm exhausted," she admits. "I'm a pathetic golfer." Luckily, golf scores are not a prerequisite for teaching. Pattee has transitioned well into the life of teaching from her paralegal and FBI days. ATC is fortunate to have her as faculty.

Amy Fredin
Accounting
Instructor



Carole Weber-Brown
Accounting
Instructor



Jane Maidl
Administrative
Assistant
Instructor



Hilda Bettermann
Administrative
Support
Instructor



Mavis Pattee
Legal Office
Support
Instructor



Judith Bertram
Medical
Administrative
Instructor



Kelly Jorgens
Medical
Coding
Instructor



Rachel Savageau
Office
Management
Instructor



Getting Down to Business

Employability is the name of the game, and a graduate from ATC's Business Division is employable in all geographical areas and in cities of any size. Business programs offered at ATC include Accounting, Administrative Assistant, Legal Administrative Assistant, Medical Administrative Specialist, Medical Coding Specialist, and Office Management. Wherever people work in an office, there is a job opportunity. Settings include law, agriculture, manufacturing, education, medicine, business, government, and entertainment.

Continuous change and upgrades in technology, programs, and classes are a must. The Business Division prides itself on being "cutting edge" in technology. Every two years, software has been updated so students are prepared for real-world work. Students starting this year can earn Microsoft Office User Specialist (MOUS) certification. Associate in Science (AS) degrees in Accounting and Business have been added this year as well. Potential changes include adding a digital transcription lab, a general or legal transcription program, and/or a third-year legal program.

According to Department Chair Hilda Bettermann, "We seem to have more job openings in our fields than we have graduates to fill them. Past employers continue to call us for potential employees." Business graduates are in such high demand that instructor Rachel Savageau believes, "If all of our Business Division graduates who are locally employed suddenly disappeared one day, the whole town would probably shut down!"

It's no secret that the reduction in state funding for higher education forces instructors to be more efficient with their resources. However, the future remains bright for business graduates. "We are seeing very strong placement even in this downturn in the economy," states Amy Fredin, Accounting instructor. Challenges, however, are good for education and business, and the Business Division has the will, ability, and support required to become bigger and better.

ALUMNAE PROFILE

By
Harry
Weseloh



Mari Johnson



Terese Amazi

ATC Graduates Shatter Glass Ceiling

Some say there's a 'glass ceiling' that makes it hard for women to land top jobs. Two Alexandria Technical College (ATC) graduates have shattered that glass ceiling with spectacular achievements! Here are their stories.

'75 Marketing and Sales Management Grad Becomes One of Herberger's First Woman Buyers

As an early-February snow sifted across frozen Minnesota fields, Alexandria Technical College alumna Mari Johnson anticipated a delightful choice. Watch the blood-red sun dip into the Gulf of Mexico or move to a different balcony of her Sarasota, Florida condominium and absorb the dusky reflection of Sarasota Bay, her winter retreat. That Johnson, 47, has that choice now can be traced to a decision made three decades ago: She enrolled in Alexandria Technical College's Marketing and Sales Management Program.

Johnson's post-secondary choices, despite very good grades, were limited financially to a small number of schools.

The College's renowned personal touch attracted Johnson, who had a strong interest in business and people. "I chose Alex Tech from that first impression. I just had a good feeling. Alex Tech was the only one [school] who did an interview," Johnson said.

Johnson discovered that personal touch carried into the curriculum as instructors helped her understand the fundamentals and nuances of the marketing and sales industry. "Those people cared about you as a student and a person," Johnson said.

Near the end of her time at ATC Johnson's career seemed laid

out already as she was running a pizza restaurant for a national chain, and that company wanted the soon-to-be ATC graduate for its management training program. However, before that option was realized, a visit to the school's campus by Herberger's Department Store officials veered Johnson into the retail business.

The department store chain was looking for three students to work as interns and to participate in Herberger's management training program. Johnson accepted the challenge.

