

# Alumni & Friends

A Publication for the Mesa Community College Alumni Association

## Mesa Community College Opens State-of-the-Art Physical Science Building

Mesa Community College's new state-of-the-art physical science building at the Southern and Dobson campus was finished just in time for the beginning of fall semester.

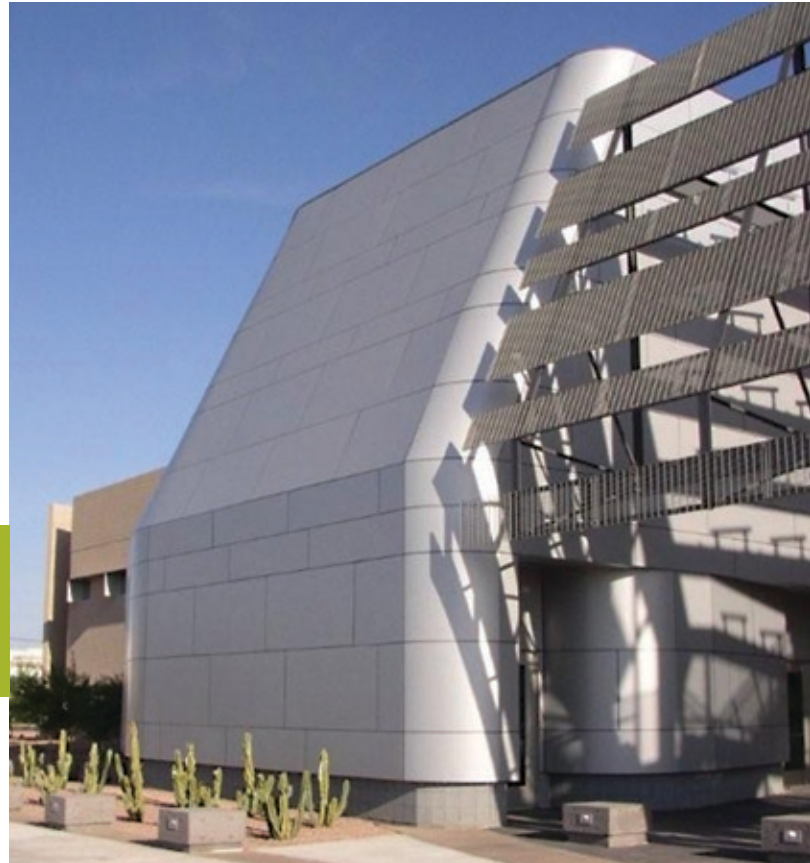
Students eagerly searched for their science classes in the new 60,000-square-foot building that also houses a 2,100-square-foot planetarium. It is the first LEED certified building at MCC and first major LEED certified building in the Maricopa County Community College District.

**"First LEED certified building  
on campus houses planetarium  
powered by the sun."**

The SmithGroup-designed facility houses classrooms and labs to serve the nearly 5,000 students a semester that enroll in astronomy, chemistry, engineering, geology and physics courses. The building's design also reflects the college's focus to provide an intellectually engaging environment which supports student/faculty collaboration and innovative teaching methods responsive to a variety of learning styles.

"In the building design, we tried to maximize the opportunity for students to learn in formal, informal and impromptu settings," said Mike Sims, MCC physical science department chair. "We also tried to make the instructional technology seamless from both student and faculty perspectives."

Sustainability features are incorporated into the building to meet the strict environmental standards needed for LEED certification and the building is equipped with technology to continually assess energy performance, temperature and air flow. Energy from the sun will help power the 53-seat planetarium through solar panels donated by SRP. The panels also double as a shade canopy for the Astronomy Plaza below.



*Mesa Community College Physical Science Building, Planetarium*

MCC students, visiting school groups and the public will experience the night sky and universe in the 53-seat planetarium through an IMAX quality, Digistar 3 projection system built by Evans & Sutherland Computer Co. A rooftop observation deck complements the planetarium for telescopic viewing of the night sky.

"I'm particularly excited about providing students with a state-of-the-art experience to see the planets and Milky Way first-hand without going outside of the city," said Kevin Healy, MCC astronomy professor.

The \$20 million budget included \$16 million in construction costs with \$4 million in technology, furniture, fixtures and equipment. The project was supported by funds made available from the MCCCCD bond initiative of 2004.

## Fall 2008

Library Program .....	Page 2	Alumni-Sponsored Events .....	Page 3
The Presidents Corner.....	Page 2	Art/Math Murals Project .....	Page 3
Stay Connected.....	Page 2	Calendar of Events .....	Page 4

# Library Program

## DESIGNS COURSES AND CERTIFICATE FOR MESA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Chas Moore, coordinator for MCC's Library Information Technology Program, and his department are designing customized courses and another certificate for the new Resource Center Aide position created by Mesa Public Schools. Due to a new plan to replace certified teacher librarians with classified library media staff, MPS came to MCC to design and offer education opportunities for the new positions which started in over 40 schools this fall. "MCC's existing library and education courses fit well into our needs for this new program," said Darcy Caron, Mesa Public Schools Library Services Coordinator.

