



Archery Instructor Makes His Mark

Faculty

Eric McIntosh takes aim at the target as Charlie Carter (left) looks on.

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As JCCC's adjunct archery professor, Charlie Carter is a perfect 10. A true toxophilite, a person who is fond of or an expert

in archery, Carter can talk enthusiastically about the language, history and teaching of archery, although he remains modest about his shooting ability.

"I'm no Robin Hood, but I enjoy teaching and enjoy shooting," Carter said. "I can shoot well if it's not too far."

Carter has taught archery at JCCC for 21 years, seeing his class size grow from six to seven students in the beginning years to a current size of more than 20 for the one-hour credit class. He explains how archery has historically been used for hunting and combat, but now has the potential for a lifetime sport. Target archery was an event in the recent Beijing 2008 Olympic Games.

"Archery is 90 percent mental and 10 percent physical," Carter said. "It's a sport where concentration, motor skills and visual acuity all come together."

While bows and arrows have evolved with technology, Carter says archery competition still hinges on focus and accuracy. The only physical constraint to archery is the ability to draw the bow.

"Strength is not the only component. Sometimes women can out shoot men."

Carter's full-time profession is that of program specialist for homeless veterans at the Veterans Administration, Kansas City, Mo.

"Teaching archery is a nice change from my

work in the mental health field. The teaching is very cathartic," Carter said.

His students range from those who have never shot with a bow before to one who was semi-professional. He's had students still in high school and retirees. JCCC archery classes provide the use of tackle, including three types of bows – entry-level compound bows along with traditional long and recurve bows.

Carter, who has a bachelor's degree in health, physical education and recreation from Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, Okla., and a master's degree in recreation with an emphasis in therapeutic recreation from the University of Memphis, Tenn., enjoys all aspects of archery instruction – from the shooting to the evolution of the bow and arrow (beginning with an 11,000-year-old bow found in an Egyptian tomb) to its language ("to play fast and loose" was a medieval reference to an archer who didn't 'hold fast,' one who was dangerous or deceitful) to its use in combat. The class also emphasizes safety and city/county regulations.

Carter wryly claims he can teach students the execution of a "perfect shot." He says it requires only two things: 1. learning to hit the bull's eye and 2. repeating it time after time. The catch is it takes hundreds of practice shots to complete those skills.

"I really like to shoot, but what I enjoy more is watching other people learn and be attracted to the sport," he said. 