

January 2023



In the Spotlight

An “Upskilling” Success Story

Tina came to The Women’s Center for assistance as she was getting out of an abusive marriage. She had been either out of the workforce caring for children or working part-time office support jobs for the past ten years. After applying for numerous administrative jobs and not landing a position, Tina decided she needed a new career direction. For inspiration, she looked to her experience working as a nurse in her home country over 20 years earlier. Asked about her choice to go into healthcare, Tina said, “First, healthcare is in high demand and I needed a job ASAP. Second, I always wanted to help people professionally.”

As a first step, Tina took an Anatomy class at CCM and liked it. She initially planned to earn a U.S. nursing degree but the time and cost of a years-long program was an obstacle. The Women’s Center suggested that she look into alternative health careers, which led Tina to choose the Certified Clinical Medical Assistant program at Ace Healthcare Training in Dover, NJ. The three-month course, which included hands-on clinical experience, would enable her to get a job quickly. Tina secured funding

through Morris County’s Employment & Training Services and she was on her way, successfully graduating in the spring of 2022. Tina shared about her training experience, “education makes me feel important, smart, helpful, knowledgeable, and dependable”.

After less than a month of job searching, Tina landed a job as a CMA at a primary care medical office. Since then, Tina has decided to specialize in the area of dermatology, has moved to a new office and is pursuing an additional certification as a dermatology technician. Tina says the benefits of her new career are “#1, [gaining the] stability and security that I need to survive and #2 feeling important and appreciated by so many people/patients.”

When asked what advice she has for women considering returning to school for training, Tina answers, “If you want to get independent and get freedom start with training and you can achieve many things. Just believe in yourself! I got a lot of support from The Women’s Center and lots of encouragement to keep going. It means so much to me and my family. The best decision ever!”

Please join us in congratulating Tina and wishing her happiness in her new career!

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*“Courage starts with showing up
and letting ourselves be seen.”*

- Brené Brown

Meet the Artist: Mary Ann Kohaut

When The Women's Center reached out to CCM's Department of Art and Design to inquire about students potentially displaying artwork in The Women's Center, we were fortunate to be put in touch with Mary Ann Kohaut, a CCM student and artist recommended to us by Professor Keith Smith. After meeting Mary Ann and seeing some of her work, we were thrilled that she agreed to a limited exhibition of her artwork at The Women's Center in the Student Community Center Room 115, from January to May 2023.

Mary Ann joined the NJ Art Association in 2020 and her paintings have been in several exhibits. She won an honorable mention at the FLIGHTS OF FANCY exhibit July 17 - October 23, 2022, at Overlook Medical Center for a portrait of her parents, "Judy and Bill." She also won an honorable mention for her painting of "Judy" during her CCM Portfolio class exhibition, at The Mayo Performing Arts Center in the Spring of 2022.

TWC: How did you first get started as an artist?

MK: I am 57 years old, and I have always been a crafter, but I didn't have the confidence to even think of myself as an Artist until recently. Taking art classes at CCM has helped me with that. I've always loved art and art history and going to art museums and galleries is one of my favorite things to do. Yet, I didn't start drawing until I was 40, after being diagnosed with an autoimmune disease and needing something positive to focus on. At that time, I started slowly teaching myself to draw even though I really wasn't very good at it. Still, I would spend 30 minutes a day practicing, and I did this for years. When I turned 50, I started to teach myself to paint, but eventually I knew I needed art classes to continue to grow as an artist and thankfully CCM has a great Fine Arts program. The professors in my art classes at CCM have really helped me to learn the fundamentals of drawing and painting and I enjoy learning different techniques to practice with.

TWC: How long have you been a student at CCM and what types of classes have you taken?

MK: I started taking classes at CCM in 1993, two years before I had my first child. It took me 25 years of taking one class at a time and raising a family to graduate with an Associate's degree in Early Childhood. Doing the internship for this program got me a job in an elementary school as a Teacher's Aide and I worked there for 13 years. At this time, in 2018, during some heartbreaking life challenges, I decided to retire from my job at the school and listen to my heart which was telling me to take art classes. As a student I used to walk past the ceramic's classroom on my way to class

and think, "I want to be in there." So, a year after I graduated, in 2019, I decided I was going to go for it and I enrolled in the Fine Arts Program and I am now just one class away from a dual degree. I am very thankful for CCM's Fine Arts program. My professors have taught me a lot while encouraging me to find my way in developing my own style.

