

Spring 2014

1 in a Million

Meet Steven Ferraro, the 1 millionth recipient of the Post 9/11 GI Bill.

See page 6.



Contest Focuses on Distracted Texting Accidents

The number of pedestrians injured while using cell phones has more than doubled since 2004, according to a study published in the August 2013 edition of “Accident Analysis and Prevention.” Young people were especially at risk, with 16-to 25-year-olds most likely to be injured as “distracted pedestrians.”

In an effort to combat this growing trend, the Middlesex County Comprehensive Traffic Safety Program was developed, and it is promoting a contest for students to create a radio public service announcement or a poster or infographic explaining the dangers of distracted walking or cycling.

The first prize is \$500, second prize is \$300, and third prize is \$200.

“The significant rise in pedestrian accidents caused by walking and texting is a major concern and we hope that this awareness campaign will help change habits that place walkers at risk,” said Middlesex County Freeholder James Polos, chairman of the Department of Public Safety and Health.

The Distraction Awareness Contest is open to students enrolled at Middlesex County College or Rutgers University.

The aim of the campaign is to change the culture of distraction so everyone becomes focused on themselves and those around them and realizes the effects on others when distracted.



From left: Freeholder James Polos, College President Joann La Perla-Morales, and Dave Gregor, coordinator of the Middlesex County Traffic Safety Program. Signs painted on campus walkways say “Look Up – Be Safe,” which promote awareness as does the “Only a Dummy Would Drive Distracted” road sign that was on campus during the fall semester. Students are invited to participate in a public awareness campaign to discourage distracted cycling and walking.



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The MCC Student Nursing Association held its annual coat drive and delivered 30 coats and 56 other items of winter clothing to the Raritan Bay Medical Center Pediatric Department. The program, called “Coats for Kids” is an annual event to aid patients at Raritan Bay. From left: Pam Hicks, nursing instructor and association advisor; Vanessa Young, vice president; Glenda Robles, secretary; Stephanie Assad, president; and Raychelle Grooms, treasurer.

MCC Plans 2 New Buildings for Spring of 2016

Two new College buildings – the center for student services and an academic science building that will be called South Hall – are scheduled to open in the spring of 2016. The center will provide a revolutionary process for enrolling students and the new science building will provide state-of-the-art classrooms and labs.

Center for Student Services

While this project is in development and a steering committee is working on specifics, it will be a two-story building of approximately 26,000 square feet, at the corner of Parkside Drive and College Drive East. The project includes improvements to the park – a more defined path, new lighting and benches – as well as upgrading two parking lots and increasing the number of spaces in them.

“It’s going to revolutionize how we admit and register students,” said Kasey Drennen, director of the College’s First-Year Experience. “We’ve been looking at Montgomery County Community College, which is in the vanguard of enrollment services, to create a true one-stop process.”

Students could take care of most of their enrollment process by visiting one counter.

“The idea is you can get through the process quicker and more conveniently,” Mr. Drennen said.

The center will serve as the first point of contact for Admissions, Financial Aid, the Scholarships Office, Student Accounts, Advising, the Registrar and First-Year Experience, as well as Corporate and Community Education.

Donald R. Drost Jr., executive director of facilities management, said the steering committee will work on the business model as the project is being designed. DMR Architects has been selected and the actual construction is

scheduled to start at the end of 2014 or early 2015 and is expected to cost \$12 million. It will be funded by Chapter 12, a program in which the county government sells bonds, and the state and the county then split the debt service.

Crabiel Hall, the most recent building on the Middlesex campus, received a LEED® silver rating from the United States Green Building Council, signifying its environmental attributes. LEED, or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is an internationally recognized mark of excellence that provides building owners with a framework for identifying and implementing practical and measurable green building design, construction, operations and maintenance solutions.

Mr. Drost said the College is attempting to attain a gold rating for this new building.

South Hall

In 2012, New Jersey voters approved the “Building Our Future” bond, which allocated \$750 million for construction projects at the state’s colleges and universities, including \$150 million for community colleges. At MCC, the proposed project was for a new, state-of-the-art science building.

“The timeline to submit a proposal for this money was incredibly tight,” said College President Joann La Perla-Morales. “We knew that in our recent Master Plan, upgraded laboratories were cited as a need of the College. A committee worked diligently and quickly to prepare three separate proposals for the bond money and equipment. The committee members included Parag

Continued on page 11

Vets Rebuild Shore

Members of the Veterans and Servicemembers Association joined about 250 Habitat for Humanity volunteers to help repair homes damaged by Hurricane Sandy during the Jimmy & Rosalynn Carter Work Project in October. Habitat for Humanity organized the building effort to repair 14 homes and construct two new ones in Union Beach. President and Mrs. Carter joined the volunteers. One block away, the MCC military veterans helped repair another home by installing flooring and painting a bedroom.



At left, President Carter constructs a frame. Above, Vincent Pagano works on the flooring.



Learning About Fire Safety

Health and Safety Day at MCC brought dozens of human service and safety agencies to campus to help students, faculty and staff learn about how to make their lives healthier. The day included a visit by members of the Edison Fire Department, who taught fire safety to the kids in the Child Care Center. Here, Aryanna Goodwin tries on a helmet and examines the mask. She is flanked by Firefighters Ed Hummel (left) and Brian Stauder.



Michele Rockwell '99, right, received the Contribution to the Community award at a gala event sponsored by Magic 98.3/Greater Media in November. The event, called Women in Business, honored 10 central Jersey women in areas such as Woman of the Year, Mentor of the Year, Woman in the Workplace, New Business, Rising Star, in addition to the Contribution to the Community honor. She is shown with the Magic 98.3 on-air personality Debbie Mazella. Ms. Rockwell was the first female firefighter in East Brunswick, and at 21, served the nation in the United States Air Force as one of only six female maintenance mechanics, servicing B-52 bombers. Later, she returned to college as an adult to obtain her Associate's Degree from Middlesex County College and a B.A. from Fairleigh Dickinson University under full scholarship. She graduated with honors from both while taking care of two children and working full time to support her family. Ms. Rockwell is currently employed by Tumi, Inc., a leading men's and women's lifestyle brand, and has risen through the ranks over the last 11 years from her original position in customer service to her current role as director of project management, store planning and construction.

