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Collaborative event focuses on sustainable solutions to student challenges

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February 28, 2018

MESA, Arizona – February 28, 2018 – Mesa Community College (MCC) and the League for Innovation in the Community College co-hosted a “Day for Visionaries and Innovators: Constructing a Blueprint for Radical Transformation” at MCC on February 16. The event is first in a series of forums that will serve as a foundation for a state model.



Rufus Glasper, Ph.D., President and CEO, League for Innovation, stated, “It is evident we need a new paradigm to address the needs of those who may not be meeting their full potential within the confines of the current college system.” He continued, “Today’s activity can serve to help with the development of a new engagement model based on the entire ecosystem of our communities and seek greater partnerships and integrated models that can be scaled nationally for positive student outcomes.”

“Our intent is to generate results by identifying innovative solutions and designing a creative approach to key areas impeding students from successfully earning a degree or credential,” said Sonya Pearson, Ph.D., MCC Vice President of Student Affairs. “The outcome was a collaborative blueprint on how we will proceed with shared accountability.”

Monica Sharma, author of *Radical Transformational Leadership*, was the keynote speaker. Trained as a physician and epidemiologist, Sharma worked for the United Nations for 22 years and is an international expert on radical transformational leadership.

Sharma’s presentation laid the groundwork for vibrant roundtable discussions focused on what students, particularly those who are typically underrepresented, need to pursue and complete a college education. Scholarships, housing, food security, transportation, workforce development, and career attainment were forefront in the development of a blueprint based on shared accountability.

More than 100 attendees representing local educational and community groups, city government officials, and industry leaders identified 50 strategies to meet student needs. Several are already being reviewed for design and implementation.

Pearson said the day sparked a renewed vision, energy, and passion for community leaders, students, and educators to be courageous pioneers, essential to transforming higher education strategies.

In the next month, the strategies will bring stakeholders from technology, housing, transportation, food services, city municipalities, veterans services, American Indian organizations, and public and private developers together to design integrated and intersectional models of sustainable solutions. The stakeholders, who share common goals, will need to commit to working in uncommon space to achieve greatness—providing more students with basic-need supports necessary to succeed in obtaining a higher education.

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Learn more about this event here. (<https://www.mesacc.edu/outreach/community-partnerships/day-visionaries-and-innovators>)

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The League for Innovation in the Community College (League) is an international nonprofit organization with a mission to cultivate innovation in the community college environment. The League hosts conferences and institutes, develops print and digital resources, and leads projects and initiatives with almost 500 member colleges, 100 corporate partners, and a host of other government and nonprofit agencies in a continuing effort to advance the community college field and make a positive difference for students and communities. Information about the League and its activities is available at <http://www.league.org> (<http://www.league.org/>).

Mesa Community College is nationally recognized for service-learning, career and technical programs, civic engagement and innovative approaches to higher education. The college serves as a resource for career readiness, transfer education, workforce development and lifelong learning. Host to more than 30,000 students annually, MCC offers more than 150 degree and certificate programs at its two campuses and additional locations. MCC is an emerging Hispanic Serving Institution with a diverse student body that enriches the learning experience. Renowned faculty are dedicated to student success, providing the education and training that empowers MCC students to compete locally and nationally. MCC, located in the East Valley of Phoenix, Arizona, is one of 10 colleges comprising the Maricopa County Community College District. For additional information visit mesacc.edu (<http://mesacc.edu/>).

Mesa Community College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association (NCA) <http://www.ncahlc.org> (<http://www.ncahlc.org/>)

The Maricopa County Community College District (MCCCD) is an EEO/AA institution and an equal opportunity employer of protected veterans and individuals with disabilities. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, or national origin. A lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in the career and technical education programs of the District.

The Maricopa County Community College District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs or activities. For Title IX/504 concerns, call the following number to reach the appointed coordinator: (480) 731-8499. For additional information, as well as a listing of all coordinators within the Maricopa College system, [http://www \(http://www/\). maricopa.edu/non-discrimination](http://www.maricopa.edu/non-discrimination).

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Mesa Morning Live



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