

This
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MIDDLESEX

COUNTY COLLEGE

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Front row, from left, holding scissors: Yasmin E. Hernandez-Manno, MCC trustee; Blanquita Valenti, freeholder; Ronald Rios, freeholder director; Dorothy K. Power, MCC board chairman; College President Joann La Perla-Morales; Robert Burke, a science major from the class of 1970 who became a pediatrician; Anissa Bousellam '14; Mark McCormick, MCC's vice president for academic and student affairs; and Linda Scherr, dean of arts and sciences. They are surrounded by other County and College officials, as well as faculty and staff in the Natural Sciences Department. Classes begin in the building in January.



South Hall Science Building Opens; Classes to Start in January

For the second time in less than a month, Middlesex County College formally opened a new building. Called South Hall, the two-story, 36,000-square-foot facility includes 14 science labs dedicated to general biology, chemistry, organic chemistry, genetics, microbiology and general science. Classes will begin in January of 2017.

"We're all excited about the new facility," said Parag Muley, chair of Natural Sciences. "It looks spacious and inviting. Students and faculty are going to find it to be state-of-the-art, and a really good educational space. It's going to be equipped with the latest and the greatest equipment for training. We are eager to get started. We can't wait."

South Hall, which cost \$18.2 million, was funded through the State of New Jersey's Building Our Future Bond Act,

along with a 25 percent match from the County.

"It took many steps to complete this project and to arrive at this day," said Middlesex County Freeholder Director Ronald Rios, who spoke at the ribbon-cutting. "South Hall has been designed as a facility where students can experience in-depth, hands-on training in a wide range of scientific studies. It illustrates our shared dedication to offering quality education in state-of-the-art facilities to prepare our students for growing and in-demand fields.

"My fellow freeholders and I will always be proud to contribute to the education of Middlesex County, and are proud to have contributed \$3.4 million to the project, to match the funds the College received from the State of New Jersey's Building Our Future Bond Act. And building our future is exactly what we are doing. Today's students are tomorrow's leaders. One day, the

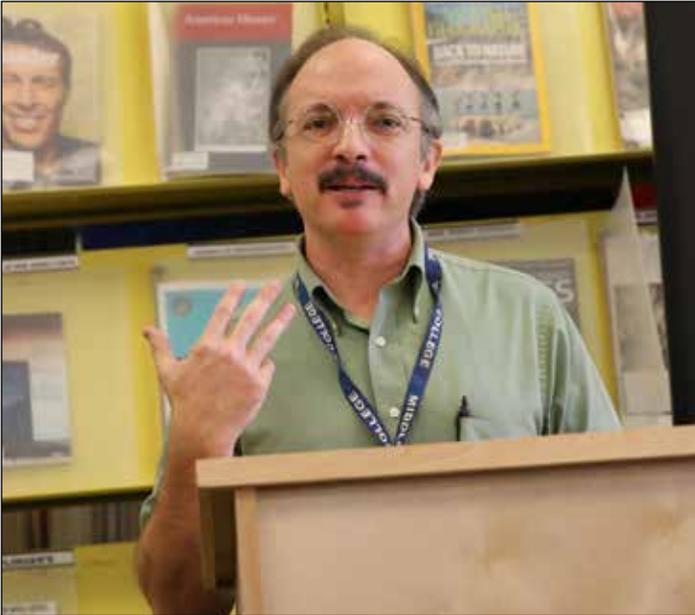
scientific breakthroughs made in these laboratories may go on to change our world for the better."

South Hall sits on land that held two smaller buildings, South 1 and 2, which predated MCC when the site was an Army Arsenal. South 1 was used as a maintenance shop for the Arsenal and South 2 was a tank repair shop. When the College took them over, they became classrooms and student support offices. Most recently, they were the temporary home for the James Monroe Elementary School when a fire destroyed its building in 2014.

Dorothy K. Power, chairman of the MCC Board of Trustees, recalled the history.

"What a difference from the old Arsenal that once occupied this space, and in the interim, provided

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English Professor Mat Spano '88 spoke and read from his new book, "Hellgrammite," at a program organized by the College Library. Dr. Spano is donating proceeds from the book to two MCC scholarships.



Brian Clemmons, dean of enrollment management, received an honorary membership into Phi Theta Kappa at its Fall induction. He was presented with his stole by Sara Chirco, PTK secretary.

Ribbon Cut Opening South Hall Science Building

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classrooms for our young James Monroe Elementary School students and teachers in grades 1-5 starting on a cold windy day in March 2014," she said. "The change that has taken place on this plot of land over the last six decades is remarkable. On behalf of

our Board of Trustees, congratulations to all who made this happen and good luck to all the students who study here."

College President Joann La Perla-Morales echoed her remarks.

"Although the old South Halls have gone, our connection to the past is constant," she said. "What connects the

first days of the college on the Arsenal site to our present is the continuing commitment of everyone at the College to provide access, opportunity and excellence for the residents of Middlesex County. We are most grateful to both the County of Middlesex and the State of New Jersey for making the funding available for this beautiful facility."

In September, MCC opened West Hall, a new enrollment center. Donald Drost, executive director of facilities management, said the College will submit the two buildings for LEED certification. LEED, or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is an internationally recognized mark of excellence that provides building owners and operators with a framework for identifying and implementing practical and measurable green building design, construction, operations and maintenance solutions. Crabel Hall, which was completed in 2011, received a Silver ranking and Mr. Drost expects West Hall and South Hall to earn a Silver or Gold mark.