In Memoriam

Frank M. Chambers

1919-2013

Frank M. Chambers, the founding president of Middlesex County College, died on December 23 in Green Valley, AZ where he had been a resident for nearly 20 years. He was president of MCC from 1965 to 1975.

“As the founding father of one of the first community colleges in New Jersey, Frank Chambers is a member of a small group of dedicated people whose life and work transformed the lives of thousands of students,” said MCC President Joann La Perla-Morales.

Born in Yonkers, NY in 1919 to Frank and Helen Chambers, he went on after high school to St. Lawrence University. While at St. Lawrence he met his future wife, Ruth Slater of Norwich, NY.

Dr. Chambers enlisted in the Navy at the outbreak of World War II, and he and Ruth were married before he shipped out to the South Pacific to serve on the aircraft carrier USS Bunker Hill. Returning from the war, Dr. Chambers continued his education at Cornell University and subsequently was called up again during the Korean War and assigned to Washington, DC, working in Naval Intelligence. Returning again to civilian life, he went to the University of Florida for his Doctorate in Education.

At the completion of his education, Frank, Ruth, and their three children took a camping trip around the U.S. before settling down at Muskingum College where Dr. Chambers was appointed dean of men. After three years there, he moved on to Broome Technical Community College in Binghamton, NY as director of admissions. Living in Greene, NY he became involved with young people as a Boy Scout leader and as a youth group leader at the Zion Episcopal Church.

With his enthusiasm for the community college concept, Dr. Chambers was invited to apply to the new Middlesex County College for the first president’s position. As the founding president, he developed a dynamic educational facility with a wide range of curriculum and high academic standards that continues to this day. After 10 years in this position, he retired to the family lake house in McDonough, NY. There he pursued his avid interest in tennis by leading a community effort to build new tennis courts where he played often and taught local youth the game.

Beyond tennis, Dr. Chambers, along with his wife Ruth, traveled the world extensively, meeting interesting people and being immersed in many other cultures. Summers

brought frequent visits of grandchildren who enjoyed sharing their grandparents’ love of nature in and around the lake. Grandpa Frank was always ready to share the fun swimming, boating, fishing or just being a loving companion. He often related Ruth’s advice to him when he retired: “You can hunt, you can fish, and you can grow a garden. What more do you want?”



Dr. Frank Chambers

After Ruth’s death in 1992, Dr. Chambers met and married Mary Jane Bishop. They settled in Green Valley, AZ, shared a common interest playing tennis at every opportunity, and traveled the world for several years. Mary Jane died in 2009. Dr. Chambers moved to La Posada retirement community in Green Valley where he remained active for several more years, not putting his tennis racquet down until he was in his nineties.

Dr. Chambers is survived by his son, Frank, twin daughters Patricia Burpee and Roberta Lamb and their spouses. He also leaves five grandchildren, six great grandchildren, and a dear friend Carole Green. He will be missed for his interest in the arts and theater, his humor and his love of humanity, friends and family.



At the groundbreaking for Johnson Learning Center, from left: Freeholder George Otlowksi Sr.; Paige D. L’Hommedieu, chairman of the MCC Board of Trustees; and President Frank Chambers.

He's 1 in a Million

Student Vet Lauded as 1 Millionth Post 9/11 GI Bill Recipient

In the Cordell Hull Conference Room in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building, next to the White House, Middlesex County College student-veteran Steven Ferraro was celebrated Friday, Nov. 8, as the national one millionth recipient of the Post 9/11 GI Bill. He urged his fellow veterans to take advantage of their educational benefit.

Sitting next to him was Dr. Jill Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden, a military mother, and a faculty member at a community college in Virginia, as well as Allison Hickey, the Veterans Affairs' undersecretary of benefits.

In a conference call with reporters from all over the nation, Mr. Ferraro explained why he attended MCC and he recommended fellow veterans to use the benefit.

"I chose Middlesex County College because my brother used his GI Bill benefit there and graduated and my sister currently attends," he said. "I figured with my family going here, it would be an easy transition from going from a full-time soldier to a full-time student. I want to thank Middlesex County College and my veterans affairs rep, David Brimmer, for the support I have gotten.

"Middlesex County College is a veteran-friendly environment and the assistance I have received was a great help. Going back to school after serving in the military is a very big challenge, especially trying to balance school life with a family. I would recommend to all veterans and service members to use their VA benefits to help you make the most out of your next career."

Dr. Biden said she has seen how community colleges have changed the lives of so many students for the better.

"As a community college teacher myself, I am very happy that our one millionth beneficiary has chosen this path," she said. "Providing quality education and helping our veterans find meaningful employment is part of our obligation to those who serve. I have seen it in my own classroom: veterans bring the same determination and focus to their studies that they use serving our country. And it's great for our country because highly skilled, trained veterans will make our nation's workforce stronger.

"We have so many returning after the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and they're going to be looking for jobs. This is the perfect way for them to transition into new careers. I'm a community college teacher so I'm hoping they come to the community college and then transfer to a four-year college. You've seen how it's worked for Steven."



After the conference call, Second Lady Jill Biden signs an autograph for Steven Ferraro's mother.

The Post 9/11 GI Bill, which began in August of 2009, has distributed over \$30 billion in the form of tuition and other education-related payments to veterans, service members and their families; and to the universities, colleges and trade schools they attend.

The Post-9/11 GI Bill is a comprehensive education benefit created by Congress in 2008. In general, veterans and service members who have served on active duty for 90 or more days since Sept. 10, 2001 are eligible.

Service members also have the opportunity to transfer the benefit to immediate family members. Legally, GI Bill benefits are tiered, based on the number of days served on active duty, giving activated National Guard and Reserve members the same benefits as all other active duty members. These benefits include:

- Up to the full amount of tuition and fees for a state-

To view the video created by the Department of Veterans Affairs, visit: <http://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/10767/gi-bill-reaches-one-million-mark/>

operated college or university. The Yellow Ribbon Program may provide additional assistance for students attending private institutions or who are charged out-of-state tuition and fees;

- Monthly housing allowance, which is based upon the location of the school; and
- An annual books and supplies stipend of up to \$1,000.

