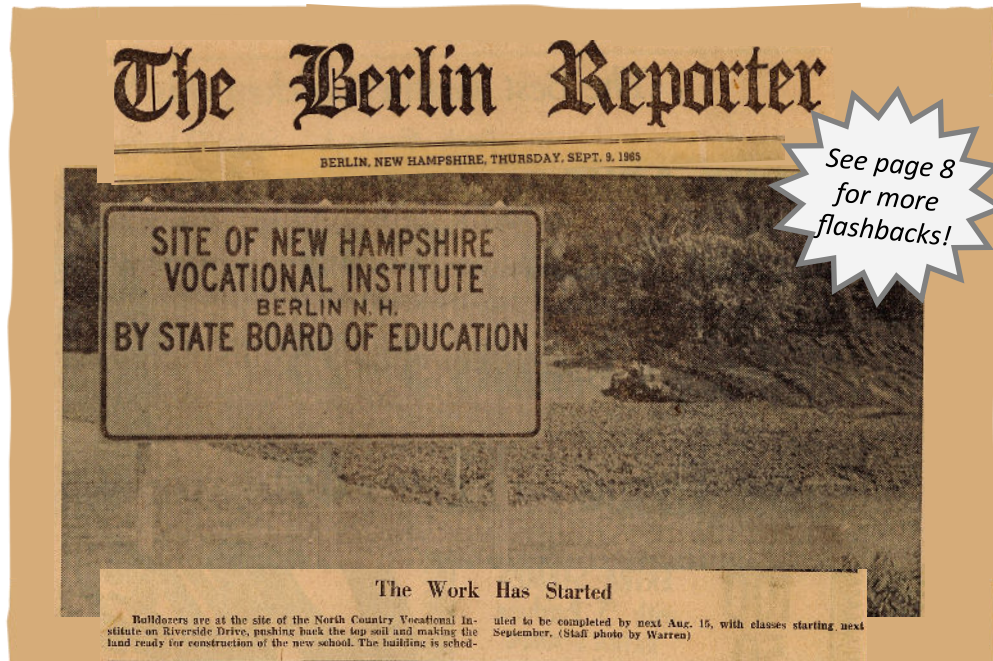




## Your Semi-Annual News & Updates

Fall 2025



*Congratulations*

**The WMCC Alumni Association is very happy to announce that WMCC student Noah Fortin, of Gorham, N.H., is the recipient of the Fall 2025 Alumni Scholarship Award of \$650!**

Both of Noah's parents are alumni; Mom, Sharon, graduated in 1998 from the Medical Transcription certificate program, and Dad, James, from the Machine Tool Processes program in 1985. Noah, 23, resides in Gorham N.H., and is currently in the Trades Management program at WMCC focusing on welding. "I want to further my education and career by gaining practical skills that complement my Bachelor's in Aeronautical Engineering. My goal is to build and develop aeronautical/aerospace technologies". Noah is set to graduate in the spring of 2026. He plans on taking the Pipe Welding certificate next summer. Noah also says, "I intend to design, develop, and test aircraft and spacecraft while becoming certified as a Welding Engineer from the American Welding Society". We wish Noah the best of luck!



The WMCC Alumni Association awards one \$650 scholarship in the fall each year to a WMCC student who has ties with one of our alumni. If you would like to make a donation to the scholarship, you may do so using this link: [Give to White Mountains Community College | Berlin, Littleton NH \(givenhcc.org\)](https://givenhcc.org/where-to-give/wmcc/)

**Stay connected to WMCC events, success stories and more!**



- Join the **FACEBOOK** group: **WMCC Alumni Association**
- Keep in touch! Contact us through the **Alumni Information Form**: [www.wmcc.edu/about/alumni/alumni-information-form/](https://www.wmcc.edu/about/alumni/alumni-information-form/)



## *Update from WMCC President Sarmad Saman*

Greetings to all White Mountains Community College Alumni. You are an important part of this great institution as you made it through our programs and now you are Ambassadors for our College.