MCC created the library program more than 40 years ago. Moore estimates that over 10 percent of the program's graduates go on for master's degrees to become professional librarians. "Ask at any library in the Maricopa County area and chances are you'll find one or more staff members or librarians that have either taken courses or graduated from MCC's library program," Moore said. For more information on MCC's Library Information Technology Program, contact Chas Moore at (480) 461-7686 or [cmoore@mail.mc.maricopa.edu](mailto:cmoore@mail.mc.maricopa.edu).



MCC library program graduates (from left) Donna Mae Tischer, Ann Marie Howard and Marta Houghland work as employees at the Mesa Public Library Main Branch.

# The President's Corner

## DEAR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS:



Greetings! Via this communication, I'd like to invite you to become part of an exciting initiative focused on recruiting, retaining, and supporting the success of every MCC student. The educational buzzword for this process is enrollment management (EM), but it's really about providing the best service possible to our students and the community we serve. It is also about providing students with quality college experiences that prepare them for success in life.

As an alum, you can make important contributions to this initiative. We are seeking volunteers to help in two key areas: recruitment outreach and career advice. As a recruitment volunteer, we want you to share your personal story about how MCC contributed to your success – the perfect compliment to the information our college staff provides to prospective students. As a career advisor, you can share information with current MCC students about your profession and the path you took to get there –

many times, a simple phone or email conversation can make all the difference to a student making major life decisions.

Information about how to sign up for these opportunities is available in the "Stay Connected" announcement in this newsletter or by contacting the Alumni Office. I hope that you'll consider giving your valuable time and support to MCC. Your contributions truly make a difference.

Sincerely,

Shouan Pan, Ph.D.

## VOLUNTEER • CLASS NOTES • EVENTS

# Stay Connected

## WHEREVER LIFE TAKES YOU

Join the Mesa Community College Alumni Online Community and enjoy access to:

- **Online Directory** – Update your profile and search MCC's directory of more than 40,000 alumni
- **Email Blasts** – Stay connected with MCC on current events and news
- **Career Center** – Post resumes, search and create job postings, and register to provide career advice to current students and other alumni
- **Events Calendar** – View and register for events
- **Class Notes** – Share what's going on in your life

The password-protected community is free and accessible only to MCC alumni, faculty and staff. Joining is easy:

1. Visit [www.alumniconnections.com/mcc](http://www.alumniconnections.com/mcc)
2. Click on "Register Now" under the first time visitors header
3. Follow the simple instructions on the page
4. Your first time registration number to enter the community is the 8-digit number located by your name on the mailing label of this newsletter.

## CAREER CENTER • ALUMNI DIRECTORY



# Alumni-Sponsored Events

## A HIT WITH COMMUNITY

Mesa Community College biology professor Dennis Wilson normally spends his days working with college students at MCC's Red Mountain campus. But this summer, Wilson took a turn as guest speaker amidst a crowd of 200 preschoolers and their parents at Mesa Public Library's Creepy Crawly Storytime in East Mesa. As he weaved his way through the crowd holding a tarantula in the palm of his hand, Wilson provided informative tidbits about desert creatures.

"It's a ton of fun to interact with kids and teach them about desert life," Wilson said. "People are often taught to be afraid of the unknown. I can provide at least a better understanding of these creatures and why they are important in the life cycle." In addition to the tarantula, Wilson thrilled the crowd with a gopher snake, a giant desert centipede and a giant desert hairy scorpion. By the end of the session, Wilson had taught the youngsters the proper scientific name of every creature he brought. "Once you name something, you have more attachment to it," Wilson said.

Wilson, who holds a doctorate in biology from the University of Oregon, is one of many MCC professors who enjoy lending their time and expertise to the community. "There's such an enormous amount of expertise (at MCC) within a wide range of disciplines that stays sequestered on campus," Wilson said. "It's important to go out and keep in touch with the community."

Children's librarian Nicole Lind said Wilson was a hit with the storytime crowd. More than 200 people attended the event. Storytime attendance is normally around 50. Creepy Crawly Storytime was one of two events sponsored by the MCC Alumni Association this past summer. "Video Game Design 101" was held at Mesa Public Library's Main Branch and featured MCC gaming technology experts. The instructor demonstrated game design and spoke about the skills needed for jobs in webpage design, digital graphics, animation and multimedia.

