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THE ENQUIRER

Last Updated: 7:10 pm | Sunday, May 20, 2007

## Gateway honors its top grads

### Some overcame big obstacles

BY HOWARD MCEWEN | ENQUIRER CONTRIBUTOR

#### COVINGTON -

Gateway Community and Technical College held its first awards convocation May 9 at the Carnegie Visual and Performing Arts Center.

"We are delighted to take this opportunity to honor the accomplishments of more than 100 outstanding students who have demonstrated academic or technical excellence in their respective fields," Gateway President G. Edward Hughes said in a statement.

Awards ranged from GED Graduate of the Year to honors from the accounting department.

"It was touching to see students who had never before won an award," said Laura Cook, vice president of Resource Development and External Affairs for Gateway. "They and their families were incredibly moved. Some were crying for joy."

Kenneth A. Stanbary, 38, won the Excellence in Manufacturing Technologies award. The 10-year Navy veteran and Iowa native attended Gateway under the Veterans Vocational Rehabilitation program. He worked third shift while taking a full-time class load. A student government representative, he was also named Student Government Association Student of the Year.

"I only have one regret," said Stanbary. "And that is the fact that I am leaving Gateway. I have made many new friends and have enjoyed all of my instructors. I would say that my life has changed for the better. One purpose of the National Technical Honor Society comes to mind, and that is to build self confidence. I am more confident today than I ever have been."

Stanbary is looking for a job in his field.

Jamie Mospens, 27, was named the outstanding student in the childhood development program and was asked to read her poem "Mother Daughter Sister Friend" during the ceremony. She transferred to Gateway from Northern Kentucky University in 2005. She plans on heading back to NKU to earn her bachelor's degree.

The weekend before finals she had an emergency appendectomy. After being told on a Friday night that she would have the operation the next day, she decided to make the best of it.

"If they were admitting me I could at least study," she said. "So I had my aunt bring me my laptop, my books and my assignments. I spent Saturday online and studying until like six in the evening when they finally did the surgery."

Mospens spent Sunday recovering and her aunt drove her to finals on Monday.

"I got two As and three Bs - not too horrible for someone who was in the hospital when she should have been home studying," she said.

Mospens credits her success to Gateway's support.

"I was more than just a face there. They knew my name, they knew my story and knew what brought me to that point and would do whatever it took to make me a success," she said.

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