WMCC is moving forward to ensuring that we can provide to our students their academic and workforce development needs. Our numbers are continuously growing since the foundation of the College in 1966. This past year 1867 students went through our doors. 859 at the Berlin campus, nearly 600 in Littleton and 410 fully online. Adding that total we have over 40 students in our Prison Education Program. Our graduation rate is one the highest at 62% while our retention rate is the highest at 84%. The College awarded 152 certificate and 100 Associate degrees this past year. Our impressive numbers reflects our continued growth, for example we have 794 enrolled in our Early College program and 335 students in the Workforce Development and Community Education area.

We have some very impressive numbers and success to report in our Nursing program. WMCC is ranked 1<sup>st</sup> out of 18 Institutions in New Hampshire for The National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) exam. This exam is used to determine if recently graduated nursing students are safe to practice. Every nurse who graduates from an ADN or BSN program must pass the NCLEX-RN to earn licensure and legally practice nursing in the United States. WMCC is 1<sup>ST</sup> among 1205 Associate Degree of Nursing offering Colleges nationally and 1<sup>st</sup> out 2304 Nationally in Nursing degree granting institutions.

Our Prison Education Program graduated its first cohort of 14 students at a ceremony that took place at the Berlin Department of Correction Facility. There was a commencement ceremony inside the facility that resembled the College's own commencement. A number of attendees included State and Federal Representatives, the Community College System of NH Chancellor and Vice- Chancellor and the graduates' families. I was honored to preside on this 1<sup>st</sup> WMCC Prison Education Program commencement and it's a clear reflection of the College's role in improving lives through education.

WMCC Workforce Development area has expanded to 4 staff members that includes two Coordinators one for our Health programs and one for our Accredited Welding Facility. This would enable us to increase our outreach and offer the training needed for our local workforce.

We are expecting that our Nursing and Science Labs renovations will begin this December 2025, and the project would be completed by August 2026 to welcome our students for the 2026/2027 academic year. This project would see the total renovation of these labs to bring them to the 21<sup>st</sup> century and expand our capabilities in providing the education sought by our students.

Meals IncludED in which WMCC provide free meals to our students is and will continue to ensure we provide our students with some form of food security and allow them to concentrate on their studies. This service is provided at both campus locations through providing over 17,765 free meals to WMCC students this past year.



White  
Mountains  
Community College

Want to learn more about  
YOUR alma mater?  
Check out the college's  
webpage: [wmcc.edu](http://wmcc.edu)





## Taking Advantage of Early College

Sixteen-year-old **Joshua Dennis O'Neil** is enrolled in White Mountains Community College's Automotive Technology certificate program for the fall of 2025. Joshua lives in Dalton NH and is home schooled. He learned of the Early College program offered at WMCC and has taken full advantage of the free courses and discounted rates Early College has to offer. "I chose the auto program at WMCC because welding wouldn't work with my schedule this year, and auto tech was a subject I wanted to get involved with at some point in my education. It seemed well set up and a better option than the local high school tech programs" says Joshua. Joshua will be graduating in the spring of 2027 and plans to either enroll in our welding program or he may go straight to the University of Northwestern Ohio for a degree in high performance motorsports. The Early College program through WMCC offers high school students the opportunity to earn both high school and college credit by taking WMCC courses. Students can take classes at their high school, on WMCC's campus, or online through a partnership with VLACS (Virtual Learning Academy Charter School). These options allow students to save time and money, explore college-level subjects, and work toward an associate degree or certificate while still in high school. These courses may be eligible to be transferred to other 2 or 4 year institutions. The program is designed to provide a flexible, affordable head start on college and career pathways!

