

# MCC volunteers help prepare taxes for low-income families

Mesa Community College volunteers, including students enrolled in MCC's Service Learning program, prepared nearly 1,000 tax returns at no charge for low-income families through a joint effort with the state of Arizona and the Internal Revenue Service. This is the second year that MCC has participated in the program.

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Program was coordinated through the Volunteer Income Tax Association (VITA). This year's program was responsible for returning nearly \$20 million to low-income working families who did not have the financial resources to file their tax returns and claim a refund. MCC Volunteers prepared taxes at both the Southern & Dobson and Red Mountain campuses.

"We helped prepare taxes for an average of 50 people a week at the Red Mountain campus," said Bob Maez, MCC Red Mountain lead site coordinator. "I feel great that we were able to help these families get back the money that they had worked so hard to earn throughout the year."

Duane Oakes, a faculty member in MCC's Center for Service Learning, hopes to involve more MCC students in the tax preparation program next year.

"We encourage our students to get involved in projects to help the community, and the tax preparation program is a perfect example of such a volunteer project," Oakes said. "MCC Service Learning students are giving back in a number of ways, including mentoring at local schools and working at homeless shelters. We even have a group of MCC students traveling to China this semester to help teach English to families there."

Governor Janet Napolitano recognized MCC and other organizations' volunteer efforts on the tax preparation program at the State Capitol where she remarked, "Thanks for making government work for the people."

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## the Bulletin



## MCCCD bond to appear on ballot as proposition 401

On June 8, the Maricopa Community Colleges Governing Board formally approved, by a 5-0 vote, placing a \$951 million bond request on the November 2, 2004 ballot. The MCCCD bond will appear on the ballot as Proposition 401.

The request is for new capital dollars for all ten Maricopa Community Colleges. New

capital dollars will be used for new buildings, refurbishing old facilities, upgrading and replacement of technology and equipment, additional parking, and ongoing upgrades of security equipment and systems.

MCC's portion of the bond monies will be \$111 million.

On or about May 14, you should have received a packet of informational bond materials at your home. If you would like additional copies of these materials or if you did not receive them, please call the Office of Institutional Advancement at 461-7445.

## Vote By Mail ballots available in IA

To request a Vote By Mail ballot, please call the Office of Institutional Advancement at 461-7446 before October 11, 2004. Ballots must be mailed by October 22, 2004.

## Charles “Bo” Colbert named Director of MCC’s American Indian Center



If you see him on campus beginning in June, Dr. Charles Robert Colbert, the new director of MCC’s American Indian Center, wouldn’t mind one bit if you smiled, waved, and said, “Hi, Bo.”

“That’s what most people know me by and what my friends and family call me. It’s a

nickname my brothers gave me years ago. It’s a lot less formal, and I prefer that,” Colbert said.

Colbert will bring that informal, approachable manner to his new position as he seeks to assess, enhance, and expand the programs and services offered to Native American students through MCC’s American Indian Center.

“MCC’s multicultural programs are pretty highly regarded out in the community and with Arizona’s Native American tribes, but the first thing I’d like to do is assess everything that’s here. After that assessment, I do have a model in mind on how to further enhance programs and encourage this segment of the student body. I also hope to pursue additional grants and scholarship opportunities for Native American students,” he said.

Colbert, a member of the Muscogee (Creek) Tribe from Oklahoma, has a comprehensive background in multicultural affairs. He most

recently served as the director of the American Indian Studies program at Arizona State University where he was one of the founding members. Prior to that, Colbert was the associate education director for the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community where he was responsible for that community’s development and resource programs.

Colbert holds a bachelor’s degree in secondary education from Northeastern Oklahoma State University. He earned his master’s degree and doctorate from Arizona State University.

“I’m looking forward to working with students and other faculty and staff to enhance what we provide for Native Americans at MCC,” Colbert said. “I’d also like to explore distance learning opportunities for students living on the reservations, as well as new partnerships with Arizona’s diverse Indian communities.”

## Repayment of 1994 general obligation bonds

*(The following questions and answers are not on the MCC FAQ handout but have been asked often in recent weeks.)*

Q. In 1994, Maricopa County voters approved a \$386 million bond for the Maricopa Community Colleges. It is my understanding that the Colleges have completed all projects associated with that bond request. However, it is also my understanding that the 1994 bonds have not been repaid.

A. You are right on both counts. All college projects from the 1994 bond have been completed. And, the 1994 bonds will be fully repaid in fiscal year 2014-2015.

The repayment of general obligation bonds needs some explanation. There are two primary reasons that general obligation bonds are repaid over a period of 15–20 years: 1) the District issues bonds on a staggered basis, balancing the need for the funds with the development projects, and 2) general obligation bonds are repaid over a 15–20 year period because of the long-range lifespan of the bond projects. Bond projects benefit communities for decades.

Conceptually, this is similar to a home mortgage which is often paid off in 30 years.

Q. Does this mean that if the Maricopa Community Colleges’ bond request passes this November, taxpayers will be paying on two separate MCCCDC bonds?

A. Given that general obligation bonds are usually repaid over a period of 15–20 years, that is correct. It is important to note that the tax rate on the 1994 MCCCDC bond will gradually decline so that on a \$100,000 home the property tax would only be approximately \$3 for fiscal year 2014–2015.

## New map signage at Southern and Dobson



MCC faculty and staff – and students taking summer session – will be the first to see the new, long-awaited directional maps installed across the Southern and Dobson campus in June. The new maps are the result of a combined effort of student government, college administration, and Institutional Advancement.

The new maps include color coding, location of the TTY (teletypewriter) phones, “you are here” locators, and directional orientation.

The 12 maps are located at:

- Front of Kirk Center
- North side of Theatre Outback
- South side of Theatre Outback
- West side of Child Care Center
- Front of College Safety
- Amphitheater between Life Science and Library buildings
- North side of Liberal Arts and Library
- Front side of AD (Administration) Support Services
- Between Music Building and Bookstore
- Front of Portable Building 54
- West side of Bookstore
- South side of Technology