TWC: What has been your inspiration for the artwork in this exhibition?

MK: This is the hardest question to answer because my inspiration has been to focus on growth as I work through heartbreak, sadness, and pain. I started taking these art classes in 2019 at a time when one of my son's was battling a very serious addiction and I was battling right alongside him. I was looking for a way to heal myself and stay strong for him and my family. Unfortunately, My Michael lost his battle in 2020, at the young age of 23. Working through these art classes challenged me in a good way while helping me to express some very intense emotions in a beautiful way. I started taking these classes, with the goal of becoming a better painter. Painting has now become a type of therapy and meditation. I lose track of time when I paint. I paint with my heart and I let my process be messy in the same way that emotions are messy. It feels good to paint. I love to experiment and use bright colors. I don't see my paintings as being perfect and I'm ok with that. I am still learning and I like to learn. There are times when I plan a painting and I work on the technical aspects of it, and there are times when I grab a new canvas and just start painting without a plan to see what happens. I feel very grateful that people seem to like my work because this gives me purpose and makes me feel like I am on the right path in my healing journey. I paint to honor my son Michael and to continue healing so I can be present for my son Jimmy and my husband Jim.

TWC: What interested you about displaying your work at The Women's Center?

MK: I want to thank Professor Smith for thinking of me when The Women's Center reached out looking for an artist to display artwork in their office. I feel like this is the perfect place for me to have my first solo art show because I believe in what this non-profit organization is doing to help women in need to get jobs to support themselves and feel better about themselves. Years ago, when my children were babies, I made the decision to be a stay-at-home mom, and thinking back on it, I wouldn't change a thing but it didn't feel good, knowing I couldn't support myself. The Women's Center offers a wealth of information for women in need to find jobs to support themselves and their families. Life can get hard some-

when my children were babies, I made the decision to be a stay-at-home mom, and thinking back on it, I wouldn't change a thing but it didn't feel good, knowing I couldn't support myself. The Women's Center offers a wealth of information for women in need to find jobs to support themselves and their families. Life can get hard sometimes and it is not easy to ask for help, especially when going through something stressful. Having an organization like The Women's Center to help is a blessing. The Women's Center works with each person individually to come up with a plan while offering support and guidance. The center does this by offering career counseling, education, training, job readiness, networking, outreach, and referrals, while offering emotional support and compassion.

TWC: What are your future goals and dreams?

MK: I will continue painting and creating. I will continue learning and experimenting. I am in the process of making cards out of some of my paintings. I love ceramics and I am interested to see where that goes. I love to write. Writing and illustrating a book of poems is a dream of mine. I would love to find a way to work with people, encouraging them to let themselves create because it feels good without worrying about the artwork being perfect. "To get lost in the process is where the healing happens." I want to start a Memorial Fund in my son's honor to help raise awareness for addiction and to give back to people in need. I will continue to work on selfcare, daily gratitude for what I have, and continue to share my story through my art. Thank you so much to everyone who is supporting me. I feel very grateful for this opportunity. Never give up on your dreams!



We invite our CCM colleagues, Women's Center participants and interested community members to attend our **Meet the Artist Open House on Thursday, January 26, from 3pm to 6pm** to view the exhibition, meet Mary Ann, and learn about services offered through The Women's Center. We hope to see you there!

The Women's Center is in the Student Community Center, Room 115, at the County College of Morris in Randolph, NJ.

The Women's Center: <https://www.ccm.edu/womenscente>
Mary Ann Kohaut: <https://mkohaut.wixsite.com/artbymaryann>

Commitment: A Secret Ingredient for Achieving Your Goal

The start of the New Year is traditionally a time for resolutions and goal setting. If you are like many people, you may have decided that this is the year you will find a new job, change careers, return to the workforce, or start a business. To help you reach this goal, it is important to have an action plan - a roadmap for how you can get from where you are to where you would like to be. A roadmap alone, however, will not be enough. What you will also need is the secret ingredient for success - a commitment to achieving your goal.