After a slow first few weeks of frustration resulting from dusting racks and cleaning fitting rooms, she began helping the retail chain blossom. Johnson proved her worth and earned more responsibility at stores in St. Cloud, Alexandria, and Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Then another opportunity at ATC beckoned. A teaching vacancy opened in February 1979 and after considerable introspection, Johnson opted to teach. She left Herberger's for what would become a one-quarter stint as a fashion-merchandising teacher at the college.

Herberger's quickly lured its prized employee back with the offer of a buyer's position at the firm. In the summer of 1979, Johnson became one of the first women to become a buyer. Johnson's duties grew quickly from buying handbags and accessories to eventually becoming Vice President, General Merchandise Manager of cosmetics, accessories, intimate apparel, and shoes for the 40-store chain. Business travel to New York City and even Italy became common for the ambitious ATC graduate.

Then in 1997, the company was sold and eventually merged with Saks Fifth Avenue. Johnson decided to sell her investment in Herberger's—which is employee owned—and move on. Johnson aggressively purchased Herberger's stock during her tenure with the company and had substantial 401k and profit-sharing assets so financial implications were minimal. "They really wanted me to stay. I went through a lot of soul searching. But I was more interested in 'making a life versus making a living' at this point in my career and wanted to spend more time with my husband, step-children, and family," Johnson said.

Johnson's 'retirement' includes marketing Sensé, a nutritional based skin care line and nutritional supplements from USANA Health Sciences, a ten-year old, Utah based company. She believes the company's continuing success is due to its quality products and vision to help people expand and maintain their physical and financial health. It was the perfect match for Johnson who was looking "for something where I could be my own boss AND make a difference in people's lives."



It all started here in Alexandria, where Mari Johnson began working for Herberger's.

But, even as Johnson is involved in her latest business, she keeps tight grips on her ties to ATC. Johnson easily finds time to stay connected with the school as a member of the ATC Foundation's Board of Directors. "Alex Tech is on my mind and in my heart," she notes, expressing genuine gratitude for a school that helped her make many great life decisions.

ALUMNAE PROFILE



**'83 Law Enforcement Grad
is Elected Sheriff**

Well, history has been made! A 1983 graduate of Alexandria Technical College's Law Enforcement Program, Terese Amazi garnered 62 percent of Mower County votes in November's election to become the first Minnesota woman elected to be a county's head law enforcement official.

For Amazi winning the sheriff's election is just another step in a career rooted in ATC's Law Enforcement Program. Amazi—whose last name was Wagner when she trained at ATC—aimed for a law enforcement career early in life. "By the time I was 14 or 15 law enforcement was the path I chose to do. It was a good fit for my personality," Amazi said.

The Moose Lake High School graduate opted for ATC. "It had a good program, still does. I had heard a lot of good things about it and knew it had good placement." While in college, Amazi met her future husband, Wayne Amazi, who was also a member of Alexandria's class of '83.

An instructor at that time and now head of the Law Enforcement department, Grant Haugen, recognized Amazi's potential. "ATC is proud of her accomplishment. While attending school she did a great job in her training. She was self-motivated," Haugen said.

Following graduation the Amazis moved to Helena, Montana, where she worked as a jailer for Lewis and Clark County while Wayne was hired by the city's police department. Although each of the transplants enjoyed the area's hunting and fishing, they returned to Minnesota five years later to be near family.



Terese Amazi is sworn in as sheriff in Austin Minnesota.

Amazi began working at the Mower County jail while her husband landed a job with the Austin Police Department. After a year as a jailer, Amazi became a Mower County deputy sheriff in 1989.

About five or six years ago, Amazi began eyeing the top job. Two-term sheriff Barry Simonson's retirement at the close of 2002 offered a prime opportunity for Amazi. "I did a lot of public speaking and went to a lot of small-town functions," Amazi said of her campaign. Gender seemed to be only a minor issue during the campaign according to Amazi, and then only during the door-to-door stops.

