

Regional Center brings education closer to the students

Part two of a five part series



Above: Nursing students from the new nursing program at the Westmont Regional Center listen into a presentation on how cough medications interact with the body. This is the first semester the program is being held at the WRC.

Right: Private tutor Mark Rusinelli (Right), instructs student Author Horn on the basic principles of Windows XP. WRC has a wide age range in their students.

Below: WRC Supervisor Debby Piha inspects one of her many plants in the break area at the WRC. Piha plays many roles at the center, some times acting as a janitor if need be.



Photos and Story by Aldo Blanco

Education is the key to success, which is why the college has Regional Community Centers. "We are in your neighborhood, come on in," Westmont Supervisor Debby Piha said. Westmont Center reaches out to those who cannot make it to the Glen Ellyn campus.

Westmont Center services up to one thousand students per semester, with classes that range from math, anatomy, nursing and ESL. By having a wide curriculum, students are able to attend school without having to go through the troubles of main campus.

The center also houses a

wide variety of students including young adults right out of high school to older students. "The diversity of our students is large, the community center has a wide variety of cultures," Piha said.

Yet the space provided is not enough. "We are land locked. We cannot build up and we have no space to build out," Piha said. Westmont's classes are always full and many students are not able to register for classes at this location. The space issue has become so bad that many students are taking classes at Westmont City Hall, where the college has leased space.

The lack of space was not an issue for pre-pharmacology student Chioma Agu, "I

wanted to go to the main campus. I live in Aurora and it is a far drive. The classes were not available so this will have to do," Agu said. Agu was at WRC to take a speech class.

Luis Jimenez thinks that the center is a great idea. "I like it a lot better than main campus, it's only 20 minutes from my house. It is good, clean and pleasant," Jimenez said while looking at the greenery that was all around.

The place has so many plants that one may think it's a greenhouse. "I have brought most of these plants from home. They make the center more relaxing for the students," Piha said. The center is calming and has a very relaxed feel.