When you are committed to achieving your goal, you make time to do what you need to do, taking whatever steps you can to keep moving forward despite your doubts and fears, even on those days when you don't feel like doing anything.

Staying committed to reaching your goal will be easier if you:

1. **Really want to achieve it** - Be honest with yourself. How strong is your desire to achieve this goal? Are you willing to do what you will need to do, even when it becomes inconvenient or uncomfortable?
2. **Have a clear vision** - A clear vision of your goal can inspire you to keep moving forward, despite any obstacles or setbacks. Having a clear vision means knowing exactly what you want to achieve and why you want to achieve it. It means setting S.M.A.R.T. goals for yourself and tracking your progress.

3. **Share it** – Share your goal with people you trust. Once you put your goal “out there” in the world, others can step in to help you achieve it..
4. **Switch from “thinking” to “doing”** – Once you have a plan, implement it. Do not wait for the “perfect” time to act. Pick out one thing you can do to get started and DO IT. This will also help you build confidence.
5. **Develop new habits** – Pick a time to work on your goal and stick to it. Make it a regular part of your daily or weekly activities. Eliminate distractions and time wasters.
6. **Find a “success buddy”** – Find someone (a family member, friend, mentor, coach, The Women’s Center) who can encourage you and help you stay focused and on track.
7. **Celebrate milestones** – When you complete a major step in your action plan, reward yourself. You did it! You are now one step closer to your goal.



Get started today! The staff at The Women’s Center at CCM can help you set and achieve your employment goals. For more information and to complete an enrollment form, click here: [The Women’s Center at CCM](#), call (973) 328-5025, or email womenscenter@ccm.edu.



Plan Something Creative for 2023

By Maureen L. Haggerty, Former Staff Member at The Women’s Center

Is there something creative you look forward to doing each day? Perhaps it is painting, working with clay, knitting, woodworking, or coloring. Whatever you enjoy, make a place for it on your calendar daily or certainly weekly. Keep this special time for you.

Need some new ideas? If you are interested in exploring new creative projects, head to your local library and look for ideas in the arts and crafts section. You will be amazed at the number of how-to books that are available! Here are two books I recently discovered:

The Michael’s Book of Arts and Crafts
Martha Stewart’s Encyclopedia of Crafts

Maybe you have a friend who loves her particular craft—ask if she would teach you the basics and try to meet one morning or afternoon a week. You might consider looking for beginner classes at a local craft shop. Adult schools offer many creative courses. Our libraries provide space for seasonal craft activities. Taking part in these new creative ventures can often lead us to develop

new friendships.

Since COVID arrived in 2020, there continues to be a need for individuals to discover ways to relax, reduce stress, and rejuvenate. Becoming involved in creative pursuits can help each of us.

Kari Cornell, author of *The Craft-A-Day Book*, indicated:

“Learning to look closely at the world around you is a fabulous way to find inspiration. Challenge yourself! Jump-start your creativity by setting a goal to do something creative every day...”

In closing, consider Albert Einstein’s words: “Creativity is intelligence having fun.”

Many good wishes for your creative ventures in 2023!



How Gaining New Skills Can Help you Re-Enter the Workforce

If you are returning to work after a years-long absence, one of the first things you have to determine is whether you plan to return to the field that you were working in prior to your break, or if you wish to switch fields. In either case, you may realize by looking at job postings, that you need to gain new skills in order to qualify for those positions.

Upskilling is the process of gaining additional training or education to build upon and advance your skills in your recent field or gain new skills to enable you to change careers. Upskilling will help you bridge that gap between your former/current skills and the skills that are now necessary for your



desired field by demonstrating to employers that your skills and knowledge are up-to-date. In addition, learning something new is good for you, makes you feel good about yourself and will increase your confidence as you reenter the workplace!

Did you know that The Women’s Center offers grant funding for short-term training and certifications to displaced homemakers who are looking to gain new skills and return to the workforce? While you can find training options throughout the local community, we wanted to highlight a few of the programs that CCM has to offer through their Center for

Workforce Development. There are also apprenticeship programs that often lead to employment in a very short amount of time.