Ms. Hickey, VA's undersecretary of benefits, congratulated Mr. Ferraro on his achievement and also looked to the future.

"We're here to congratulate a very special veteran – the one millionth beneficiary of this landmark program, both as an individual and as a representative of the post 9/11 veteran generation, which has sacrificed so much for our country. We're also getting ready to help the next million use this benefit to get a quality education and find meaningful employment."

Mr. Ferraro was interviewed by other media later in the day, and had a tour of the West Wing of the White House, including the press room and a peek inside the Oval Office.

Earlier in the fall, the Department of Veterans Affairs visited the campus to create a video marking the milestone. They interviewed Mr. Ferraro, Mr. Brimmer, College President Joann La Perla-Morales, as well as George Lisicki, member of the College's Board of Trustees and a former national commander-in-chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.



In a light moment, Mr. Ferraro "briefed" an almost empty press room in the White House.



David Brimmer (left), the director of the MCC Center for Veterans Services, speaks with Robert Worley, director of education service, and Allison Hickey, undersecretary of benefits for the Department of Veterans Affairs.

35 Years of Joyous Laughter

By Chuck O'Donnell '91

Improvisational comedy is like taking a running leap of faith into the unknown – in front of a live audience.

Luckily for Joe Bevilacqua, Jim Folly and Kenny Savoy, they have always been each others' safety net.

It didn't take long after they met in the Theatre Department at Middlesex County College in the fall of 1978 to realize they shared a calling to make people laugh. And the harder, the better.

Soon, they were spending all their free time – even cutting some classes, truth be told – to write skits and create characters. Where the improv stopped and real life began was hard to say. Didn't matter.

They formed a comedy troupe, dubbed themselves Liquid Comedy and got ready to take the stage by storm.

In the tradition of “The Carol Burnett Show” or “I Love Lucy,” the strength of their bond and the magic of their friendship – being able to read each others' expressions and feeding off each others' energy – only heightened the spontaneous and sometimes unpredictable nature of the art form.

Or, in laymen's terms, it made them funnier.

And all the students who sat and watched them perform “Mary Heartburn, Mary Heartburn” in Bunker Lounge in College Center could see it. So many people began to come to their performances that, as Mr. Savoy '81 puts it, “We would call ourselves The Beatles.”

And why not? When comedians such as Jerry Seinfeld and Gilbert Gottfried came to perform at the school, Liquid Comedy would do “Gilligan's Elevator” in between their acts.

They went on to create radio skits that aired on the College radio station, landed prime roles in the Theatre

Department's productions of “Equis” and “A Midsummer Night's Dream” and even convinced Ed Drake, the head of the department, to allow them to use the stage for a variety show.

“I think we just felt calm and natural with each other so there was no pretense,” Mr. Bevilacqua '80 said. “None of us were trying to be better than the other. There's no ego. We're not looking for compliments. We're not trying to impress each other.

“We're just being and it comes out and it fits like a puzzle. Like a hand in a glove.”

Many years have passed since their college days. The wrinkles on their faces are like road maps of the places life has taken them. But through it all – births, deaths, illness, everything – their friendships have never wavered and their chemistry has never waned.

Mr. Bevilacqua, Mr. Folly '80 and Mr. Savoy collaborate on “The Comedy-O-Rama Hour” Internet radio show that streams live each Monday at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. on dreamstreamradio.com. The shows are also available for free download through iTunes, or can be uploaded to your digital device via a free app.

At the start of each episode, the off-key strains of the blaring bugle is a call to order for the off-beat array of characters living at Camp Waterlogg.

Sgt. Lefty, Ellis the Boatkeeper, Chef Ron Drysdale, Stinky, Lil Jimmy Butch and all the others are brought to life by the voice acting of Mr. Bevilacqua, Mr. Folly and Mr. Savoy. Two founding members of Liquid Comedy – Gary Bihler and Tom Giannazzo – no longer perform with the group, but Mr. Bevilacqua's wife, Lorie Kellogg, has stepped in. She does the voices of Olive Pitts, Lkie and many others.



In a world where buzz words like “edgy” and “dark” dominate the popular culture landscape, Camp Waterlogg is a breath of fresh air at the foothills of the Catskill Mountains. The characters who live here may be misguided or bumbling, but they never hurt anyone. Ridiculous without being malicious.

“The culture has gotten very angry and afraid,” Mr. Bevilacqua said. “Everyone wants to watch shows about people doing harm to each other. Everything is very dark on television and in movies. There’s not a lot of happy stuff going on. You can see that as, ‘Oh, God, we’re so depressed and I can’t do anything about it.’ Or you can see it as an opportunity to be different.”

Different is a good word to describe the show. Mr. Bevilacqua edits and produces the show at their home in Ulster County, N.Y. It’s the real-life Camp Waterlogg, complete with 17 chickens running around in the back yard. When Mr. Folly, who lives in New Brunswick, and Mr. Savoy, who lives in Piscataway, can’t make the 90-minute drive, they’ll simply record a skit and send it to Mr. Bevilacqua, who will splice it into the show.

Mr. Bevilacqua will sometimes enlist the help of some of the comedians he’s met over the years to join them on the show. Al Franken and Rick Overton, among others, have cropped up on past episodes.

More recently, Stuart Pankin (“Curb Your Enthusiasm,” “Desperate Housewives”) called Sgt. Lefty after having acquired the movie rights to his life story. When Sgt. Lefty revealed that he had lost his right arm in an automated potato peeler accident in the mess hall – and not in some heroic act on the battlefield – Mr. Pankin pretended to be outraged.

Pankin: “Do you know how much money I’ve already put (from) Pankin Productions into the Lefty story? Now you’re telling me this was a kitchen peeler accident! You understand, that means I have no reason to make this movie anymore.”

Sgt. Lefty: “Gee, does this mean I’m not going to get my robotic arm?”

Pankin: “I don’t care about your robotic arm. I’m a little more concerned about the \$500,000 I’ve already put into the movie, which is gone. It’s not even tax-deductible any more!”

Other characters who appear on “The Comedy-O-Rama Hour” can trace their origins back to MCC.

