Good afternoon and thanks for joining us I'm Judy Simpson. Every year continuing education at the University of Vermont helps thousands of nontraditional students do just that continue their education. Continuing education or CE offers courses and programs in collaboration with all aspects of the university. CE can help students who are planning a career change or those seeking professional development in their existing field. To learn more I'm joined by Amanda chalk. Amanda is an outreach professional with continuing education welcome and thanks for being with us. Maybe you can start off by giving us a thumbnail sketch of continuing education at UVM?

Amanda: We have a really concise mission that I like it because it gets to the point very well in that we are providing flexible relevant educational options for people at all stages of life because certainly the opportunity to learn should never stop. So the idea that there's a continuum we like to joke that unless someone isn't a great program the six years whether they're doing their undergraduate or graduate degree is about the only time they don't belong to CE.

Judy: No kidding. What makes someone a continuing education student?

Amanda: Somebody who is trying to get into an undergraduate program. Someone who wants to pursue a master's program. Someone who's looking to gain a body of knowledge so that they can enhance their career or change their career. It's really about accessing education to make all of those transitions in your life and getting into college getting into a master's program getting into a new career that's what continuing education students are pursuing.

Judy: Can you tell us a little bit more about the Pre-College program? Is it just for high school students?

Amanda: Pre-College is a really really big initiatives of continuing education because it is for high school students so it's an outreach program to the state of Vermont have to have to access to the university for all Vermonters have in high school. But it's also for students have been out of college for a while or maybe did some college and decided to come back so there Pre-College because they're going into their undergraduate program and the way the students access the University of Vermont is through something we call guaranteed admission program. Students can do just that they can actually earn an admission to UVM by signing a contract to CE. Earning a 3.0 over the 18 credits they take and with that accomplishment they've earned their
admission to UVM. To guaranteed admission program is a great Pre-College program for people to demonstrate they're ready for college.

Judy.: That's huge because so many kids in high school have no idea what they want to do for a career or maybe where they want to go to school.

Amanda.: Absolutely and things change. People may make the decision when they get out of high school that they're not ready but we're there when they change their mind and decide the college's ready for them there's a way to get back without having to going through the traditional admissions process and to demonstrate that they are in fact ready even if their high school transcripts don't necessarily look that way. People's lives change and we like to have a way for them to access the university at any stage.

Judy.: We're some examples of our reach that you do around the state?

Amanda.: Yes continuing education is not just at the UVM campus. We do contracts with schools and school districts so that we can provide professional development for teachers and administrators. We're also doing corporate training with businesses throughout the state of Vermont and actually in the region in New Hampshire as well as Northern New York so companies can bring instructors from university to provide training on project management customer service business analysis and the cost effectiveness of having an instructor, two their company and train the entire organization is really an effective way for a company to bring everybody up on the same level in terms of what they're doing for training for their staff. So that's been a great way for us to reach out to the Vermont community. In addition we do offer a degree completion program. The RN to BS program which is what it sounds like four registered nurses to get their undergraduate degree and we're partnering with Medical Centers around the state to offer that degree completion program. Then I would say some of the last options is we offer online programming so anybody throughout the state can access UVM courses in an online format or there's also the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute which is actually located around the state. There are sites throughout the state and I think you've spoken was someone from our department about that.

Judy.: Which is really great because it encompasses all different kinds of courses. Everything from mushroom to languages to travel it's truly an amazing thing.

Amanda.: Yes so back to the idea of having access to education at any stage of your life it's for a community people who are 50 plus but they did not necessarily want to stop learning and growing as well and those chapters are throughout the state.

Judy.: I know one of the really exciting times for continuing education is the summer?

Amanda.: It is summer is one of the best seasons in Vermont of course we all think but it's also one of the most vibrant times on the campus. There are about 3000 students who pass through the doors or through the virtual tour through online learning in the summer program. There are just about 600 courses available in the summer. Summer as you can see from the picture is one of the nicest times to be in Burlington area certainly. As of the 600 courses 30% of them are online courses but we also offer programs that are not available during the academic year. Is a picture of our Latin jazz course which we actually offer with the Flynn. It's a partnership where students can come in and this happens to be the percussion track but students can be musicians
and take the program and they actually learn with visiting faculty Alex Stewart from UVM get to perform at the Flynn. Arturo Oferro was our visiting faculty last year and he's a pretty amazing person. It's a course like no other and that's what's true about summers as a lot going on on campus and a lot of things that are available to students as well as the professionals in the community.

Judy.: Is it a popular time for students to be in class? Because summertime I think you want to be outside.

Amanda.: That's what's great about summer in one way because many of the classes involved field visits out into the greater outdoors so that's nice we take advantage of the season. There's a whole plants and soil science track farmer training is one example of where we have a program that's concentrated and summer. That is the growing season as a whole bevy of soil science classes that are very similar to that.

Judy.: Some of the interior classes?

Amanda.: Some of the interior classes summer one other reasons that summer is a vibrant time is that.

Judy.: What about high school students is that a way to introduce them is that a chance for them to see what college is all about?

Amanda.: Absolutely. Summer is a time when high school students but be looking at a chance to dabble to get their feet wet to see what it's like to take their first college course to have their first college instructor to write their first college paper this is that lower threshold of not taking other classes so they can focus on the one hard course which is certainly true for the undergraduate and graduate population as well. While summer is a nice time to be outside its also nice time to focus on one hard course and get your cheek pa up or to a good job of keeping your GPA up by getting the hardcore sign of the way.

Judy.: There's obviously a lot of diversity in your programming. Is their typical student who attends the programs?

