



Eastern West Virginia  
Community & Technical College

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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### **AMANDA SITES FINDS COLLEGE DOLLARS FOR STUDENTS AT EASTERN**

Amanda Sites, the new Director for Financial Aid at Eastern WV Community and Technical College, believes that everyone who wants go to college should be able to do so. “In today’s job market, an Associate’s or Bachelor’s degree means pretty much the same thing as a high school diploma did sixty years ago,” she said.

And in recent surveys, the US Census Bureau has consistently reported that Americans with a college degree generally enjoy better opportunities, better jobs and better wages than those with no learning beyond high school.

But because average college costs have climbed faster than average family income, and also outpaced almost all goods and services in the economy, “It’s not surprising that some 80-percent of fulltime college undergraduates receive some form of financial aid,” said Sites, who joined Eastern November 1, just in time to gear up for January’s start of the college’s spring semester, and the winter financial aid season.

“We want to ease the concerns of everyone who thinks they’d like to start college,” she emphasized, “whether it’s been years since they last sat in a classroom, or if they just graduated high school last June.”

Sites will explain all the ins-and-outs of the aid application processes by appointment at Eastern’s Moorefield center, and during Financial Aid workshops for new students January 4. To reserve a place at either the afternoon or evening workshop that day, or to make an appointment, call her at 434-8000, or toll free: 877-982-2322.

In addition to working closely with Eastern students, Sites will offer evening Financial Aid Parents’ Workshops in several Potomac Highlands counties. “We’ll be at Pendleton County High School January 10; East Hardy High School, January 15; and Hampshire High, January 17,” she said.

Whatever their age, at Eastern new and returning students can qualify for a variety of federal and state grants and loans, Sites said. “I’ll work with them to calculate a budget for tuition, books and other college costs, and to determine the best form of aid in each individual case.” Fulltime students can apply for the WV Higher Education Grant program, while part-time adult students can make use of the Higher Education Adult Part-time Student (HEAPS) grants.

“Federal Pell grants provide funding to low-income students, and loans are also available, currently at a fixed rate of 6.8-percent,” Sites noted. “And for students with financial need, the government will pay the interest on those loans while they’re still in school.”

A 1998 graduate of Moorefield High School, and valedictorian of her class, Sites comes to Eastern from the WV State Auditor’s office after four years as a Field Auditor performing compliance and financial audits of local governments, including counties, cities, Boards of Education, libraries, and so on. Before that, working summers and weekends in Pilgrim’s Pride’s accounting department, she helped pay her way through a

five-year accelerated program at WV Wesleyan College, where, in 2003, she earned both her Bachelor's degree in accounting, and her Master's in business administration.

"We are very fortunate that Amanda Sites has joined the Eastern team as our new Director of Financial Aid," said Robert 'Buck' Eagle, the college's Dean for Academic and Student Services. "Her business education and experience working in the state auditor's office are strong assets for this position. And she has already become a very good fit with the Eastern family."

"This is a very exciting time for me," Sites acknowledged, "with great learning opportunities. This position at Eastern brings me home, and best of all, it offers me a chance to give something back to my community."

Serving the residents of Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Mineral, Pendleton and Tucker counties, Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College is a comprehensive and equal opportunity community and technical college bringing the resources and assets of Education That Works to the families, communities and employers of the Potomac Highlands.