For instance, Mr. Folly and Mr. Savoy were influenced by the chemistry between Jackie Gleason and Art Carney on “The Honeymooners,” so they channeled that buddy humor into a skit about two madcap Italian bakers and developed it into part of Liquid Comedy. To this day, Mr. Folly has trouble remembering if he’s supposed to be playing Marcello or Luigi. Either way, that act, and the characters, are still alive today.

So are their memories of MCC. The zenith of their time at MCC may have been when they put on “The New Looney Tunes Show,” with spoofs and skits influenced by everything from Saturday morning cartoons to “Saturday Night Live.”

“We ended with Gary Bihler and me doing ‘Who’s on First’ as Abbott and Costello,” Mr. Bevilacqua recalls. “And it was a big success.”

After a few years, one by one, the members of Liquid Comedy graduated from MCC. Mr. Bevilacqua has made a living doing everything from extra work on TV to audio book reading. Mr. Savoy plays the stock market. Mr. Folly works with Youth Stages, a children’s theater company based in Princeton.

Mr. Bevilacqua has been plotting a return engagement on the stage at MCC.

“We could do some of the old material and mix it in, but it would mostly be kind of a variety show slash radio theater,” he said. “We could even record it for the radio.”

Truth is, life hasn’t been one long spoof. Sure, there have been a lot of laughs, but also some tears. Through it all, these three friends have stuck together.

“We’ve suffered through some tragedies but we’ve also had some great things happen,” Mr. Folly said. “So it’s not just about us doing comedy, it’s about us being human beings and being friends and looking out for each other.”



Opposite page photo, circa 1978, from left: Jim Folly, Tom Giannazzo, Joe Bevilacqua, Gary Bihler and Kenny Savoy. This page: Jim Folly, Lorie Kellogg, Joe Bevilacqua and Kenny Savoy. Joe Bevilacqua is holding the umbrella in both photos.

Phi Theta Kappa Completion Project Hosts Transfer Fair

The MCC chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society for two-year colleges, held a transfer fair in the fall as part of kickoff week for the Community College Completion Challenge (called C4).

Sponsored by the New Jersey Council of County Colleges' Center for Student Success and the New Jersey Education Association, the NJ C4 initiative is an effort to increase the number of community college students completing their Associate Degrees and Certificates so that they have the credentials they need to successfully transfer to four-year colleges and universities to earn their Bachelor's Degrees and enter careers that provide family-sustaining wages.



Activities were held at all of New Jersey's 19 community colleges during the week of October 14-18.

"Phi Theta Kappa is committed to actively promoting completion of a college credential – an Associate Degree or Certificate among college students," said Rod Risley, executive director of Phi Theta Kappa. "Throughout this completion week in New Jersey, we hope to encourage students to take that pledge and declare that they will, indeed, complete their education."

The Council videotaped the transfer fair, as well as conducted interviews with students, College President Joann La Perla-Morales, as well as PTK Co-Presidents Ron Rubanick and Yana Burlachka.

The Community College Completion Challenge website, www.ccompletionchallenge.org, showcases the missions, action plans and strategies developed by each chapter to inspire their constituents; the goal is to produce five million more Associate Degree and Certificate holders by 2020.



Phi Theta Kappa Co-President Ron Rubanick is interviewed by Jake Farbman, communications director of the New Jersey Council of County Colleges. See the video on YouTube: [NJC4-Middlesex County College](#).



MCC honored veterans and service members during a Veterans Day program in November. Here, George Lisicki, a member of the College's Board of Trustees and former national commander-in-chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, spoke, along with Mike Miller, an Army veteran, motivational speaker and author.



Student Government Association officers, seated from left: Roma Gandhi, vice president, programming; Jean Fernandez, president; Precious Japheth, treasurer. Standing, Christopher Witte, vice president, student affairs; Stephanny Gomez, secretary; Kim Guerriero, vice president, student organizations; Christina Lam, vice president, academics; and Obaid Hussaini, executive vice president.

Student Government Association: A Whirlwind of Activity

Academic assistance and club development are the two main themes of the Student Government Association this year. The group is promoting increased opportunities for study, as well as assisting clubs with recruiting new members.

“We’re the voice of the student body,” said SGA President Jean Fernandez. “We’re trying to revitalize SGA to make a difference in the lives of the students and improve their overall experience here on campus.”

Last fall, SGA, along with Phi Theta Kappa, the honor

society, organized a debate asking if grades help or hinder the educational process. They are planning another one for this spring, posing the question, “Is it better to start at a two-year college or a four-year college?”

SGA officers met with Middlesex administrators and asked that space be available for studying late at night.

“Some of our students go to Rutgers to study during finals and others go to a coffeehouse that is open all night,” Mr. Fernandez said. “We were able to get two rooms in Main Hall, plus the lobby area, open until 1 a.m. during finals.”

SGA ran a self-awareness event, in which the Counseling and Career Services Office provided tips and tricks about how to study, and the Dietetics club promoted healthy energy foods to keep students focused during finals.

But academics are not SGA’s only priority. During the fall semester, it organized a Club Expo, in which campus organizations informed students of the breadth of their activities.

“At the beginning of each semester, we have the Student Activities Fair, but then you don’t get the chance to see them again,” Mr. Fernandez said. “The Expo allows clubs to publicize themselves and recruit new members.” He plans two more Expos during spring semester.

Other plans include: a “stay motivated” campaign to keep students successful in the classroom; a fair so students can learn about food and culture from other nations; and collaboration between clubs.

“Our long-term goals are to keep SGA strong, so that it can be a viable voice for students,” he said. “When space becomes available after the College’s two new buildings are finished, we’d love to see a student lounge be developed. I’m proud of what we’ve been able to accomplish, and I hope next year’s officers will continue that momentum.”

New Buildings Planned for 2016

Continued from page 3

Muley, David Edwards, Ron Goldfarb, Sue Perkins, Patrick Madama, Don Drost and Roseann Bucciarelli. They did a great job. A special note of appreciation goes to the Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders for providing the College with the \$3.4 million needed as a match.”

The MCC Board hired LR Kimball Architects, and the program phase – determining the academic needs for labs, lecture and classroom space – has begun.

Mr. Drost said it will most likely be a two-story building that will replace South I and South II. The departments there have been relocated and demolition is scheduled to take place in February. The goal is also a LEED gold rating for this building.

