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### **MSCC's Tutor Training Program Earns CRLA Certification**

Mid-South Community College's Tutor Training program has earned College Reading and Learning Association certification and will be able to certify its own tutors for reaching mastery goals at three levels.

"We're really proud of this certification," said Dr. Elaine Wilkins, MSCC's Learning Success Center Director. "It validates what we do on a daily basis. What that means is people who do this for a living have looked at our program and said, 'MSCC has a strong tutoring center.'"

Specifically, the CLRA reviewer(s) described MSCC's tutoring effort as a "solid program that addresses the basic requirements for all three levels of certification."

CRLA is a professional organization whose members are dedicated to improving student reading, learning assistance, developmental education, tutoring, and mentoring. It



***Tutors in Mid-South Community College's Learning Success Center stay busy helping fellow students.***

supports the dignity, potential, and rights of all readers and learners, particularly at the postsecondary level, and subscribes to ethical guidelines for the professional conduct of its members.

“It’s important to our institution to be able to say that we have a CRLA-recognized learning center, and it’s important to any of our tutors who want to pursue a counselor’s or behavioral license after earning a four-year degree,” Wilkins said. “It’s also important to the community because it is not something that everyone can achieve.”

MSCC is one of only eight institutions in the state certified by CLRA and one of only three community colleges to earn the recognition. Mid-South has used CRLA criteria as an instructional guideline for more than a decade.

Wilkins said Mid-South’s certification came as a result of a collective effort.

“The certification was a management down-employee up vision that was recognized and approved,” Wilkins explained. “Everyone from Dr. (Glen) Fenter to our tutors helped to make this happen. I typed up the application and sent it in, but everyone contributed.”

When asked to spearhead the certification process, Wilkins said she asked herself the question, “How do we build a program strong enough to address these students’ needs?”

“We chose the student peer model, and CRLA prefers that because they say that you get good results,” Wilkins pointed out. “When you hire students to tutor, they know exactly what the other person is struggling with. Once we decided on that approach, we began looking in our own backyard for the best of the best.”

Most of the tutors have a classroom connection to MSCC, and those who don’t are students in four-year programs. All who have worked at least one full semester have achieved Level I certification. MSCC can also recognize the academic coaches with Level II Advanced Certified Tutor and Level III Master Certified Tutor certificates as they progress through the process.

All tutors must have a minimum 3.0 grade-point average to work with fellow students, and most of them can assist with multiple subjects.

“Our biggest thing is tutoring ‘across the curriculum,’” Wilkins said. “All but three of our tutors can cover almost any subject that’s on this campus, with the exception

of aviation maintenance. But they can help students learn the skills to be a better reader in aircraft maintenance.”

“That’s why we’re so busy. The students are getting a sense of, ‘This is where I go when I get into (academic) trouble,’ and we want them to feel comfortable when they get here.”

Tutors meet with Wilkins on a daily basis during a half-hour span in the afternoon when the center is closed. They also participate in training at the beginning of each semester and attend additional sessions throughout the semester.

Wilkins said CLRA encourages programs to involve tutors as much as possible in the culture of the college.

“They want you to develop tutors to a higher level,” she explained. “We certainly want our tutors to be as knowledgeable as possible about the College because students often need help in areas outside of tutoring.”

The center uses a peacock as reminder of how the tutors should respond to other students.

“Our peacock demonstrates that we are constantly on display, and we should be very proud,” Wilkins said. “We emphasize calmness, self-assurance, and confidence. Some days, we might have some ruffled feathers, but people will forgive you if there are so many more good days.”

While many colleges and universities charge for tutoring, MSCC offers all of its services for free.

For information about tutoring or other academic enhancement opportunities at Mid-South, visit the campus at 2000 West Broadway, West Memphis, call (870) 733-6728, or send an email to [admissions@midsouthcc.edu](mailto:admissions@midsouthcc.edu).