

## SPRINGFIELD

# Job Corps helps STCC student land MGM position

When she was offered a position at MGM Springfield, Karisma Roach was overcome with emotion.

"I'm really happy to have this job," Roach said. "When they told me I was hired I started to cry. I came a long way to get a good job - and I found one that I really wanted."

On July 9, Roach starts work as a full-time cage cashier at MGM. She will help guests with a variety of transactions including check cashing, slot tickets and chip cash outs, to name a few of her responsibilities. The casino is scheduled to open Aug. 24.

Roach arrived in Western Massachusetts in March 2016, at the age of 21. She had attended the University of the Virgin Islands and earned an associate degree in accounting. She relocated to the mainland for better opportunities. Hoping to get a foot in the door, she enrolled in Job Corps.

At Westover Job Corps Center in Chicopee, Roach completed two trades, culinary arts and office ad-

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Karisma Roach, left, and MGM Resorts' Regional Vice President of Talent and Workforce Development Wanda Gispert pose for a photo after Roach was hired by MGM Springfield. Roach is a Job Corps graduate who then went on to Springfield Technical Community College.

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Karisma Roach

## STCC

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ministration. She served as the treasurer of the Student Government Association and as a dorm captain. She completed advanced leadership training.

Roach then applied to Springfield Technical Community College through the advanced career training program at Westover. This program allows students to enroll at STCC while living at Job Corps.

Roach took a part-time job at the Chicopee World Class Big Y, working as a cashier and at the store's courtesy booth. She will graduate May 31 from the STCC professional office administration assistant program with another associate degree.

"Job Corps prepared me for college and work because of the time management skills I had to attain," Roach said. "Westover had good staff who were supportive. I'm always early for work. If a co-worker calls out, I'm the first one they call. I show up. I am able to pay bills on time. I'm living in my own apartment. Humility is the key to success. I came from nothing, and I'm leaving with more than enough. Hard work pays off in the end. My dream is to one day have my own business."

While studying at STCC, Roach attended an MGM Springfield information

seminar and applied for a position. She was called in for an interview a few days after submitting an application.

"I got hired on the spot," she said. "I'm very excited. You can build a career working for them."

"Karisma clearly has a passion for service, and she took the right steps to reach her goal by committing herself to the appropriate training and education," said Wanda Gispert, MGM Resorts' regional vice president of talent and workforce development.

"This isn't a case of luck; Karisma diligently followed a path designed to help her earn a place at MGM Springfield. Karisma is a success story in the making."

"The door used by Karisma that connects Job Corps to STCC, and on to MGM Springfield, is powerful, and she offers a tremendous example to so many others," STCC President John B. Cook said.

Roach credited her professors for supporting her during her two semesters at the college. "It's really a good college," she said. "The professors work with you. They give their time to help you out."

She received excellent grades and is looking forward to commencement day on May 31. She said her mother will travel from the U.S. Virgin Islands to watch her shake hands with Cook and receive her diploma.