Parag Muley, chair of Natural Sciences, is eager for the new building to be completed.

“It’ll be fabulous,” he said. “It’ll be an excellent addition to our existing facility that will fill a much-needed niche. It will bring our resources on par with national and international standards as well as incorporate new pedagogies that have been evolving. Students can indulge in self-discovery and self-learn.”

Scholarships Office Provides Friendly Assistance

Students seeking scholarship help at MCC can turn to an office unique to community colleges in the state. The Scholarships Office assists students with the process and also the evaluators judging their requests.

“It’s a very effective program,” said Pam Hedberg, the director. “I’m very proud of the services we provide. We are fortunate to have approximately 60 dedicated review committee members, many of whom are faculty and administrators of the College, who spend countless hours ranking scholarship applications. Numerous scholarships are awarded based on their efforts. The most rewarding part of what we do is hear from the students how scholarships have enriched their lives.”

Ms. Hedberg works closely with the Middlesex County College Foundation, which has provided over \$10 million in aid to 15,000 students in its almost 50-year history. During the recent economic slowdown, scholarship support lagged, but it has come back and in 2012,

provided \$425,000 in aid to 342 students. While the books aren’t closed on 2013, support is already over the half-million-dollar mark.

The Scholarships Office administers more than 100 endowed and annual scholarships. These awards have criteria established by the donor. Students fill out one common online application to be considered by the review committees. They can also apply for general Foundation awards, many of which go to students who – for one reason or another – do not qualify for other financial aid.

“It could be that they experienced a loss of a job, or that, while they are living at home, their family is not supporting them financially at college, or it might be some other change in circumstance,” Ms. Hedberg said. “But the most common issue is that the student already has a degree. They are not eligible for federal aid, so we try to help them.”

Ms. Hedberg said the online application process, called “STARS Online,” has made the process easier for both student and evaluator, so much so that the number of applicants has increased from 200 a few years ago to 1,200 in 2012. The process has another benefit.

“We probably save 100 trees a year,” she said.



Students from geology and oceanography classes taught by Professor Claire Condie volunteered to clean the Laurence Harbor Waterfront Park. The program was organized by Clean Ocean Action, a nonprofit dedicated to improving the quality of marine waters off the New Jersey and New York coasts. Here, Winston DelVillar hands trash to Christian Borges.



When Dr. Christine Harrington published her textbook, “Student Success in College: Doing What Works!,” she decided to take some of the royalties from it and establish scholarships for students. She invited those taking Student Success 101 classes to create posters summarizing research findings from a peer-reviewed journal article. The three winners were honored at a ceremony in December. From left: Dr. Harrington; Randi Sheehan, first place winner whose poster was on the importance of student-faculty relationships on student success; her professor, Patty McMahon; Patrick Nicklas, the second place winner, whose poster’s theme was how video game performance can negatively affect academic performance in college students; his professor, Charlotte Quigley; Joseph Reyes, third place winner whose poster was on the importance of family communication on student success; and College President Joann La Perla-Morales. Ms. Sheehan was awarded \$2,000, Mr. Nicklas \$1,000, and Mr. Reyes \$500.

ALUMNI ACTIVITIES

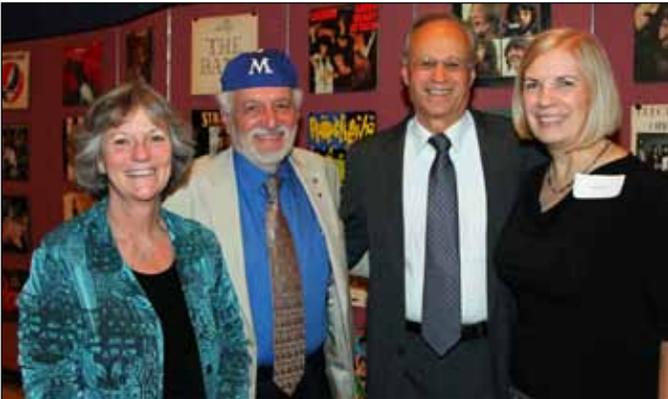


About 100 alumni from the classes of the 1960s and 1970s mixed with faculty, staff and emeriti at a reunion in October. The group met old friends, reminisced with faculty, and enjoyed dinner. They also danced to the wonderful sounds of the British Invasion Tribute Band, which included Robert Murdock, class of '79.



What a Time It Was!

Alumni from the Classes of the 1960s and 1970s rocked, reminisced, reflected



AlumNotes

Dorothy Bitetto '69 is president of the MCC Alumni Association, and secretary of the board of 10 Hairy Legs, a unique dance company founded by Randy James. The next performance is at NJPAC on March 8.

Albert Gomolka '71, vice president of the Alumni Association, retired after 37 years with the New Jersey State Park Service and is enjoying his hobby/business in the collectibles and antiques field.

Barry Constantine '74 has over 30 years of experience in the biotechnology and medical devices field. Barry earned a B.A. from Thomas Edison State College and served in the U.S. Army Medical Corps 52nd Combat Aviation Battalion in Vietnam from 1970-1971. His career has included management and research positions at Johnson & Johnson, Sherwood Medical, Convatec, Integra Lifesciences Corp., CLN Medical, and Polymerix Corp. In 2004 Barry founded Barry Constantine Consultant LLC, based in Toms River, specializing in pharmaceuticals, biologics, medical devices and products used in surgical procedures.

MaryAnn Sorensen Allacci, Ph.D. '76 continued her education at Ramapo College of NJ, Hunter College, and she received a Ph.D. in Environmental Psychology from The Graduate Center of the City University of New York. She is on staff at the Rutgers Center for Green Building, teaches environment and behavior at the New York School of Interior Design, and has co-founded a nonprofit organization, Projects for Environmental Health, Knowledge, and Action.

Mario A. Da Costa '76 was writer/photographer for Quo Vadis, the campus newspaper, and one of the founders of SHO NUFF, an Afro Latino newsletter of the Third World Student Association on campus. Mario worked as a bilingual investigator for the Middlesex County Board of Social Services for 19 years (1977-1996), and now lives in Los Angeles, employed as an internal security officer for Woodward HRT in Valencia, an aerospace company contracted by the U.S. Department of Defense. Mario is married and the father of four.

