


# MVCTC: Training for changing economy

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## School sets example for the country

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- Holly Samuels 

CLAYTON, Ohio (WDTN) - The spotlight shined on the Miami Valley Career Technology Center in Clayton Wednesday as the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education held a town hall meeting on retraining America's work force. Arne Duncan said he chose the school as the host site because it sets an example for the country to follow.

MVCTC trains high school students and re-trains adults to enter the work force with the skills employers are looking for. One student who's taking advantage of the opportunity is Peggy Soter, who fell victim to the economy last year when she was laid off from her job at a Dayton-area company, where she worked as a software test analyst.

"It's kind of late in life for me, but I hadn't given up, so I decided to go back and go to an area that I wanted to go to when I was younger," Soter said.

She's studying at MVCTC to become a nurse, and is scheduled to graduate this summer. Soter said being a nurse is something she's always wanted to do.

"When I was in high school many many years ago, but I didn't go right then. I'm fulfilling my dream," said Soter. "It may be late in life, but I'm still fulfilling that dream."

MVCTC's Adult Education Center is home to many students with similar stories.

"We provide skills training from the basic skills up through credentials and job licenses so people can get jobs," said Amy Leedy, Adult Education Supervisor, MVCTC.

Leedy said enrollment skyrocketed when GM, Delphi and others left the area leaving many workers without jobs, and without the skills needed to start again in Dayton's changing economy.

MVCTC uses special techniques to help meet the needs of those students, including keeping close relationships with area employers. Those relationships, said Leedy, helps educators understand what they're looking for in a hiree.

"As one of the older students and taking the time to train myself to learn again, they have all the resources here. I mean, study specialists," said Soter. "After you've been out of school for so long you kind of forget, and if you want the resources, they're here."

Duncan said he believes centers like MVCTC are the answer to turning the country's economy around.

"I absolutely believe we have to educate our way to a better economy," said Duncan. "That's better educating 16-year-olds, it's re-educating and retooling and retraining 26-year-olds and 36-year-olds and 46-year-olds and 56-year-olds. That's what this place is doing."

MVCTC is one of 49 such centers in the state. Duncan said the U.S. Department of Education is showing its support for the programs by providing \$1 billion in funding, but he said the government is also asking employers to help keep the schools honest by making sure that the students are given the tools needed to land a job.