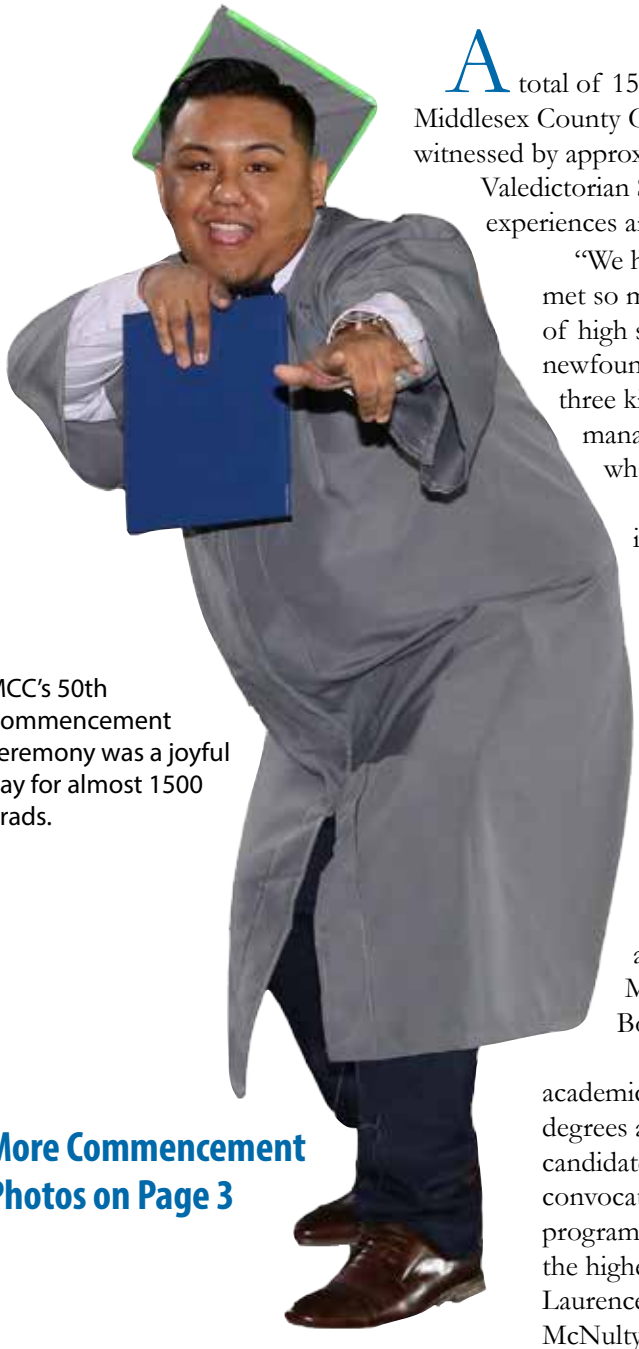
This Month @ MIDDLESEX COUNTY COLLEGE

June 2017 Vol. 9, No. 10

Tassels Turned: MCC Celebrates Grads at 50th Commencement



MCC's 50th Commencement ceremony was a joyful day for almost 1500 grads.

A total of 1509 degrees and certificates were awarded to 1476 students by Middlesex County College Tuesday, May 23 at the 50th annual Commencement exercises witnessed by approximately 3500 guests in the Expo Center at the Raritan Center.

Valedictorian Sara Rose Chirco delivered the class welcome, sharing her experiences and aspirations. Ms. Chirco is a Liberal Arts/Sociology major.

"We have all worked so hard to get here today," she told the class. "I've met so many hardworking people here at Middlesex. Some were fresh out of high school, struggling to find their passion and learning to juggle their newfound sense of educational freedom. Some were moms who are raising three kids, working two jobs, taking six classes each semester and somehow managing to get straight A's. It's amazing what you've all accomplished – what we have all accomplished – here at MCC. It is a huge success.

"Success has different meanings for different people. For students it's making it to graduation or handing in a paper on time. For athletes it's winning the big game or further developing their skills. For parents, it's getting you out of the house. But seriously, don't let other people measure your success. You define your own success. We should all be proud that we are here today, no longer as students of MCC, but as graduates."

Approximately 650 members of the Class of 2017 participated in the exercises, representing the 385 graduates of August 2016, 373 of January 2017 and 718 of May 2017. Participants included several students who fulfilled the requirements for more than one degree or certificate during this academic year.

Dr. Mark McCormick, vice president for academic and student affairs, presided. Greetings were delivered by Dr. Joann La Perla-Morales, College president; Dorothy K. Power, chairman of the Board of Trustees; and Ronald G. Rios, Freeholder director.

Dr. Diane Trainor, of the Natural Sciences Department, led the academic processional as grand marshal. Dr. La Perla-Morales conferred degrees and certificates to the graduates. Dr. McCormick presented the candidates for graduation. Earlier in May, the College held an honors convocation for students with the highest academic achievement in each program. MCC also presented the Chambers Awards to graduates with the highest grade point average. They include Ms. Chirco; the salutatorian, Laurence W. Giordano; and Christopher J. Klapper; Dorota Matracz, Chelsea McNulty and Yana Titova.

More Commencement Photos on Page 3

From left: Veronica Clinton, executive director of the Middlesex County College Foundation, who presented the award; Robert Murdock; and College President Joann La Perla-Morales.

