

## Busy medical assistant life suits Three Rivers woman



**KALAMAZOO---**As a certified medical assistant employed at the Western Michigan University Sindecuse Health Center, Linda Gavin keeps busy with a number of duties in providing care to the staff, faculty and students of Western Michigan University.

Gavin is a 2007 graduate of Glen Oaks Community College with an Associate of Applied Science in Allied Health degree and a Medical Assistant Certificate. The Three Rivers woman also graduated in 1992 from GOCC with an Associate of Applied Science in Business. Gavin returned to the classroom in 2004 with a compelling desire to work in health care. "In 2001, my daughter was diagnosed with various medical problems. I had an interest in the health care field, but it was not until my daughter's diagnoses that I had the motivation to take that huge step and return to college. After spending countless hours in physician offices and hospitals for testing, I decided to return to Glen Oaks to pursue a certificate in Medical Assisting and a degree in Allied Health," said Gavin. Besides working full-time, raising two children with her husband, and completing two externships, Gavin also completed the Office Assistant-Medical certificate and qualified for her credentials in January 2008 as a Certified Medical Assistant (AAMA) from the American Association of Medical Assistants.



As a medical assistant, Gavin works under the supervision of a physician or mid-level practitioner. Her clinical skills include obtaining vital signs, evaluating the recording patient history and subjective symptoms, assisting the physician with examinations, performing diagnostic testing, assisting with procedures and treatments, preparing and administering medications and immunizations as ordered, collecting and processing specimens, and recognizing and responding to emergency procedures.

General or administrative duties also keep Gavin busy. These may include electronic medical records for chart documentation and scheduling, obtaining medical records from a variety of sources (from hospitals, etc), maintaining examination rooms and inventory of supplies and equipment, applying aseptic technique and infection control, educating patients on various health topics within scope of practice, coordinating patient referrals, assisting with telephone messages and requests for calling in prescriptions, attending continuing education courses, serving on department or Division of Student Affairs events at WMU, assisting quality improvement and various other committees.

Despite a busy work schedule and a family Gavin is continuing her education through Western Michigan University. She will soon be a senior and close to earning a Bachelor's Degree in Interdisciplinary Health Services with a minor in Psychology. Her goals may go even farther as she considers a Master's Degree in Public Administration.

Would Gavin recommend work in allied health or as a medical assistant to others?

"I would encourage any individual that not only loves working with people, but likes the diversified and challenging features of the health care field to pursue a career in medical assisting. The Glen Oaks Community College Medical Assisting program offers a strong foundation in clinical and administrative skills with an incredible support staff at all levels of the college environment. Personally, I find a career in medical assisting both rewarding and challenging. I have the opportunity to help others

daily while utilizing specialized skills. And, in my case, the education from Glen Oaks provided great preparation to continue at the university level,” concluded Gavin.

The Medical Assistant Certificate is a diverse and flexible occupational program requiring 50 credit hours at Glen Oaks Community College. Clinical skills include phlebotomy, medication administration and surgical assisting. Administrative skills include health insurance coding and billing, medical transcription, patient scheduling and receptionist duties. Graduates are eligible for National Certification. The Associate of Applied Science in Allied Health degree is a 62 credit hour program for those seeking increased responsibilities, supervisory roles and health care office management in physician offices, health care offices, hospital based clinics, hospitals and small health care businesses. Those seeking more information may contact the Student Services Office or Brenda Luczek, Instructor of Allied Health, at (269) 467-9945 or 1-888-994-7818 toll free, or e-mail [bluczek@glenoaks.edu](mailto:bluczek@glenoaks.edu)