

Copper Mountain College offers ‘How to go to college’ class

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You know what it is like to procrastinate. But didn't you find out it was easier to start a task once you learned how to go about tackling it? For many people, going to college is a lot like that. Uncertainty about perceived obstacles sometimes puts off this important educational step.

Copper Mountain College is inviting military family members to participate in the new program Steps to Success Jan. 13-16 at CMC's Combat Center office in building 1526.

The program is available through Copper Mountain College by Title V, a federal grant that addresses educational issues and concerns centering on academic success in basic skills and removing barriers to educational opportunities.

R & B Auto Center in Fontana, Calif., is sponsoring the Steps to Success Program and will donate \$100 to the program for each vehicle they sell to military personnel aboard the base.

“We're aiming this program to the spouses of sergeants and below,” said Jeff Fourier, the branch head of Lifelong Learning. “They are the future to our society. We want them to go to college, so when our generation retires there is someone there to take our place.”

Steps to Success begins with three hours of classes a day that teach and assist students in overcoming barriers that sometimes keep people from going to college, including registering for child care, school-related paperwork, financial aid, time management and transportation issues.

“This program was made by a Marine spouse for the Marine spouse,” said Kelly Nekvinda, an instructor with and founder of Steps to Success. “We're trying to get them to understand that being a Marine wife and going to college may be difficult, but not impossible.”

All the spouses who participated in the classes will then be registered with CMC and begin college the week after the program ends. They will also receive free textbooks for their classes.

“A lot of these women are afraid to go to college,” said Nekvinda, a Christchurch, New Zealand, native. “Most of them don't even know where to start. They don't understand the forms they have to fill out or they think they don't have enough time, and everything goes down hill from there.”

During the program, Nekvinda and Sheri Holbrook, the Title V coordinator for CMC,

will guide participants through financial aid, college admissions and registration, credit evaluations, time management and personality and career assessments.

“A lot of woman come to us and say they were unsuccessful in high school,” said Holbrook. “It doesn’t matter though. We’re here to give them so much support and help them succeed and secure their future.”

At the end of the four-day course, spouses will be invited to a celebration luncheon and a job fair to help them figure out what careers they might be interested in pursuing.

As the spouses begin college, the instructors of Steps to Success will hold weekly meetings with fellow college members with the same goals.

“These spouses will not be let go and expected to swim,” said Nektivinda. “We will have weekly meetings with a support group and free tutoring from qualified volunteers. We try really hard to make the first semester as easy as possible.”

For more information e-mail Nektivinda at ksweetman@cmccd.edu.