

This
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MIDDLESEX

C O U N T Y C O L L E G E

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Veterans Day was celebrated with a flag raising, a speech by College Board member George Lisicki, who is also a former national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and a service project. The College community and other volunteers packed boxes of food and hygiene items to be shipped to service members overseas. The program was organized by Operation Shoebox NJ. From left, MCC student Mike Gada, an Army veteran; Middlesex County Sheriff's Officer Matthew Michals; and MCC student Lasha Otiuridze, a Marine Corps veteran.

College Again Named as Veteran-Friendly School

Once again, Middlesex County College has been named as one of the most veteran-friendly colleges in the United States, receiving recognition for its service to student-veterans, according to lists developed by three media companies: Military Times, Military Advanced Education, and Victory Media. This is the third year MCC has been named to the Military Times' list, the fourth time for Military Advanced Education, and the fifth year for Victory Media. In addition, MCC was named as the number 4 two-year school in the nation for veterans by Online College Plan, a college search service for prospective students and their parents.

MCC President Joann La Perla-Morales credited the Veterans Services

Center for the rankings. Established in 2011 with support from the Willard T.C. Johnson Foundation, the center's mission is to assist with quality education and comprehensive support services.

"The center has done a great job in assisting military veterans as they transition to civilian life," she said. "They make sure veterans receive all the entitlements for which they are eligible, coordinate services they need to be successful, and create an environment where they can socialize with other military veterans."

One such veteran is Mike Gada, who was in the Army and is now a Computer Science major.

"The Veterans Center has been a focal point for making sure I'm on

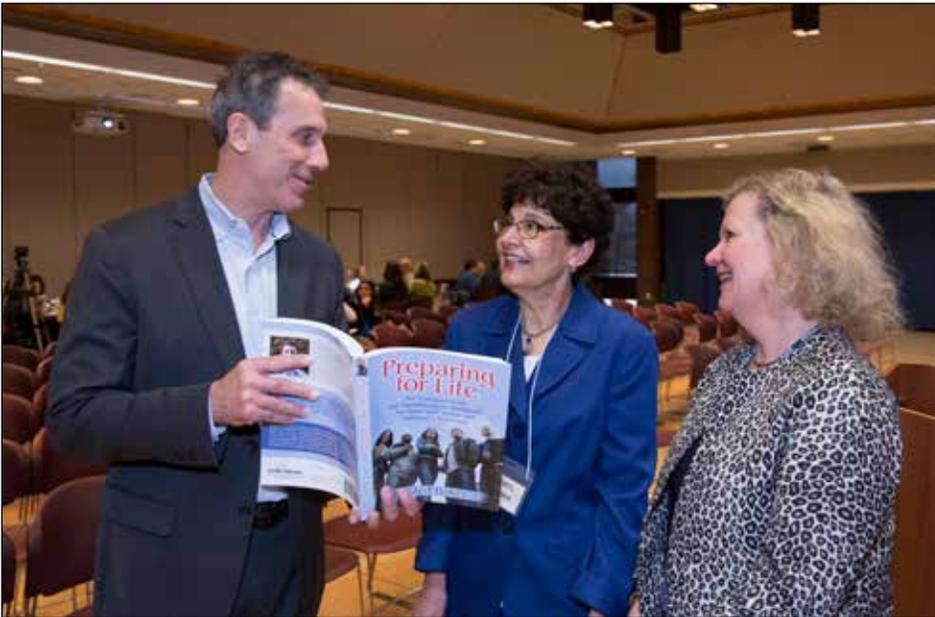
the correct path to achieve my full potential," he said.

Richard Feldman, the coordinator of the Veterans Center, said he was grateful for the generous support of the Willard T.C. Johnson Foundation.

"The Foundation has allowed us to make a real difference in the lives of these men and women," he said. "I love watching these students prosper in their transition back into civilian life. One of my favorite days of the year is Commencement, where I can watch with pride as our veterans graduate."

Military Times publishes magazines for members in the branches of military service. Its survey, called "Best for Vets," is an editorially independent

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Jed Baker, director of the Social Skills Training Project, an organization serving individuals with autism and social communication problems, spoke at Disability Awareness Day in October. He is the author of eight books, including “Preparing for Life: The Complete Handbook for the Transition to Adulthood for Those with Autism and Asperger’s Syndrome” and “Overcoming Anxiety in Children and Teens.” Dr. Baker writes, lectures and provides training on the topic of social skills and managing challenging behaviors. He is speaking with Cheryl Kolber, director of Project Connections, MCC’s program for college-able students with learning disabilities, and Elaine Daidone, counselor for students with disabilities.

MCC Again Named Veteran-Friendly

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news project that evaluates the many factors that help make colleges and universities a good fit for service members, military veterans and their families. More than 500 colleges took part in this year’s detailed survey. Middlesex was ranked 10th in the nation among two-year colleges; it was the only community college in New Jersey to make the list.

“We limit our list to encourage

competition, and we genuinely hope this helps raise the bar for veterans on campus,” said Amanda Miller, editor of Best for Vets.

The rankings are published in full in the issues of Army Times, Navy Times, Air Force Times and Marine Corps Times.

Military Advanced Education (MAE) named MCC a Top School in its 2017 MAE Guide to Colleges & Universities, measuring best practices in military and veteran education. It will be released

in the December issue of MAE, and available online at www.mae-kmi.com.

