

Weekend College still enrolling students for fall

Free info session on July 26 will include more details about program for adult learners

BAYTOWN, TX — When Cathy Graham made the decision to enroll in the Weekend College at Lee College, she was tired of being a secretary and eager to embark on a new career path — but also a little apprehensive about returning to the classroom after many years away.

Graham's journey in the Weekend College, in which students earn associate degrees in less than 2 years by attending classes only on Friday evenings and Saturdays, has been better than she could have imagined. In her very first class in the Computer and Network Maintenance Technology program, she learned how to build a computer from scratch; now, even coworkers in her department at NASA come to her for help troubleshooting their machines. She marvels at how much she has learned so quickly.

"When we started this, we never thought that in a year and 9 months we'd be graduating," said Graham, a grandmother of three and long-time Baytonian who will walk across the stage in May to receive her Associate of Applied Science degree. "I didn't believe it at first, but our instructors knew. They are our cheerleaders. I learned to start trusting."

Funded through a \$2.7 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education, the Weekend College is designed for adult learners and those juggling work, school and other responsibilities. A free information session about the program will be held from 7-8:30 p.m., Tuesday, July 26, in the Rundell Hall Conference Center on campus. Faculty, staff and students will provide more details about enrollment for the Fall 2016 semester, share experiences and answer questions. Free food and refreshments will be provided.

Weekend College students can choose from five different Associate of Art and Associate of Applied Science degree program options: Industrial Welding Technology, Computer and Network Maintenance Technology, Business Administration and Management, Transfer Allied Health and General Studies – Social Science. The program uses a cohort model that keeps the same groups of students together from enrollment to graduation or transfer, and class sizes average just 18-25 students.

Through 3-week and 8-week bridge courses, Weekend College students are able to move more quickly from developmental classes into credit classes. Classes are offered at multiple Lee College locations to enhance convenience and flexibility, and many are delivered in a hybrid format that blends online and classroom instruction. Weekend College courses are never dropped; once accepted into the program, students will always have the courses they need for their degree.

Students in the Weekend College also receive personalized advising, financial assistance and tutoring offered 24 hours a day, seven days a week. A completion coach provides assistance with the application process, financial aid and registration, and continues to help students through each semester until graduation or transfer.

The overwhelming support of her Weekend College instructors and classmates helped calm Graham's initial fears about going back to school, and has kept her motivated to

succeed. She looks forward to completing her associate degree and moving on to her bachelor's and master's — and feels confident her Weekend College family will always be there to cheer her on as she pursues a career in information systems and security.

“You have to commit yourself and your time to the program,” Graham said. “Believe in yourself and don't give up; never give up. The Weekend College has been a great experience that I am so glad I've had.”