THE STAR DEMOCRAT

Connection is innovative training by social services

DENTON — The Mosaic Connection, an innovative training series developed by the Caroline County Department of Social Services, aims at spotlighting an individual's value and boosting self-esteem, job readiness and general life skills.

Caroline County is partnering with the Chesapeake College Office of Continuing Education and the Kent, Queen Anne's and Talbot County Departments of Social Services, to broaden the delivery of this series to families throughout the Upper Shore.

Based on the premise that everyone has value gained through education, life and work experiences, the Mosaic Connection builds on that worth by providing training sessions on topics including job search techniques, money management, home ownership, balancing work and family, and finding your workplace strengths.

Caroline County has developed the training series around a number of videotapes created locally from various training and workshop experiences. The tapes provide a personal look at the face of those who have overcome employment skills deficits, as well as those who were multi-skilled and simply needed a boost.

Through facilitated conversation with an instructor, students not only gain skills that help them move into the workforce, or enhance their present employment, but they learn about themselves in the process.

The Mosaic concept is representative of the pieces required to make a successful connection to work, excel in the workplace and lead life of fulfillment.

Students of the Mosaic Connection progress toward a graduation from the series, which represents another positive to add to each individual's existing achievements. Even after getting a job, students return to continue adding "pieces" to the mosaic in order to build on their successes.

The program is popular among those participating. From September through November 2002, Caroline County filled 132 training slots. Beginning in January 2003, students receive continuing education credits from Chesapeake College for completing each seminar.

During that time, other local organizations and businesses, such as the Maryland Cooperative Extension Agent in Caroline County and the Centreville National Bank, have participated to make workshops successful.

The Mosaic Connection series is featured in the current issue of the Chesapeake College Continuing Education and Workforce Training catalogue. For more information, please call the College's office of Continuing Education or the Caroline County Career Center at 410-479-5777.