The new sheriff faces challenges similar to many departments in growing counties. "We need to move our department into the 21st Century." To do that, Amazi has set her sights on updating the communications system and solving crowding at the county's jail.

But one 21st Century item can already be scratched off the to-do list: be the first woman elected county sheriff in Minnesota.

Students Design State-of-the Art System, Yaskawa Donates \$60,000 of Equipment

Three Alexandria Technical College students designed, built, and programmed a piece of equipment for the Yaskawa Motor Company exhibit at the recent International Packaging Expo in Chicago.

The system is a project of the College's Center for Automation and Motion Control (CAMC). Its creators are (pictured left to right) Automation Systems Integration Certificate students Adam Goebel, Lloyd Elgin, and Mark Evich, who worked with Dr. Ken Ryan, director of Manufacturing Automation Research at the Center. Ryan notes, "I am extremely proud of the students involved in this project. It was a pleasure to watch their enthusiasm



and dedication. They put many late hours into the project despite a very challenging academic schedule."

In exchange for creating the demo system, the Center received a duplicate system to train students in automated motion control. Ryan notes, "I am impressed with Yaskawa's obvious dedication to our students. The company donated \$60,000 worth of

state-of-the-art equipment that is vital to our educational mission and would otherwise be unaffordable."

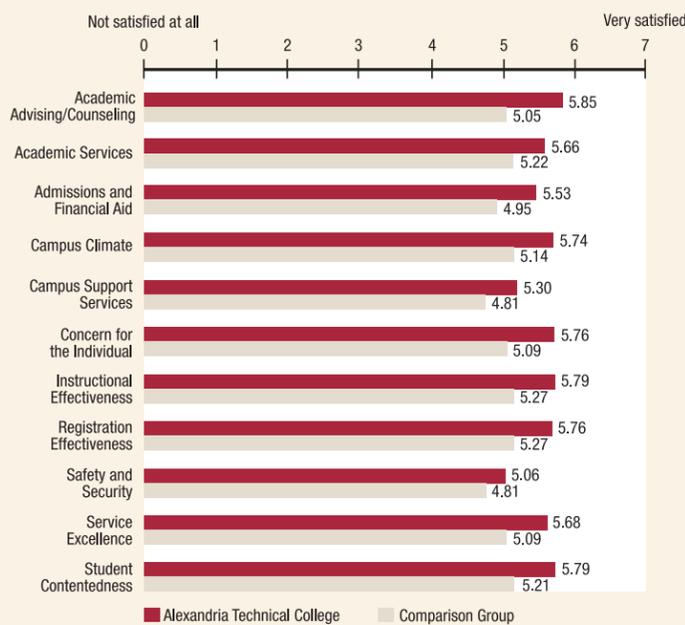
At colleges around the country, departments often do not work well together. This project, however, illustrates strong interdepartmental cooperation at Alexandria. Dr. Ryan says, "We also appreciated the help we got from our Machine Tool Technology and Welding programs. Students and instructors from both programs contributed to this initiative. Without their help it would not have happened."

Yaskawa Packing Industry Marketing Manager John Downie states, "It was more successful than we ever dreamed it could be. In fact we have already started brainstorming with Dr. Ryan for another system to introduce another new technology innovation next year."

Students Give College High Grades

In a recent national survey, Alexandria Technical College students rated the College **significantly** above average in **all** eleven key areas (see below).

How Satisfied Are Our Students Compared to Other Community, Junior and Technical colleges



The survey is the 2002 Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory. For more information visit <http://www.alextech.org/surveys>.

Career & Student Networking Service

A free, new service is available to help Alexandria Technical College (ATC) graduates to advance their careers and network with other ATC alums, current students, and/or potential students. The service empowers members of the ATC family to help each other.

Here's how it works. Alums complete a 5-10 minute survey online at <http://www.alextech.org/Alumni.htm>. Their survey responses and contact information will become part of a database that others can access e.g., at <http://www.alextech.org/Alumni.htm>. ATC graduates, current students, and/or potential students can contact respondents to find out about their careers, jobs, employers and/or experience at ATC.