Denise Wilson Sikora '77 graduated with a degree in Medical Lab Technology and discovered her love of the medical field. In 2002,

she returned to complete the Medical Coding and Billing certificate program and then started a second career as a medical biller. In 2005, Denise started her own business as a medical bill patient advocate. "In 2009 I left my office manager position to work in my business full time, and we now offer medical billing for small medical practices as well as medical office consulting. As a medical bill advocate, we are able to make a tremendous impact in a person's life when we resolve their unpaid medical bills. MCC is a fantastic school with many opportunities available to students of all ages."

Francine Krimsky '81 will be leaving the Visual, Performing and Media Arts faculty in June, after teaching over 27 years at MCC. Francine has always been very involved in the College community and has encouraged student participation in numerous projects and competitions. She has volunteered with the MCC Foundation, Marketing Communications, the Office of Minority Student Affairs, the New Brunswick Center, the Health and Safety Department, the Blue Colt Book Store, as well as the Theatre. Francine served as advisor to the Art & Photography Club and founded the Mixed Spices Multi-Cultural Club. She has earned an additional degree as Doctor of Naturopathy and is board certified. She will embark on this new career, serving as a holistic health practitioner. Her clients will be empowered with the proper knowledge, enabling them to make informed decisions in maintaining healthy lifestyles. As a holistic practitioner, Francine will educate clients about the value of plant-based diets, whole foods, proper herbs, essential supplements, and stress management techniques. By utilizing these techniques, clients will experience wellness and longevity, accompanied by a better quality of life. Francine has two children, a son, who works along with his wife in television editing, and a daughter, who is a graduate of MCC, and rescues homeless/injured animals; she advocates veganism and animal rights.

Edwin Skrobacz '81 earned a B.S. and an M.S. from the New Jersey Institute of Technology. His wife, **Susan Shaw Skrobacz '81**, is a graduate of the Dental Hygiene program. Edwin and Susan have two children, Megan, born in 1990 and Tyler, born in 1993. Edwin is a supervising structural engineer at Parsons Brinckerhoff

and is responsible for project management, structural design and inspection of fixed and movable bridge structures throughout the USA and Canada. In addition he is an adjunct instructor at NJIT and Stevens Institute of Technology. Hobbies include long distance cycling and mountain biking, and he is an officer in the Knights of Columbus Council 8160 and active in several professional societies.

Tony K. Wei '86 earned a B.S. from the New Jersey Institute of Technology in 1988, an M.S. from Stevens Institute of Technology in 1997, and has served as an engineer with the U.S. Army since 1989. Tony lives in Piscataway, is married, and has a son. His hobbies include skiing, mountain biking, traveling and camping.

Kurt Rao '87 is vice president & corporate chief information officer at Time Warner, Inc. His past positions include vice president – global technology services at NBC Universal, vice president at General Electric/NBC Universal, and vice president at Vivendi Universal. Kurt continued his education at Monmouth University and the University of Pennsylvania – The Wharton School.

Toni Hoffmann '90 graduated from Rutgers in 2005 and retired in 2007 after 34 years with Philips Lighting in Somerset, NJ. Toni is married and shares five children and four grandchildren with her husband. "My husband, Bob, is the best. We both worked very hard – me for 42 years and Bob the same, including five years in the Navy."

Astrid J. Randa '94 lives in Vienna, Austria, and is responsible for the marketing and administration of the veterinary clinic she opened with her husband in 2010.

Kenneth Noto '97 graduated with a degree in Police Science and earned a B.A. Degree in Criminal Justice from Kean University. "I got a great education through MCC. In 2002 I moved to New York and became a New York City police officer. In 2004 I joined the Department of Defense at Fort Monmouth, NJ, and later joined the Pennsylvania State Police. I served four-and-a-half years in the Patrol Unit of Troop K, Skippack Station. I am currently assigned to the Bureau of Gaming Enforcement as a trooper/criminal investigator. Work hard, study and follow your dreams and anything is possible!"

Corinna Crafton '99 contacted MCC about New Pathways to Teaching in New Jersey, an alternate route program: "As a mid-career changer myself (HR generalist to teacher 10 years ago) and MCC alumnus, I am thrilled to see this program being introduced. I've already shared the news with several connections. I'd love to return to MCC as an instructor in the program and share some of what I experienced and learned making this transition."

Emily Pereira '02 completed her B.A. in Sociology from Douglass College in 2005. In 2009 she earned an MLIS degree at The School of Communication, Information & Library Studies, and the New Jersey State Librarian Certificate. Emily has worked at Rutgers University for the past 12 years. She has two children – Brandon, 8 years old, and Mona, 6 years old.

Alyssa Dula '02 graduated from William Paterson University with a B.F.A. in 2007 and has been teaching art in East Orange Public Schools for the past two years. She previously taught art for six years at a charter school in Plainfield. In the summer, Alyssa teaches at an academic enrichment camp at Kean University, and enjoys painting and museums.

Meghan Alai '02 is director of institutional research at MCC. Meghan and her partner, John Costello, welcomed a very healthy baby boy, Sean Eamonn, to their family on December 5, 2013. Everyone is doing very well. Meghan's mother, **Maureen Alai '08**, is recently retired from Johnson & Johnson.

Yvonne Varner '03 founded WOW at MCC and works as an event specialist. Yvonne also studies African American art and history, and spends her time on arts, crafts, sewing, and being involved with the Alumni Association Board.

Parag Vapiwala '03 continued his education at the University of Phoenix and is currently employed at Bristol-Myers Squibb.

Lacey Plichta '06, treasurer of the Alumni Association Board of Trustees, teaches second grade at Princeton Charter School and, in addition, creates gourmet cupcakes. Check out her cupcakes: www.laceysgourmetcupcakes.com.

Michael Austerlitz '08 graduated from Hobart and William Smith Colleges in 2010. He worked

for a year with AmeriCorps VISTA at a legal aid office in Geneva, NY. In December 2013, Michael graduated with a Master of Public Administration Degree from the Cornell Institute of Public Affairs, Cornell University. "Just wanted to let everyone know that my time at MCC really helped me get to where I am. Thank you!"

