



Naperville Center Supervisor Shawn L. Mertens.

# Regional center caters to high school, transitional students

*Part five of a six part series*

The Naperville Regional Center offers both credit and non credit-classes, but what makes this center unique is that it also houses Technology Center of DuPage's Cosmetology program as well as classes for High School Districts 203 and 204.

"During the day we have high school students working in our classrooms. Districts 203 and 204 have a transitional program for students that graduated from high school, but have developmental disabilities and need job training," Site Supervisor Shawn Mertens said. "The vocational skill the students are learning will make them go out into the community. By being here they can interact with adults, helping them become responsible members of the community," Mertens said.

The TCD off site gives students from the Naperville and other nearby high schools a chance to study cosmetology without having to commute to the Addison location. "I want to work in runway or model make up. I have always loved make up and would play with my mom's make up. Hair is only my back up," Waubonsie Valley High School student Katherine Rally said.

The high school program is stepping stone for those who want to work in any of the cosmetology fields. "This is a wonderful program. It's great. It is also much cheaper than programs outside of TCD or COD- we only pay a fraction of the price for the longer program," Rally said.

Mertens is new to the Naperville center and is very excited to get to know the community better. She is involved in three local chambers of commerce. "I am very excited about this position, I feel that we will have much more to offer the community," Mertens said.

**Photos and Story by Aldo Blanco**



Cosmetology students Katherine Rally (left) and Kate Limanowski look on as an instructor explains the proper way to apply chemicals onto hair using aluminum foil.



**Upper Right:** A mannequin head is seen with strips of hair exposed for a cap highlight.

**Above:** Naperville Regional Center sign and building is easily visible off of Rickert Drive.

**Left:** Instructor Kim Curia reads out instructions to transitional student Grace Song on how to bus a table properly.