For more information please contact Associate Dean of Enrollment Services, Bruce Smith, at bruces@alx.tec.mn.us or 320-762-4483.

DEPARTMENT PROFILE

Computer Science

ATC's Computer Science Division is energized for an exciting future featuring a new, cutting-edge building, revised programs, and great things to come! Fortunately, Computer Science graduates don't have to wait for the future to taste success. The division's faculty surveyed some of its graduates to see how they're doing. Working at different jobs in diverse organizations from Alexandria to Maine, these graduates reflect on the importance of their college education.

Jamie Springer has gone a long way since completing the CVN (Computer Voice Networking) program. The ATC graduate is working in Bangor, Maine, as a Network/Systems Specialist 2 for Rural Cellular Corporation—a wireless communications firm headquartered in Alexandria.



"I would highly recommend going to ATC as it is a smaller environment, which means friendly people, more help if needed, and people that really want you to succeed."

Chris Sebranek helps people from all over the world. As Shift Lead/Senior Help Desk Technician for SEI Information Technology in Fargo, North Dakota, the CTSS (Computer Technical Support Specialist) graduate solves hardware, software, and procedural problems for anxious customers.



"ATC prepared me immensely both technically and socially for finding a job and being successful at it."

The New Computer Science Building is Coming!



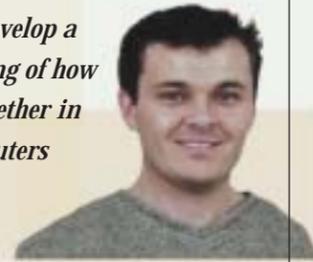
Aaron Johnson used an ATC certificate program to become a web developer for Tastefully Simple, a local direct sales company that offers upscale gourmet foods throughout the country.

“Learning ColdFusion was probably the biggest advantage for me with the Web Development Certificate Program.”



While St. Cloud Hospital cares for people, ATC graduate Tony Klassen monitors the health of the facility's computer network, ensuring health professionals have round-the-clock access to patient data.

“ATC helped me develop a good understanding of how everything fits together in the world of computers and networking.”



Custom programming, graphic design, networking, voice and data wiring, as well as web, email, and co-location hosting are all in the professional bailiwick of CTSS (Computer Technical Support Specialist) graduate Nicole Beilke. As System Administrator for Digital Green, a St. Cloud company, Beilke serves customers in Minnesota and California. She recalls:

“Instructors do a great job of combining academics with business experience to make classes very interesting and worthwhile.”



Working at Microsoft Business Solutions offers frequent challenges for Kerry Scott, COPR (Computer Programmer) graduate of ATC. Scott credits the Computer Programmer curriculum, which trained her to be flexible and included the background needed to understand the current and future standards that she works with at MBS.



“Every day I learn something new about the languages and technology we use to create, maintain, and deliver web applications to our partners, customers, and team members.”

ATC's new computer science building is scheduled to open in fall, 2004. Plans for the state-of-the-art, 52,000 square foot building include 21 technology-equipped classrooms and labs, and much more.



Alexandria

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Enriching Lives, Securing Futures

*When you give to the
Foundation, you are not just
supporting Alexandria
Technical College, you are
enriching lives and securing futures.*

Working full-time and going to school as a "non-traditional" student can be a tough balancing act both physically and financially. I am very grateful for this scholarship.

Mark Reicks
Accounting

Your belief, support, and funding of this scholarship displays your commitment to excellence in higher education. I am honored to be a recipient of such an award.

Kathy Hoffman
Legal Administrative Assistant

The Alexandria Technical College Foundation encourages gifts to enhance student success from individuals, companies, and charitable foundations. For more information on how to contribute, contact Kathy Nohre, ATC Foundation Executive Director, at (320) 762-4591, kathyn@alx.tec.mn.us.