

Casino school will reimburse dealers

Classes start Feb. 26

BY JIM KINNEY
jkinney@repub.com

MGM Springfield said yesterday it will reimburse tuition for students at the Massachusetts Casino Career Training Institute who learn two or more casino table games, pass MGM's audition and work for the new Springfield casino for at least a year.

The news came during an open house at the school, which is a partnership among MGM, Holyoke Community College and Springfield Technical Community College.

Classes begin Feb. 26 at 95 State St. on the MGM campus in the South End.

Prospective student Dewight Armstrong, of Enfield, is ready, having already signed up.

"There is a buzz," Armstrong said. "I know there is a feeling of anticipation for it to open. Let's get started."

He works now at the Amazon
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Mayor Domenic Sarno, left, gets a lesson in blackjack dealing from MGM Springfield Vice President Robert Westfield. Looking on at right is Holyoke Community College President Christina Royal. (DON TREEGER / THE REPUBLICAN)

BOSTON

Study determines cost of hunger at \$2.4 billion

Access to food viewed as public health issue

BY ANDY METZGER
State House News Service

From dialysis treatments to special attention in the classroom, costs pile up for those who may be ailing because they are hungry or unsure how they will get their next meals. A

study publicized yesterday pegged the total cost of hunger and food insecurity in Massachusetts at \$2.4 billion.

"That's a staggering amount," said Catherine D'Amato, president and CEO of the Greater Boston Food Bank. "There is no reason anyone in our state should go hungry."

The study assembled by Chil-

dren's HealthWatch, a program of Boston Medical Center, tallied up the costs of care for diabetes, rheumatology and pulmonary diseases, among other ailments associated with food insecurity. Poor nutrition can also result in needs for special education, according to the study.

"If you don't eat enough, you're not ready to learn," said Ana Poblacion, a researcher who worked on the study. Special education costs made up \$520 million of the total cost of hunger in Massachusetts, a state of 6.8 million people where 10 percent of households lack the resources to afford enough food, according to researchers.

The HealthWatch study used data

SEE HUNGER, PAGE A7

Tuesday, Feb. 13

Mid Day 9136 Evening 9020

Exact order

All 4	\$4,530	\$5,462
First or last 3	\$634	\$765
Any 2	\$54	\$66
Any 1	\$5	\$7

Any order

All 4	\$189	\$455
First 3	\$106	\$127
Last 3	\$106	\$255

Previous numbers drawn

Monday	0375	3054
Sunday	0273	8802
Saturday	0717	9520
Friday	0669	6239
Thursday	2315	0282
Wednesday	1909	5592

MEGA MILLIONS

Feb. 13	5-12-15-46-49
Megaball: 1; Megaplier: 4	
Feb. 9	28-34-41-46-47
Megaball: 14; Megaplier: 3	

Feb. 13	8-17-22-30-34
Feb. 12	7-8-12-32-34
Feb. 11	9-14-22-24-33

MEGABUCKS

Feb. 10	3-12-27-37-41-45
Doubler: 3	
Estimated jackpot: \$500,000	
Feb. 7	13-31-34-35-39-41
Doubler: 4	

LUCKY FOR LIFE

Feb. 12	7-11-33-37-47
Lucky Ball: 10	
Feb. 8	4-10-13-32-40
Lucky Ball: 12	

POWERBALL

Feb. 10	1-13-27-41-59
Powerball: 20; Power Play: 5	
Estimated jackpot: \$203 million	
Feb. 7	23-34-35-40-47
Powerball: 10; Power Play: 2	



From left, Denise Jordan, the mayor's chief of staff, Tracye Whitfield, director of manufacturing and corporate training at Springfield Technical Community College, and Michael Suzor, assistant to the president at STCC, take part in a game demonstration yesterday at the Massachusetts Casino Career Training Institute. (DON TREEGER / THE REPUBLICAN)

TODAY'S OBITUARIES

Listed by name, these obituaries can be found in today's paper. You may view these obituaries and sign the guest book at masslive.com/obituaries.

Arnold, Robert R.
Belisle, Leonard J.
Canterbury, Robert
Carboneau, Phyllis T.
Caverly, Stefania W.
Daniele, Sineo G.
Dietrich, Richard
Doran, James B.
Duketette, Hattie Jean
Gintowt, Lucille
Gray, Grace E.
Harris, Anne M.
Higgins, Martha Dell

Jasmin, Scott J.
Kokoszka, Mary A.
Korzec, Raymond M.
Lemon, Elton S.
Majka, Rose
Mulvaney, Mariellen
Proulx, Jean P.
Shappley, Patricia F.
Templeman, MaryAnn
Thomas, Amy E.
Walsh, John P.
Wenninger, Louis

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Casino

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Fulfillment Center in Windsor, Connecticut.

"I think people think the first day is when it opens," Armstrong said. "But the first day is now, when you can get in here and get the training."

MGM Springfield will need to interview more than 1,000 potential dealers to hire the staff it needs for the casino floor, said Wanda Gispert, regional vice president of talent and workforce development for MGM Resorts International. The casino will need 450 table games dealers and about 100 additional dealers who specialize only in poker. Eighty percent will be full time and about 20 percent will be part time, she said.

Jeffrey Hayden, vice president of business and community services for Holyoke Community College, said there are about 60 people signed up for classes now and about 100 people in the pipeline. He hopes to start with 200 students in the first cohort.

Classes will run all spring and summer. Information about the school is available at mctci.org/school.

Interviews and auditions will begin in March. Successful candidates will then get a hire date that will be sometime over the next few months depending on how fast construction work at the

WATCH THE VIDEO

M Go inside the Massachusetts Casino Career Training Institute at masslive.com.

\$960 million casino progresses, Gispert said.

MGM Springfield is set to open in September.

To qualify for an audition, an applicant must take and pass at least two courses. One is an introductory course that also includes Massachusetts Gaming Law, alcohol awareness and problem gambling awareness. Tuition for these first-level courses ranges from \$399 to \$599 depending on the game.

Then trainees must take at least one level-two course in a different game. This course is the same as a level-one course, only it doesn't have all the law, problem gambling and alcohol awareness material covered in level one. Upper level classes cost \$199 to \$399, with craps being the most expensive.

These first two courses meet four hours a day, five days a week for 12 weeks.

The work is tipped. The base pay will be about \$5 an hour, but tips can push that to \$20 to \$30 an hour.

Robert Westerfield, vice president of table games at MGM Springfield, said he prefers that job applicants are trained on at least three games, though poker dealers

will learn only poker.

The most important skill is customer service, being friendly and helpful, he said.

"We want people when they come into the casino to say, 'I want to go to his table,'" Westerfield said.

He gave a basic blackjack lesson to Mayor Domenic J. Sarno. It starts with the shuffle, Westerfield said.

"Everybody is used to how they do it at home," Westerfield said. "But to do it here, you need to keep your palms flat on the cards. Just move the corners together."

Take cards from the "shoe," or holder, with the middle finger of the left hand, and deal in order.

Bettors will scratch the table if they want another card. They'll wave you off if they want to hold.

"Always collect the money," Westerfield said.

Sarno admitted being less than polished. But Westerfield said the mayor did no worse than most students on the first day.

"There are natural baseball players and natural basketball players," he said. "There are no natural card dealers. You have to practice the skill."

Once offered a job, the dealers will still have to get a Massachusetts Gaming Commission license, which requires a background check and a \$300 fee. Dealers can pay after the fact with a payroll deduction.