Robert Murdock '79 Named Alumnus of the Year

Robert Murdock, a 1979 graduate, was named MCC's Alumnus of the Year for Contributions to the College, its Alumni Association or its Foundation. The award was presented during Celebration Day, an annual event that honors College employees reaching milestone service anniversaries, two Outstanding Service to the College award winners, as well as the Alumnus of the Year.

Mr. Murdock graduated with a degree in Accounting and went on to Rider University where he earned his Bachelor's Degree. He is a founder of the band The British Invasion Years (formerly The British Invasion Tribute Band) and he sings and plays the bass guitar. He is also the business manager for the group and says the accounting skills he was taught at MCC and Rider made him the logical choice to manage the band's financial affairs.

"On February 9, 1964 when my parents sat me down in front of the TV to watch the historic first appearance by The Beatles on the Ed Sullivan Show, I knew I wanted to be a musician in a band," Mr. Murdock said as he accepted the award.

His parents hired a teacher, who taught Mr. Murdock to play the guitar, bass guitar and piano.

"As I got older, I discovered that music is more than just an art form, it is also a business," he said. He came to MCC in 1977.

"It was one of the wisest decisions I ever made," he said. "Because of the great business fundamentals and foundation I learned here, I am now able to wear two hats in my career, managing the business of the British Invasion Years and performing the music I love with a great bunch of musicians and friends. For that, I have to say thank you to MCC for helping me to get to this point. I owe a huge debt of gratitude for all I learned here in just two short years."

The British Invasion Years now performs throughout the nation. They also donate their talents for numerous charitable events each year.

Two Outstanding Service to the College awards were also presented. Joaquin Nieves, an information technology desk analyst, was presented the award for staff, and Susan Perkins, vice president for administration and finance, won the award for administrators.

Notables

Steve Larkin, chair of Medical Lab Technology, received the Outstanding Educator of the Year award from the American Society of Clinical Laboratory Science – New Jersey at its annual spring seminar.

THIS MONTH AT MIDDLESEX

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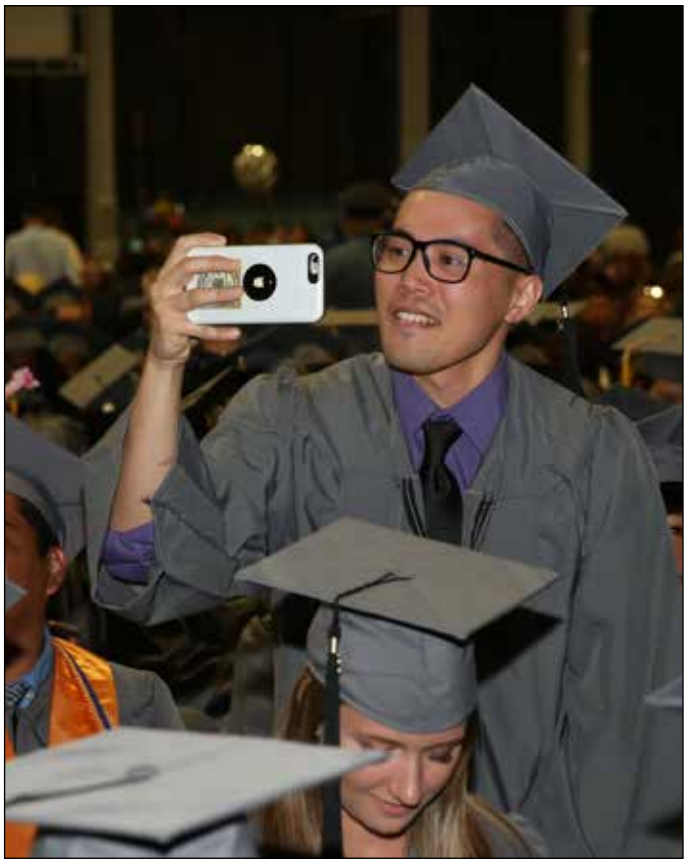
Commencement 2017



Top right: Sara Rose Chirco, the valedictorian, and Laurence Giordano, the salutatorian. For more photos and video of the Commencement Ceremony, visit www.middlesexcc.edu/commencement.

Eleven MCC students were recently honored for their induction into Alpha Mu Gamma, the national honor society for foreign language study. Seated, from left: Alejandra Carbajal, Juana Cuarezma, Angela Spinetta, Imelda Stiles, Miluska Zimic. Standing: Professor Brenda Cavanaugh, Zachary Jellison, Stephan Jules, Ksenia Khlystova, Luz Mairy Llauger, Jinali Patel, Maria V. Solano de la Sala Torres, and Gary Abbott, chair of the English as a Second Language Department.

Zikyara Hicks, star MCC basketball player, was presented the Vincent DeSario award by Athletic Director Bob Wisniewski at the Athletic Banquet in May. The award, named for the late MCC golfer, is presented to a sophomore student-athlete each year.

MCC student organizer Brandon Rodriguez (right) leads a group of walkers as they start the Believe Tonight walk, which raised money for leukemia and lymphoma research.

An End-of-Semester party allowed students to blow off some steam as the semester came to a close as finals approached. The program featured carnival games, fun and food. They played Foosball and participated in a race to see who could pop their balloon the fastest.