Kristin Nemeth '08 has joined the Renaissance Newark Airport hotel as the Ironbound restaurant's specialty chef. A graduate of the Hotel, Restaurant and Institution Management program, Kristin trained as a line cook and saucier at a Tuscan-style restaurant, and a sous chef at a bed and breakfast inn. Previously with the Bridgewater Marriott, she held the positions of banquet captain, banquet/line cook, purchaser, kitchen supervisor, and specialty restaurant chef at T-Bones Steakhouse.

Kamil Saber '09 earned a Bachelor's Degree in Environmental and Business Economics from Rutgers University. Kamil had been self-employed for 15 years prior to attending MCC, and continues to be to the present day. "My educational background in both institutions sharpened my skills and helped me expand my entrepreneurship. I now own two businesses in two different industries and am in the planning phase of expanding my ventures overseas in home building and real estate development. I enjoy traveling and do so often. I wish everyone success at MCC!"

Yaira Camicia '10 completed a B.S.N. at Thomas Edison State College, and is enrolled in a Master's Degree program in education. "I have been working as an emergency room nurse since my graduation and I am very satisfied

with my life and career. The nursing journey was a very difficult one, but it was possible with all the support and great curriculum provided by MCC. I would tell all the nursing students presently enrolled that the rewards are waiting at the end of the line and not to give up."

Elizabeth Ruiz '12 is a senior at Kean University.

Andrew Cowan '12 is presently attending Kean University, and anticipates graduating in May 2014 with a B.A. in History.

Vanessa Haliotis '12 is a volunteer at Turtle Back Zoo, West Orange.

Karina Leon '13 is working part time as an after school counselor at the YMCA in Perth Amboy. Karina earned her substitute teaching certification and is furthering her education at Kean starting January 2014. She is so thankful for all of her wonderful professors at MCC who helped her earn her degree and looks forward to visiting when her younger brother graduates and joins her as an MCC alumnus.

India Seawright-Kyser '13 graduated from the Paralegal Studies program and is enrolled at Rider University, majoring in Liberal Studies with a concentration in Law & Justice.

Jen Mahoney is owner/travel agent of Cruise Planners Total Travel Services, specializing in destination weddings, honeymoons, incentive travel, and both individual and group travel. Jen is special-needs certified. www.splendorvacations.com.

Let us know what you've been up to.
Email alumni@middlesexcc.edu

Save the Date

MCC Alumni Association Food Tasting Event

*An Evening of Good Taste
for the Educated Palate*

Wednesday, April 9 • 6-8 p.m. • College Center
\$30 in advance; \$35 at the door; \$20 students
alumni@middlesexcc.edu • 732-906-7732

FOUNDATION REPORT

Saying Thanks

Scholarship recipients met their benefactors at the College's Scholarship Reception in November. The annual event is an opportunity for scholarship donors to meet student recipients. In addition, Jerome F. Katcher

was recognized for his longstanding commitment to Middlesex County College students. Ronald Rubanick, Phi Theta Kappa president, spoke on behalf of the students. Additionally, Keith Mullane, a dedicated benefactor, spoke regarding the importance of giving back.



From Left: Foundation Chair Brian Daugherty, honoree Jerome F. Katcher, and President Joann La Perla-Morales.



Paige B. L'Hommedieu (top, second right) with L'Hommedieu Family Scholarship recipients .



Keith Mullane (top right) with Mary Braun Memorial Scholarship recipients.



Casino Night: The Odds Were in Your Favor!

A fun-filled and exciting Casino Night was held in October as more than 100 guests enjoyed an evening of risk-free gambling, playing blackjack, craps, roulette and poker. Winners received tickets for prizes ranging from ballroom dance lessons and gift certificates to five-star eateries, a 33" LCD television, and much more. Sponsors of the event included Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, Summit Associates, Inc., Elizabeth & Paige B. L'Hommedieu, Investors Bank, Middlesex County AFL-CIO Labor Council, New Brunswick Plating, The Provident Bank Foundation, Universal Mailing Service, Inc., and Wilentz, Goldman & Spitzer, P.A. Numerous restaurants, theatres, hotels, local businesses, yoga studios, and individuals donated raffle items.

Update on Recent Gifts Toward Scholarships

LyondellBasell is a multi-national manufacturer of polyolefin materials for a wide range of industrial applications. As a responsible corporate neighbor, LyondellBasell presented the MCC Foundation with a gift to assist students in the Process Technology Program develop technical knowledge regarding plant operations and team-building skills. The Process Technology Program is a jobs-oriented program that prepares students for careers in the chemical, pharmaceutical and related industries.

The Switzer Foundation understands the needs of nursing students and has provided a generous gift of \$10,500 to support the Switzer Foundation Scholarships for Nursing Students. Without private support, many nursing students must delay their career goals as the costs for completing their education is higher than in any other academic program. The Switzer Foundation gift is supporting 12 students this academic year. It is an inspiration to the recipients and a commitment to their success.

The Wells Fargo Foundation has generously provided a \$10,000 gift to support the Wells Fargo Regional Foundation Annual Scholarships, providing financial support to five students who otherwise would be unable to afford to pursue their studies, or whose academic progress would be delayed due to work or family obligations.

The Northfield Bank Foundation provided a generous gift of \$5,000 to renew support for scholarships in 2013-2014. Five \$1,000 scholarships will support MCC students from townships where Northfield Bank has branches in Middlesex County. This support will help

to ease financial burdens for the student recipients who seek to better their lives and that of their families through education. The success of MCC students will also help to strengthen and enhance the fiber of the communities in which they live and work.

Join us!

Middlesex County College,
the MCC Foundation
and the Alumni Association
cordially invite you to the

44th Annual Scholarship Gala

Saturday, March 1, 2014, 6 p.m.

The Imperia, Somerset, NJ

Honorees:

David H. Brogan '93

New Jersey Council of County Colleges

32nd Annual Scholarship Golf Classic

Tuesday, May 20, 2014

Metuchen Golf and Country Club, Edison

For more information, please call the MCC Foundation at 732-906-2564, email foundation@middlesexcc.edu or visit www.mcc-foundation.org.