## WHITE MOUNTAINS COMMUNITY COLLEGE NOW OFFERING AWS WELDING CERTIFICATION SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC

*WMCC only accredited testing facility in New Hampshire*

Berlin, N.H. (September 23, 2025)— [White Mountains Community College](#) (WMCC) in Berlin, New Hampshire has launched American Welding Society (AWS) certification services for both students enrolled in the college's welding program and the general public. WMCC's Accredited Test Facility (ATF) is led by Certified Welding Inspectors (CWIs) who evaluate the strength, quality, and integrity of completed welds to assess

*Continued on page 6*



# Golfing for a cause . . . .



By Angela Clark WMCC Bursar

On June 26, 2025, 27 Teams competed for fun, fundraising, and friend-raising at the Maplewood Golf Course & Inn in Bethlehem, NH for your 7<sup>th</sup> annual WMCC Golfing the Gap tournament. Our goal is to bridge the gap between what students can afford and what they owe, highlighting our mission of affordability and accessibility. Even the smallest balances can



hinder a student's ability to progress to completion. Ninety-five percent of our students receive some form of financial aid. The Tournament raised over **\$21,000** this year alone! Please mark your calendar for June 25, 2026, when we will hold the eighth annual *Golfing the Gap* tournament, once again at the Maplewood Golf Club and Inn in Bethlehem, NH. For more information, please contact Angela Clark at 603-342-3053, Ryan Richard at 603-342-3019, or email us at [wmccgolf@ccsnh.edu](mailto:wmccgolf@ccsnh.edu)

WMCC's VP of Academic Affairs, Leah Maciejewski, Camden National Bank's Bobby Hill, and WMCC's VP of Student Affairs, Mark Desmarais

## White Mountains Community College Honored as Community Partner of the Year by NH Department of Corrections for Prison Education Programming

July 18, 2025

**Berlin, N.H.** – White Mountains Community College (WMCC) received the Community Partner of The Year Award from the New Hampshire Department of Corrections (NHDOC) for its work with the Northern New Hampshire Correctional Facility (NNHCF) to provide opportunities for students to enroll in a course of study and earn associate degrees through the college. This foundational partnership culminated in the first-ever graduation ceremony in the facility recently for the inaugural cohort of students, who received degrees in Business and Liberal Arts.



Goals of the program include helping to prepare participants for life and employment post-release, but are also centered on rehabilitation, reducing recidivism and enhancing facility safety. The WMCC NHDOC Prison Education Program model is also the basis for a planned expansion of the program at a second Community College System of NH (CCSNH) College – NHTI – Concord's Community College. The goal is to provide similar programming within the two corrections facilities in the city serving men and women.

Continued on page 7





1965



1970s



1980s



1990s



1995



2000



2005



White Mountains Community College

2010-

## Ronni-Jean Marois

WMCC Class of 2011



As a working single mother of two, going back to school felt like being “a deer in the headlights” to Ronni-Jean Marois. She soon learned that at White Mountains Community College, she

wasn’t just a number; that guidance and support were everywhere.

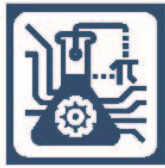
During her Medical Office Management degree program, Ronni’s favorite classes were with program coordinator Lynn Davis and instructor Tamara Roberge, but it didn’t take long to realize that everyone at the college was there to help.

After graduation, she jumped right into gainful employment in medical coding and billing at Coos County Family Health Services, which led to other opportunities.

In 2024, Ronni returned to her alma mater as a Welcome Center Assistant. Now, she is the person who guides, supports and helps everyone who calls or walks through the doors at WMCC. While the building layout, some of the departments and faces have changed since she was a student, Ronni is happy to say that the culture of encouragement continues. We’re so glad she’s come full-circle!

## Charles Astuto

WMCC Class of 2023



In the 21st century, Information Technology security is essential in every facet of American life, and staffing those positions takes a special breed of professional.

In 2023, Jefferson resident Charles Astuto graduated with an Associates degree from the Information Technology program at White Mountains Community College. As a result of his education, he is now enjoying a career as a Systems Administrator at Weeks Medical/ North Country Healthcare.