The guide presents results of a questionnaire of military-supportive policies enacted at more than 600 institutions including private, public, for-profit, not-for-profit, four-year, and two-year colleges. From community colleges to state universities, online universities and nationally known centers of higher learning, MAE’s 2017 Guide to Colleges & Universities arms students with information about institutions that go out of their way to give back to the men and women in uniform.

Victory Media has named MCC to the coveted Military Friendly Schools® list. The list honors the top 20 percent of colleges, universities and trade schools that are doing the most to embrace America’s military service members, veterans and spouses, and ensure their success on campus.

“Our ability to apply a clear, consistent standard to the majority of colleges gives veterans a comprehensive view of which schools are striving to provide the best opportunities and conditions for our nation’s student veterans,” said Daniel Nichols, a Navy Reserve veteran and chief product

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THIS MONTH AT MIDDLESEX

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Joseph Nesi: From Corporate America into the Classroom

For 20 years, Joseph Nesi was immersed in corporate America. “I was a financial controller in a business unit that was being phased out in a corporate reorganization,” he said. “When thinking about my next move, I thought, let me try it on my own.”

So his sole proprietorship was born, providing accounting, tax and business advice to individuals and small businesses.

“That was going along nicely,” he said. “But one day, I was in a meeting with a client interested in creating a startup company. He brought some colleagues. When my presentation was done, one of them said, ‘You did an excellent job. Have you ever thought about teaching?’ That stuck with me.”

So Professor Nesi went to the Adjunct Faculty Fair and met with Rich Ellison, the chair of Accounting and Legal Studies at the time.

Professor Nesi’s first class was Financial Accounting.



Joseph Nesi

“I was off and running,” he said. “Next thing I know I’m a college professor and I really like it. It was very fulfilling.”

He learned from Ed Ruhno, a longtime adjunct active in the Adjunct

Faculty Council, who acted as a mentor. He sat in on Professor Nesi’s classes and helped develop his teaching skills.

So when a full-time position opened in the department, it didn’t take him long to apply.

“I was ready to begin the next chapter of my career,” he said. “I enjoy the interaction with the students and the support from colleagues. CELT (the Center for Enrichment of Learning and Teaching) workshops and mentors have been a big help. There’s a great formula for success here.”

He revels in his students’ success, noting with pride as they go on to four-year schools and later into the profession.

“For me, that’s what it’s about – seeing the light bulb go on,” he said.

Professor Nesi is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the New Jersey State Society of Certified Public Accountants. He is also a board member of an organization close to his heart: Community Action Reaches Everyone, a nonprofit that assists Edison residents in its school system with socio-economic hardships. The group provides assistance for those families in need and runs an afterschool reading program.



Eva Wiener was a passenger on the St. Louis, which left Europe in 1939 attempting to flee Nazi Europe. Denied entry by multiple countries, the ship was forced to return to Europe where hundreds of passengers were eventually killed in the Holocaust. The ship has become a symbol of the plight of European Jewry on the eve of the Holocaust. Ms. Wiener spoke in November in a program sponsored by the MCC Holocaust and Human Rights Center. Chatting before her speech are, from left, Linda Scherr, dean of Arts and Sciences; Shirley Wachtel, English professor who arraigned the visit; History Professor Terrence Corrigan, who is also director of the Center; and Ms. Wiener.



About 30 students recently joined dozens of other volunteers at a beach cleanup in Old Bridge. 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. From left, MCC Earth Science Club members Stephanie Janeczko, Emily Koester and Kyle J. Zaczek discard items they found on the beach.

College Again Earns Veteran-Friendly Awards

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officer at Victory Media. “Military Friendly helps military families make the best use of the Post-9/11 GI Bill and other federal benefits while allowing us to further our goal of assisting them in finding success in their chosen career fields.”

The Military Friendly Schools website, www.militaryfriendlyschoools.com, also features interactive and

search tools to help military students find the best school to suit their unique needs and preferences.

George Lisicki, a member of the MCC Board of Trustees, was the national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars when the Post 9/11 GI Bill was signed in 2008. President George Bush was reluctant to sign it, because his advisors told him service members would leave the military en masse. “I told him this bill would

actually encourage young men and women to join,” Mr. Lisicki said. “As I was leaving the Oval Office, he winked at me and said ‘You’ll have your G.I. Bill.’”

Mr. Lisicki said he was very proud of Middlesex County College and the work of the Veterans Center.

“They’re doing a wonderful job,” he said. “And that’s proven by all these awards. They help these young people transition from military to civilian life.”

A student club, called Middlesex, Math & the Mouse, heard from a best-selling author about how to apply math and data to saving time. The lecture, by Len Testa, was titled “The Traveling Salesman Problem for Fun and Profit.” He is a best-selling author, computer scientist, and data guru and holds a patent on the methods used to save up to four hours waiting on lines at Walt Disney World. He is also the president of Touring Plans and leads the researchers for all of The Unofficial Guides travel book series. He explained how he applied research on the time-dependent traveling salesman problem to figure out how to avoid the lines at Disney. Before his speech, he talked with club members, from left, Shayne Judge, club president; Lauren Sutphen, secretary; Alyssa Capone, treasurer; and mathematics professor Patty Kiernan, club advisor.