You can find these courses in the college’s [Spring 2023 Schedule](#):

- ◇ Project Management - PMP Exam Prep (Page 5)
- ◇ Microsoft Training: Excel, Word, PowerPoint (Pages 13-15)
- ◇ Certificate in Human Resources (Page 6)
- ◇ NonProfit Certificate Program - Fundraising and Grant Writing (Page 7)
- ◇ Advanced Manufacturing Apprenticeship Program (Page 7)
- ◇ Certified Nurse Aide (Page 35)
- ◇ Pharmacy Technician Apprenticeship Program (Page 37)

If you’re currently employed either full-time or part-time with a company or agency, then you are eligible to take certain classes for [FREE: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT GRANT-SUPPORTED TRAINING](#)

*If you are interested in grant-funded training, please complete our Enrollment Form today to see if you meet displaced homemaker criteria. If you are already a current participant, please contact us directly at womenscenter@ccm.edu or 973-328-5025.



Legal Assistance

The Women’s Center’s family law program can help you get the answers you are looking for; whether it’s through a private consultation with a family law attorney, obtaining referrals, or attending our Divorce Workshop Series.

Family Law Legal Clinic

The Family Law Legal Clinic provides a free 30-minute private consultation with a volunteer family law attorney. A consultation can help you navigate the legal system and understand the options available to you, as it pertains to family law. Please call or email for more information or to schedule an appointment.

Divorce Workshop Series

The Divorce Workshop Series is a free informational workshop designed to educate individuals on the various components, elements, and aspects of the divorce process. Topics include the divorce process, choosing a lawyer, enforcement of child support, tips on completing legal forms, mediation, alimony, post-judgement relief and financial aspects of divorce. Each two hour session is dedicated to a specific topic, workshops are held in the spring and fall. Follow us on [Facebook](#) to find out when the next workshop is being offered.

Phone: 973-328-5025 | Email: womenscenter@ccm.edu

ADVANCING YOUR CAREER – STRATEGIES AND HOW-TOS FOR ALL CAREER EXPLORERS

A **FREE COMMUNITY SERVICE** offered by the Center for Workforce Development to help everyone, employed or unemployed, to plan, network and learn the best practices from professionals who coach and teach what is needed while you are **ADVANCING YOUR CAREER!**

Tuesday evenings, 6:30 - 8 p.m., January through May, 2023, remote with live instruction.
REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED at <https://www.ccm.edu/workforce/job-search/>
 Instructors will email login details at least 24 hours before the start of each workshop.

Seats are limited. Please only register for the workshops you will attend.

FOCUS TOPIC / ADVANCING YOUR CAREER STRATEGIES	FACILITATOR	PICK YOUR DATES – workshops do not need to be taken in order.		
Career Planning: Your Path to Success Ready to embark on your career or thinking about changing to a new field or industry? Learn how to identify a career path, set goals and create a plan to help you get started.	Michele Johnson	January 17	February 21	April 18
Resumes and Cover Letters: The Perfect Duo A well-constructed resume and cover letter is your statement to a potential employer showing why YOU are the best candidate. Learn best practices that make yours stand out.	Christy Bouziotis	January 24	February 28	May 2
How to Search and Network for a New Opportunity Navigate 10 key elements of an effective job search, including how to network and strategize to land your new opportunity.	Kathy Vincelette	January 31	March 7	May 9
The Interview: Putting It All Together Learn the secret to answering questions that come at all stages of the interview process. Find out ways to present yourself successfully.	Rosemary Grant	February 7	March 14	April 25

NEW! CAREER EXPLORATION SESSIONS

Explore new career opportunities! Learn about salaries, educational requirements, job outlook and major employers in the fields of:

HEALTHCARE • COMPUTING/TECHNOLOGY • ENGINEERING/MANUFACTURING • BUSINESS

Career Exploration will focus on one field each evening.

**Tuesdays, 7-8 p.m.
 March 21–April 11 and May 16–June 6.**

Schedules and registration coming soon at <https://www.ccm.edu/workforce/job-search/>

Additional information for unemployed, underemployed or dislocated individuals can be found at <https://www.ccm.edu/workforce/unemployed/>