In high school, Charles took advantage of Early College classes because “it was nice to have cheaper tuition and get high school credit too.” Charles said he chose WMCC for an IT degree because it was close to home. IT instructor Ron Denault was Charles’s favorite teacher, and he said he really enjoyed the program.

Recently, Charles has started taking online classes through Southern New Hampshire University to further his IT education with a bachelor’s degree.

Charles’s brother, James, is currently a WMCC nursing student. We look forward to hearing about his career success in a few years!

a welder's skill level and ensure they meet the AWS requirements.

"AWS certification is a portable credential that helps prove that an individual has the required skillset to do a job well. It opens doors to jobs and is a path to higher wages," said Don Arguin, ATF coordinator at WMCC. "In many cases – such as government contracts – certification is required."

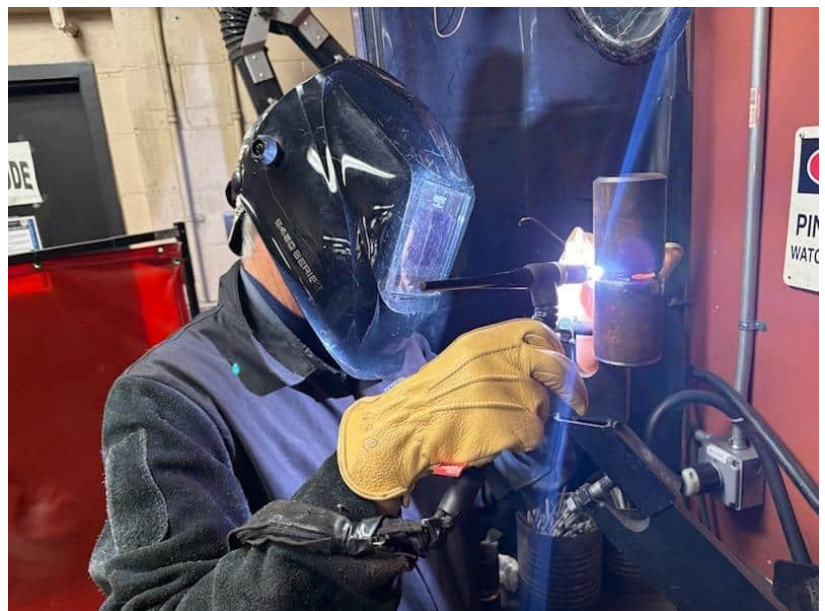
Funding from a 2019–2025 Northern Borders Regional Commission grant supported the creation and initial infrastructure of the ATF at WMCC. This investment laid the groundwork for New Hampshire's first AWS accredited test facility, establishing WMCC as a critical resource for industry and a foundation for expanding regional technical training. Funding received in the New Hampshire state budget approved by the governor and legislature enabled WMCC to expand program infrastructure so welding certification services could be offered to the public, bolstering the welding workforce and facilitating a broad range of projects that rely on certified welders.

"There are training programs for welders that have Certified Welding Inspectors for their own students, but they are not open to the public. When a large program that provided certifications out of Bangor, Maine recently closed, there was a real need for an ATF that is open to all. We stepped up to fill the gap and serve both our own students and the community," Annette Cole, manager of Workforce Development at WMCC explained.

As part of WMCC's Workforce Education program, the ATF is available for a broad range of certifications ranging from common applications – such as pipe and structural steel welding – to custom work.

The ATF began serving high school welding classes even before its official public opening. "We have had busloads of students come for certifications. They will graduate high school with baseline certifications that give them an edge in the job market or a leg up before continuing their welding education," Cole said.

For more information about WMCC's ATF and welding certification services, please visit [WMCC.edu/ATF](https://wmcc.edu/ATF).



*Don Arguin, ATF Coordinator at WMCC, in the welding lab.*

The program began in March 2023. Participants were enrolled in classes full-time and received onsite instruction by WMCC faculty, using the same curriculum offered at the college. Two more cohorts of 26 individuals are currently enrolled in the program.

