



News Release

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WESTERN STUDENT EARNS NATIONAL AWARD

St. Joseph, Mo. —Jan. 18, 2005—When Meri Thompson enrolled at Missouri Western State College as a nontraditional student, she voluntarily signed up for a developmental math class to ease her fears about taking college algebra. Her experience in that class, she said, laid the foundation for a successful college career, and Thompson was recently rewarded for her efforts. This month, she learned that, from the thousands of developmental education students in the nation, she was awarded the Martha Maxwell Developmental Education Student Scholarship. Thompson, of Cameron, Mo., will be honored at the national conference of the National Association for Developmental Education in Albuquerque, N.M. in March.

The scholarship is given annually to a graduate of a developmental education program who has successfully continued his or her college education. Thompson earned her bachelor of science in history and secondary education certification in December 2004, and plans to pursue a second undergraduate degree.

“I think it’s a tremendous recognition,” said R.E. Moore, director of Western’s developmental education program. “She used the (developmental math) course not only to succeed, but to succeed at a very high level. She is a top notch student and an outstanding individual.”

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Thompson said her good experience in the developmental math class led not only to an “A” in college algebra, but to her decision to return to the developmental program as a tutor, a position she held for the next four years. “I understand the apprehension and frustration that these students experience. It shocks them when I tell that that only a few years ago I was sitting in that same place and experiencing the same fears and apprehensions.”

Along with her tutoring job and carrying a full-time course load, Thompson operated a dance studio she owns, and volunteered in her community. She also maintained a high grade point average throughout her college career and was inducted into four honor societies.

“Academic success was not the only benefit I received from the developmental math course,” she said. “The encouragement and understanding that I experienced made a lasting impact on me.”

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Missouri Western State College is a four-year public institution providing a blend of traditional liberal arts and professional degree programs. The college offers student-centered, high quality instruction that focuses on experience-based learning, community service, and state-of-the-art technology. Western is located in St. Joseph, Mo. and is committed to the educational, economic, cultural and social development of the region it serves.