THIS MONTH AT MIDDLESEX

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Arts and Sciences Dean: “It’s a Terrific Time to be Here”

As Linda Scherr walked toward L’Hommedieu Hall on her first day at MCC in August, she felt some apprehension. She had left a job she loved – an 18-year career, with tenure – for the uncertainties of a new position as dean of Arts and Sciences. She was anxious as she set foot into the building.

But by the end of that day, she knew she made the right decision.

“There are wonderful, talented people here,” she said. “Great faculty, great programs and it’s a beautiful campus.”

Dr. Scherr said she is particularly excited about the opening of the new South Hall science building. Classes will begin there in January.

“It’s got world-class labs and wonderful space for students to study – on their own or in groups,” she said. “It’s going to provide opportunities for students to enhance their education by working together.”

Dr. Scherr is also interested in expanding online opportunities for students, including the possibility of offering complete degree programs online.

“This is a terrific time to be here as we are looking to do more with online learning, which is where the 21st century community college needs



Linda Scherr

to be,” she said. “At the same time, we have to do it carefully and do it right. Online classes are not right for every student or every course.”

She is also planning to work with the Honors Program Board to continue its work in developing more Honors classes at MCC.

“I view that as a significant part of the community college mission,” she said.

Dr. Scherr is a historian by discipline, with a Ph.D. in Ancient History from the University of

Pennsylvania, and a degree in History and Near Eastern Studies from Cornell. She was a faculty member at Mercer County Community College from 1998 to 2012 before becoming dean for instructional effectiveness and then acting dean of Math, Sciences & Health Professions in 2014. She completed numerous scholarly publications and presentations, largely on archaeology and ancient history, in addition to many on teaching, learning and assessment.

Dr. Scherr is also an authority on General Education programs, and was the co-chair of the state-wide General Education Coordinating Committee; she was presented with the Council of County College’s Community Spirit award in 2008 for her efforts.

She also was the recipient of the Patricia C. Donohue Leadership Award from the American Association of Women in Community Colleges in 2015.

Dr. Scherr said she is getting to know the MCC community and its strengths.

“I’m still learning about the great accomplishments of the people in this division,” she said. “I love coming to work each day. It’s a wonderful group of faculty, staff, students and administrators.”



Pulitzer-Prize-winning author Junot Díaz spoke to the College community as part of Hispanic Heritage Month. From left, Mr. Díaz, Ode Hoppie, assistant director of Student Activities; , English Professor Wilson Class and Angelo Abreu, assistant director of the New Brunswick Center.



Faculty and students in the Dental Hygiene program attended an Oral Cancer Walk/Run and Screening in Andover, NJ. It was educational, as oral cancer survivors spoke about their treatment and long-term consequences of their head and neck cancer diagnosis. The MCC group raised the most money and was awarded a Velscope, a diagnostic tool used to detect suspicious lesions on oral soft tissues. From left: Olivia Grimes, June Somma, Andrea Cuenca, Kali Capunay, Marilyn Rangel, Crismery Guerra-Breton, Ricardo Zapata, Lynn Tobin and Molly Tobin, the team mascot.

Student Speaks on NASA Research at Regional Conference

Danielle Caruso, a Middlesex County College student and recipient of a NASA Space Grant Fellowship award, was selected as the student speaker at the Mid-Atlantic Space Grant Directors meeting Sept. 29-Oct. 1 at Johns Hopkins University's Mount Washington Conference Center in Baltimore.

Her presentation was titled: "A Look at TLR4 and MyD88 in Glioblastoma Using Immunohistochemistry."

"I wanted to test for antigens in tissue samples to see if they are present," Ms. Caruso said. "The tissue samples were taken from patients over 20 years ago who had died from a cancer called Glioblastoma. This cancer is a type of brain cancer, and it forms in the astrocytes (star-like cells that make up supportive tissue) in the brain. The cancer is very aggressive and deadly. The antigens I tested for are called TLR4 (a receptor protein in immune cells) and MyD88 (an adaptor protein in the TLR4 signaling pathway). These proteins work together to get rid of any foreign invaders in your body and they are found in many different other cancers, such as colorectal, esophageal and breast cancer. But when cancer forms, these proteins will promote cancer, preventing your body from becoming healthier.



Danielle Caruso

"In order to see if TLR4 and MyD88 are in Glioblastoma, I performed a laboratory test called Immunohistochemistry, which is a technique used to test for antigens using their respective antibodies in samples of tissues. I performed Immunohistochemistry in the JFK Neuroscience Institute lab. My results showed 100 percent of the tissues used had positive results for TLR4 and MyD88 antigens. This means that they do in fact play a role in cancer formation and also immunosuppression, which in essence means your immune system is shutting down."

Ms. Caruso was one of six MCC students who received a \$5,000 grant from NASA to perform scientific research with their professors.

She said the experience of making the presentation was "amazing."

"Everyone seemed attentive and interested in the work I was presenting," she said. "Although I was nervous, I feel the presentation went quite well and it was an incredible experience that I will remember forever."

Ms. Caruso plans to attend Rutgers University after she graduates from MCC, and become a cancer researcher.