The ceremony was held in the gym of the NNHCF with over 100 people in attendance including the graduates, their families, faculty and staff from WMCC, CCSNH and the NHDOC. WMCC President Sarmad Saman welcomed attendees, noting the NNHCF serves as another campus for WMCC and that students are given the same academic opportunity and rigor, with access to counseling and advice that helps students complete their programming.

“Our mission is to change lives and make sure we have an educated workforce that will improve our economy – your success is our success,” Saman said.

The program was envisioned and modeled several years ago. WMCC received approval from the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE) as a Second Chance Pell Program (SCP), which allows incarcerated individuals to apply for federal Pell Grants to pay for classes. In 2024, the NHDOC formally approved the Prison Education Program proposal, noting its alignment with both NHDOC’s rehabilitation goals and WMCC’s educational mission.

Nicholas Duffy, director of rehabilitative services with NHDOC, delivered congratulatory remarks on behalf of the department. “You are trailblazers. Real growth comes from perseverance. You turned challenges into stepping stones and adversity into opportunity. Graduation is impressive, but doing so in prison takes more – it means seeing beyond these walls around you and beyond the stigma,” he said.

Commencement ceremonies at the facility are expected to become annual going forward as the effort gains momentum. Legislation passed in New Hampshire 2024 to create a Corrections Education and Vocational Planning Group (CEVPG) will help support program expansion based on key goals. The CEVPG aims to enhance career and educational programming within NHDOC to improve facility safety, public safety, reduce recidivism rates and bolster employability and self-efficacy among incarcerated individuals. Key partners include NHDOC, CCSNH, New England Board of Higher Education, and the University System of New Hampshire.

White Mountains Community College (WMCC) is located in Berlin, New Hampshire with a satellite campus in Littleton, and is one of seven colleges in the Community College System of New Hampshire. WMCC offers associate degree and certificate programs, plus training options, preparing students for 21st century job opportunities as well as transfer pathways to four-year colleges and universities. WMCC is fully accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE). Courses within WMCC and the Community College System are the most affordable in New Hampshire and the Littleton Academic Center increases access to all students in the North Country Region. Courses are available day, evening and online. WMCC courses transfer to four-year colleges and universities in New Hampshire and across the country.



**Find updates and  
opportunities at the  
Community College System  
of New Hampshire  
website: [CCSNH.EDU](https://ccsnh.edu)**



# REMEMBER WHEN... 60 years ago this fall:

## 1965 in the United States

President:	Lyndon B. Johnson
Vice President:	Hubert H. Humphrey
Population:	194,302,963
Life expectancy:	70.2 years
Federal debt:	\$322.3 billion
Inflation:	1.6%
Median income was about	\$6,900. *
Unemployment:	5.2%
Cost of a new home:	\$21,500.00
Average cost of new car:	\$2,650
Cost of a first-class stamp:	\$0.05
Cost of a gallon of regular gas:	\$0.31
Cost of a dozen eggs:	\$0.53
Cost of a gallon of milk:	\$0.95
Cost of a loaf of bread:	\$0.21

Source: <http://www.1960sflashback.com/1965/economy.asp>

\*Source: <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/1967/demo/p60-051.html>



Four—THE BERLIN REPORTER, BERLIN, N. H. — Thursday, Sept. 2, 1965

### Editorials

#### He's a Natural For the Job

Ed Oleson is coming home. And that is good news for us of the Berlin area.

Ed has been appointed director of the North Country Vocational Institute — and the State Board of Education is to be congratulated for picking him. He's a natural for the job.

Ed not only has the administrative background and ability, but he knows the young people of the area and the problems they face in getting the training they need.