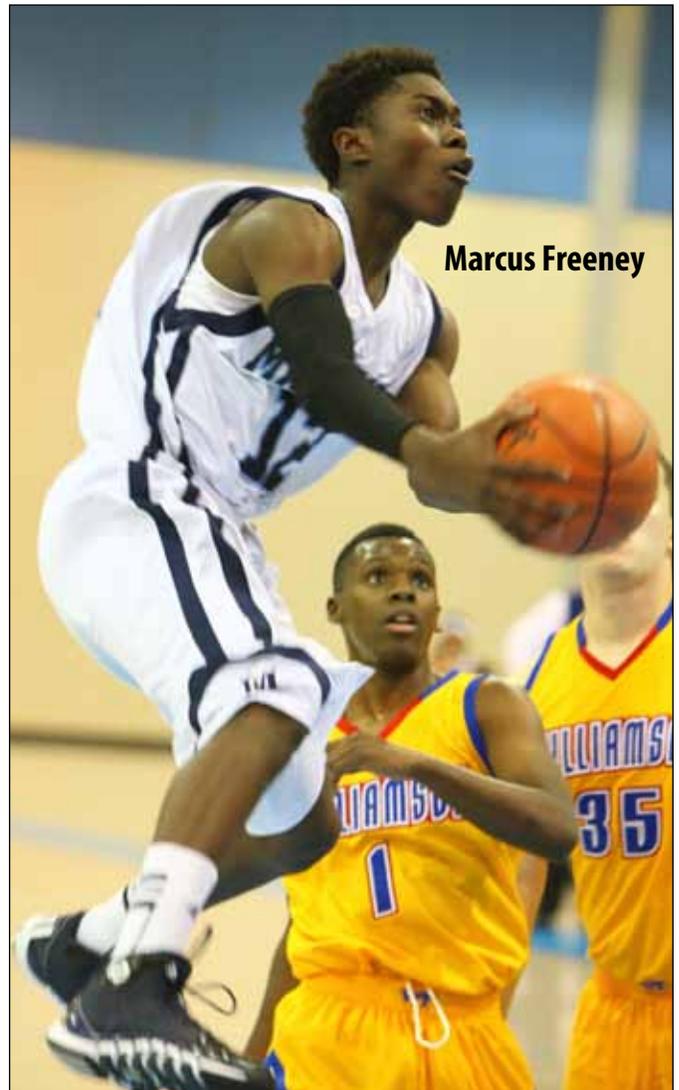
SPORTS UPDATE



Jeremy Cruz



Robert Gomulka



Marcus Freaney



The Middlesex County College men's basketball team made the holidays brighter for underprivileged children in the area as they collected dozens of toys and games to donate to the Toys for Tots program. From left: head coach Chris Tarver, Jeremy Cruz, Jonathan Cuccia and John Cosme.

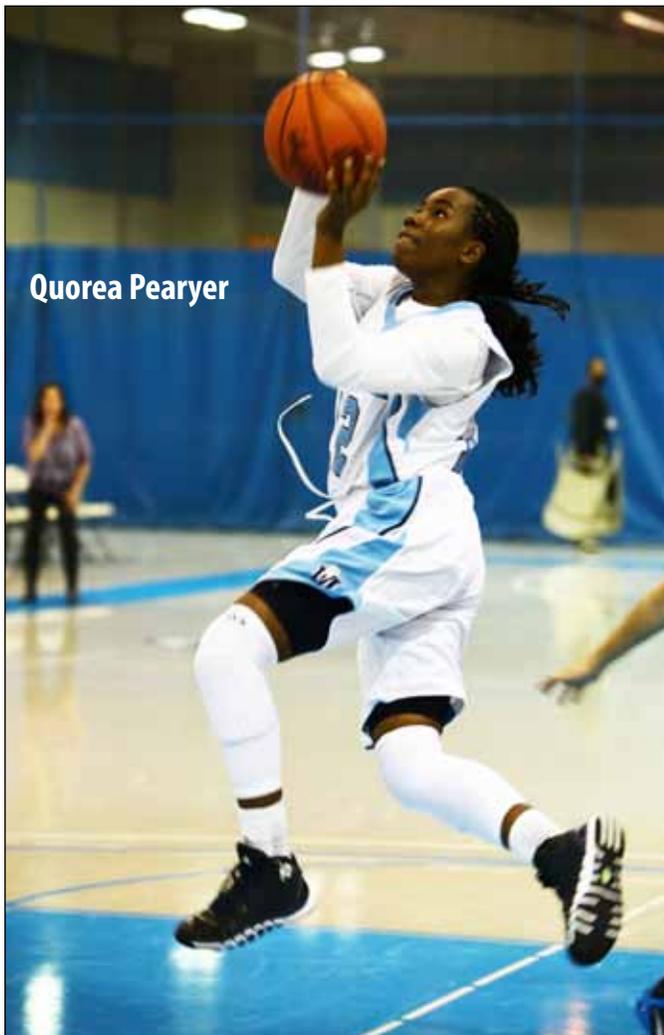


Jennifer Shereyka

The Men's Basketball team is currently in third place in the Garden State Athletic Conference with a record of 7-2 and an overall record of 8-4. Marcus Freeney and Jaquan Pearyer are leading the way for the Colts on offense.

The Women's Basketball team has an overall record of 10-4 and a Garden State Athletic Conference record of 6-2. Jennifer Shereyka and Quorea Pearyer have each been named Garden State Athletic Conference Player of the Week this season. They are also leading the team in scoring.

The wrestling season started off on a positive note at the Washington and Jefferson Invitational Tournament with Gavin Pejacovich, Kurt Hewitt and Taylor Black finishing in the top five. Mike Vettori was having a breakout performance before an injury forced him out of the tournament. They now look ahead to the districts in Albany, GA and the national tournament in Spokane, WA.



Quorea Pearyer



Gissel Santana



Institutional Advancement

2600 Woodbridge Ave.
Post Office Box 3050
Edison, NJ 08818-3050

Change Service Requested



The Middlesex County College annual holiday party included a food drive that collected 700 pounds of food, which was donated to M.C.F.O.D.S. (Middlesex County Food Organization and Outreach Distribution Services). Members of the College community dropped off food as they entered the party. From left: Kimberlee Hooper, director of the Office of School Relations; Anny Gonzalez, department assistant in Counseling and Career Services; Max Hill, Office of School Relations; and College President Joann La Perla-Morales.

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