Amanda.: That's the thing summer is one of those times when we draw from our own undergraduate population from the graduate students but also from professionals around the country. There's a picture here from one of our one week intensive by offering courses in these condensed formats we can have people travel here take a vacation spend weekends in Vermont before and after but get a concentrated body of knowledge in a one week format which makes it accessible for professionals around the country as well.

Judy.: It also makes it doable for the student.

Amanda.: It does make it doable for the student. The semester in summer is a little bit concentrated it shorter than the regular 15 week semester during the academic year but that is so students still have time to have summer jobs to take family vacation.

Judy.: Right. You mentioned online classes how does CE use or incorporate some of the technology into those offerings?
Amanda.: It's expanding every term. The number of offerings that we have in the online format continue to increase every semester that we add courses. But also that we have a number of online programs that are available so that would be a sequence or certificate's and the university is working on a degree programs as well in online formats. The what we have available now professionals who are interested and who happen to be Health Care professionals interested in joining the healthcare industry we do have a healthcare management certificate's that's available completely online. We have several programs for educators and people who are looking to join the education field industry through speech language pathology educational technology or even up brain learning sequence which is new this year so for teachers who are interested in modifying the way they teach based on actually the way our brains learn.

Judy.: Interesting how long are these courses are the days weeks?

Amanda.: A whole certificates the whole sequence is likely to be 18 credits it's likely to take a student an entire year or they can even structured way out and take two years depending on how quickly they need to complete it. During the academic year the semesters likely to be about 15 weeks but during the summer we can get a class done and a short as one week were as long as five or six weeks. We have a lot of options in a lot of flexibility in the way the students can access the courses a UVM.

Judy.: What kind of student succeeds in online courses do you think?

Amanda.: I would say it's somebody who can manage their time and somebody who has the discipline to know that they need to show up to class even though there's not a classroom in the sense for them to show up there still a virtual classroom there still are instructor who has expectations of their purchase a patient. But certainly somebody who's also ready to engage in online classes is very engaging. Your discussions with your fellow students probably more so than one would think you're doing in a traditional classroom where you're engaging maybe with your faculty but in online learning is really for somebody who want something that's flexible convenient and they can do on their own schedule.

Judy.: There's the back and forth with professors and other classmates.

Amanda.: Very much so as a matter of fact it times it tends to be a requirement of the education is that students participate in discussions with each other.

Judy.: You made some reference to international students is that a focus of CE?

Amanda.: It is a focus of CE but certainly a focus of the university and CE Works to support that mission which is that we're trying to here's a picture of our summer program the U.S. Signinose pathways program. USPP as we refer to it and that's really a bridge program so in terms of increasing the international population at the university increasing the diversity of the students who go to UVM we offer continuing education offers a bridge so students can start in the summer. The students come to Vermont spend the summer with us taking classes getting oriented certainly taking English language courses but also very challenging engineering or math or science courses but in addition we offer the chance to build their community here in Vermont so that when they start in the fall they are settled they're ready to succeed so it's really a way to connect them two Vermont and to UVM.
Judy.: We also mentioned work force development across a state. Can you give us more examples of how that works?

Amanda.: Absolutely.

Judy.: It's sort of the reverse of someone coming to take a course.

Amanda.: Exactly. Because we like to bring corporate training and two of business we want to help develop the staff based on what each individual's companies needs are. So that curriculum is really customized to what the business tells us and what they want the staff to learn. We want to make sure the instructor is using the language of the organization and that it's as long or as short as the company needs that these tend to be one and two day training sessions for the whole staff is together. This picture happens to be one of our summer courses were so we take students to some of the local businesses this one is I believe NRG systems business practices and NRG is a great example of a local business that is a very successful profitable business but is using sustainable practices in order to get there as part of their mission. Here were actually visiting with seventh generation. So in terms of workforce development we brought people from around the country into Vermont to talk about how Vermont businesses succeed and one of those threads is around sustainability and using social practices. And doing that in a convenient inflexible format. With that one week intensive we can have people come here and travel from abroad into it and accessible way. Another thing we'd like to do in terms of workforce development is that there are people who have certifications to achieve or to maintain. By working with some of the professional associations like the project management institute or the society for human resources there's also a business analysis to professional organization. If we can help people with those certifications maintain their certifications get their CE use over time we help them maintain their professional standing with and that particular association. By partnering with those organizations were able to help people achieve and maintain the certification.

Judy.: It seems like there are continuing opportunities for the university to reach out to these groups. Things change a lot in technology and change a lot in education do you find that you're constantly trying to reinvent what you do to reach new people?

Amanda.: We definitely want to be adaptable and the university is providing a lot of new technologies so we'll find that there's a faculty member who is exploring a new area and we want to make that available to companies through corporate training. It can work both ways we certainly want to provide training based on what companies are asking us for so if they say we really want our staff to know about customer service because we want to change our whole model and focus on how we take care of our customers or in the other direction where where somebody like Sandia Labs come soon and partners with the university and we take that knowledge and expertise to provide some training up to the community to say here's an opportunity where there's this great expertise making its way through UVM how do we share that with the broader area.

Judy.: How can our viewers find a more information about UVM continuing education?

Amanda.: We have a pretty deep website there's a lot there and I would say it's a great place to explore and try to find new things but whenever and out please call our staff. There's a lot of
people at CE who are willing to direct and tried to hone down the plethora of options into something that's applicable to a person's background and needs.

Judy.: Amanda thanks so much. That's our program for today I'm Judy Simpson we'll see you again next time on *Across the Fence*.

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