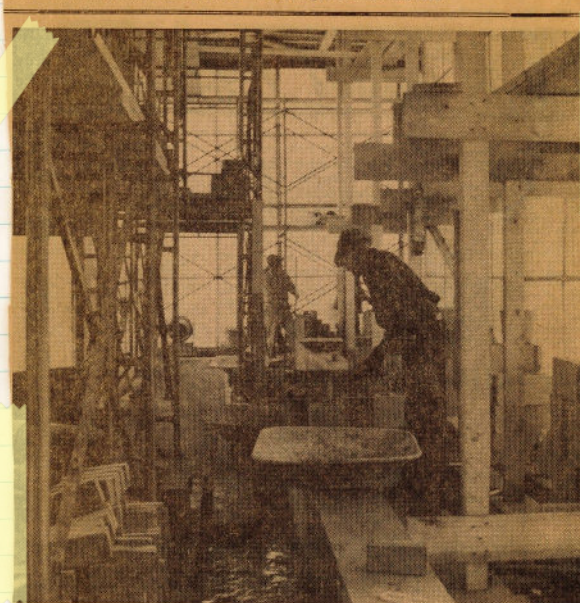
He spent 11 years at Berlin High School, as an industrial arts teacher and later as assistant principal. He helped develop and expand the outstanding vocational program that has made BHS an example throughout the state. Just prior to his leaving Berlin, he toured the country to select equipment under a federal program to completely modernize the BHS machine shop.

Because of his background and experience, Ed was selected as director of trade and industrial education with the State Department of Education and then to head the big Manpower Development and Training Center in Manchester.

Although Ed went to the southern part of the state in 1962, he really never left Berlin. He has kept his residence here and made no secret of the fact that he hoped some day to come back.

Perhaps the greatest tribute to Ed that has been made is that by Earl Little, chief of the state Division of Vocational-Technical Education, who worked closely with Ed at BHS and later became his boss with the State Department of Education. Said Little, "The success of the institute is assured through the appointment of Mr. Oleson, a man of wide experience, unlimited stamina and sterling qualities of leadership."

BERLIN REPORTER, BERLIN, N. H. — Thursday, November 25, 1965

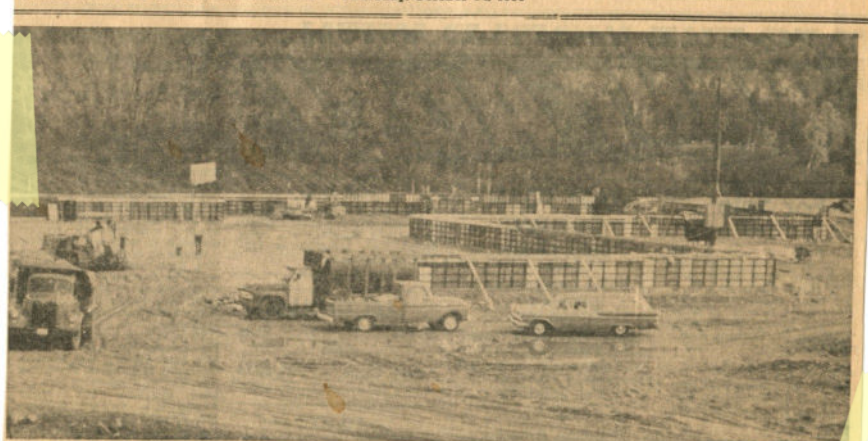


#### Cozy Place In Which to Work

The weather may be cold and wet but masons putting up the walls of the North Country Vocational Institute work in comfort. Translucent material on wooden frames has been erected to completely cover the area in which men like Sidney

Sanborn of Milan (foreground) are working. Warm air blowers keep the temperature even, which helps the mortar harden evenly. (Staff photo by Warren)

THE BERLIN REPORTER, BERLIN, N. H. — Thursday, October 14, 1965



#### The Foundation Is Laid

Work is progressing rapidly on the North Country Vocational Institute, with forms up and concrete poured for the foundation. The school, located on Riverside Drive property donated to the state by

Mrs. Mark Twitchell, is scheduled to be completed next August and to open next September under the direction of Prin. Edward Oleson of Berlin. (Staff photo by Warren)