# Art/Math Murals Project

Four new ceramic tile murals grace the outer walls of the Arts/Communication and Math/Computer Science buildings at MCC's Southern and Dobson campus. They were designed and handcrafted in painstaking detail by MCC faculty and student artists.

The murals are a fusion of art, math and culture, designed to educate the community about mathematics and art in different cultures. Madeleine Chowdhury, an MCC math instructor who is Muslim, said the project also serves another purpose as the nation remembers the anniversary of Sept. 11. "Seven years ago an unfortunate thing happened on 9/11 and, as a repercussion of what a negative visualization that event was, I thought that it would be nice to create a more positive visualization of Islam," Chowdhury said.

As a math professor, Chowdhury was not sure how to accomplish the visual aspect of the goal, but the project came into focus as she researched tessellations of girih (geometric star-and-polygon) patterns common in Islamic art and architecture. The patterns are mathematical in nature. Art murals with similar patterns were created from the ninth through the 15th century across Europe, Africa and Asia.

Chowdhury said she was inspired by these patterns, noting that Christians, Muslims and Jews all used similar designs in art and architecture as they worked together to build a thriving society during this period.



So Chowdhury teamed up with MCC art instructor Linda Speranza. "We wanted to replicate what they might have done during this period in our murals," Chowdhury said. The names of the four murals are representative of harmony and peace among the people of various cultures: "Umma" (community); "Tawhid" (making one); "Salam" (peace); and "Mizan" (balance). "Every piece of these murals is completely handmade," Chowdhury said. "Each piece had to be very precise, like a jigsaw puzzle."

"I'm hoping the murals add to the aesthetics of the campus and at the same time they are educational mathematically, artistically and culturally," Chowdhury said. "The entire time we were always in awe of the amount of creativity during the time these types of murals were created. It was amazing to mimic some of that creative synergy."

To learn more about enrollment management or other college initiatives, visit the President's Corner at [www.mc.maricopa.edu/bulletin](http://www.mc.maricopa.edu/bulletin).



**MCC**  
Alumni Association

**EXCITING START, EXTRAORDINARY RETURN**

*Alumni & Friends* is published by the Office of Institutional Advancement (IA) for the alumni of Mesa Community College.

**Editor** Marcy Snitzer  
**Phone** 480-461-7792  
**Email** marcy.snitzer@mccmail.maricopa.edu



**Alumni Relations**  
1833 West Southern Ave.  
Mesa, AZ 85202

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Phoenix, AZ  
Permit No. 662

# Mark Your Calendar

**October 29, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.**  
**Empty Bowls at Southern & Dobson Campus**  
Fundraiser for Paz de Cristo  
Navajo Room, Kirk Student Center

**October 29 – November 1, 7:30 p.m.**  
**November 1, 2 p.m.**  
**Urinetown**  
Musical Theatre – Theatre Outback

**October 30, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.**  
**2nd Annual Engagelt!**  
Library, Room 145

**November 3 – 13**  
**Faculty Art Show**  
Opening Reception – November 5, 6 p.m.  
Navajo Room, Kirk Student Center

**November 6, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.**  
**Empty Bowls at Red Mountain Campus**  
Fundraiser for Paz de Cristo  
Community Room, M200

**November 6 – 7, 7:30 p.m.**  
**Fall Dance Concert**  
Theatre Outback

**November 7, 6 p.m.**  
**Hall of Fame**  
Phoenix/East Mesa Hilton

**November 8, noon**  
**Homecoming Barbecue**  
Practice field south of Riggs Stadium

**November 8, 2 p.m.**  
**Homecoming Football Game**  
MCC vs. SCC – Riggs Stadium

**November 18, 7 – 9 p.m.**  
**“Values and Their Meaning in Your Life”**  
**Evening Lecture Series in Psychology**  
Navajo Room, Kirk Student Center

**November 18, 9 – 10:15 a.m.**  
**Democracy’s Challenge:  
Reclaiming the Public’s Role**  
Southwest Reading Room

**December 4 – 6, 7:30 p.m.**  
**December 7, 2 p.m.**  
**Dracula**  
Theatre Arts – Theatre Outback

**December 5, 6 p.m.**  
**Chihuly: The Nature of Glass &  
Las Noches de las Luminaries**  
Desert Botanical Garden

**December 12, 7 p.m.**  
**Broadway Bound**  
**A Revue of Broadway’s Greatest Hits**  
Theatre Outback

For a complete listing of events and times, check out our online calendars.

**GENERAL MCC EVENTS** [www.alumniconnections.com/mcc](http://www.alumniconnections.com/mcc) **ATHLETICS** [www.mc.maricopa.edu/athletics/schedules](http://www.mc.maricopa.edu/athletics/schedules)