

December 2, 2008

the Bulletin

MESA COMMUNITY COLLEGE'S EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

New Fast Facts Booklet Update

by Matt Ashcraft, Dean of Research and Planning



As your new Dean of Research and Planning I intend to periodically update the campus community on major initiatives and data trends related to our students and the community we serve. One of my first priorities has involved transitioning much of the “official” reporting related to our student body away from the beginning of the semester to the 45th day of the semester. The 45th day is the official “census” day across the Maricopa Community Colleges. It is also the point in the semester when the general student population has more or less settled, therefore providing a more accurate reflection of who our students are.

Examples of reports that ORP has transitioned to the 45th day reporting snapshot include the MCC Student Profile and the soon to be released Fast Facts 2008-2009 booklet. ORP will still provide many reports derived from the beginning of the semester reporting snapshot where it makes sense to do so; schedule management/building reports and enrollment management reports are two examples. Providing the most accurate data and intelligence for informing decision making is one of the ORP team’s top priorities. Making this transition moves us a step closer to this goal. Questions or comments? Feel free to email me at: matthew.ashcraft@mccmail.maricopa.edu or call me at 480-461-7215.

Early Alert Referral System (EARS)

by Beverly Maxton

Mesa Community College strives for excellence in all we do. Student success is the focus of the Mesa Community College Early Alert Referral System (EARS) pilot project. The project kicks off in early spring, 2009, with full implementation for use of all MCC faculty and staff by fall, 2009.

The EARS project is a college-wide collaboration to develop an online database system for faculty and staff to identify and provide early intervention services for students. The system will be an interactive flow of communication and collaboration of strategies to provide proactive services for students facing academic and related college challenges.

Essentially, the purpose of EARS is to increase academic success and retention of students that are experiencing personal difficulties/behaviors that may affect completion of their educational goals. In addition, we strive to improve the processing of student referrals, response time and services for students.

Although discussion and planning are still underway, plans are to inform students of the EARS project via New Student Orientation, Mesa Legend, class syllabi and the MCC Web. Students may be referred to various support areas on campus such as tutoring lab, Writing Center, Math Lab, Career Services, Financial Aid, Disability Resources & Services, Counseling Center, etc.

For further information or if you have recommendations for the EARS project contact the System Coordinator, Beverly Maxton at 480-461-7449 or email beverly.maxton@mccmail.maricopa.edu.

Phase II of EARS will consist of developing online access for students to complete Student Satisfaction and Service Excellence/Complaint forms. AC360°. She predicts that her peers will have a strong impact on the election.

Fast Tracking the Dream College Savings Program

Slots are still available for low- to moderate-income students to apply for a special college savings program. Applicants agree to save regularly over a period of time and participate in financial management training. For every dollar saved, another dollar is matched with federal funds.



The program is offered through A New Leaf's MesaCAN organization in partnership with Mesa Community College and Mesa United Way. These organizations work together to provide participants access to higher education, financial and money management, and case administration.

Here's how it works:

- * Low- to moderate-income students apply for an Individual Development Account (IDA) to save money that will be used for educational expenses.
- * Once an individual is deemed eligible and has saved for a minimum of six months, their money, (up to \$2,000 for

individual, \$4,000 for household), is matched with federal and private funds that can be used for tuition, fees, books and anything related to education.

- * Individuals participating in this program take a personal finance literacy course.
- * Any funds remaining after completion of graduation or transfer may be used at an in-state university.

At MCC, many service learning students benefit from this program. For example, if an AmeriCorps student volunteers 300 hours and receives \$1,000 in education awards, that amount can go into the IDA account and be doubled to \$2,000.

"We saw that this program was a perfect fit for AmeriCorps students and we also want to get other service learning students, regular students and community members involved," said Dawn Rhodes, program advisor at MCC's service learning office.

MCC students Notiosha D'Addabbo and Brigham Nicoll are both participants of this program and say they can hardly believe there's not a catch.

"There are no words to describe the relief I feel," said D'Addabbo, who is struggling to pay tuition and medical bills from recent thyroid surgery. "This gives me an amazing outlook for college and it's a true blessing for lower income people."

New Leaf Program Manager Linda Haskell said the program has about 20 more slots available out of a total of 55. Paperwork needs to be filled out and approved by Feb. 1, 2009.

For more information or to fill out an application form, visit <http://www.mesacan.org/> or call Shannon 480-833-9200 ext. 216.

MCC Alumni Association launches Online Community

With email marketing becoming the norm and social networking sites such as Facebook exploding, online services to stay connected are becoming more than just a nicety – they're expected. MCC's new online community helps alumni stay connected with the college and each other at a time and place that's convenient for them.

The password-protected community is free and most sections are accessible only to alumni. By joining the community, alumni have access to:

- * Online directory – Update their profile and connect with friends by searching MCC's directory of more than 40,000 alumni
- * Email blasts – Current news and events are delivered based on the alum's personal preferences
- * Career Center – Post and search resume, job, and mentor postings
- * Class Notes – Share what's going on in their lives

Two portions of the community that are open to the public are the:

- * Events Calendar
- * Online Donation Form

While there are many benefits to the college in having the community, there are three that may be of particular interest to employees:

Mentor/Mentee postings within the Career Center - Alumni have the potential to be a valuable resource for career advice for our current students. Unfortunately, MCC's alumni database did not have professional information on the vast majority of our alumni.



With the community, alumni can update their profile to include professional information and complete a mentoring form, indicating that students or other alumni can contact them. The Career Center portion is slated to be opened to current MCC students in the spring.

Event Calendar and Management – MCC is currently using the calendar available through the alumni online community as its Public Events Calendar. In addition to the basic calendar view, an event management tool enables us to take registration and credit card payments online as well as generate attendee and waiting lists. (This has temporarily replaced the R25 College Calendar, which is being revised so that the Public Events portion does not display employee and student events.)

Email Marketing – Sending news and event information to our alumni and friends benefits the college. To ensure our messages aren't blocked by spam filters, each message needs to contain opt out information and conform to certain addressing standards. The community manages this and provides a variety of data on the success of our messages, such as who opened the message and what links were clicked. The community also allows us to personalize messages and target particular demographics.

Please visit the alumni website at www.mc.maricopa.edu/alumni and peruse the public portions of the site. To learn more about the community, contact Marcy Snitzer at marcy.snitzer@mccmail.maricopa.edu.

MCC Alumni Facts

- * Of the more than 43,000 alumni in our database, 61% still live in the East Valley.
- * In 2007, more than 8,000 alums provided mailing, professional, and educational updates as part of a year-long research project to produce the 2008 MCC Alumni Directory (print edition).
- * Alumni volunteers partnered with recruitment staff for the first time this fall to represent MCC at high school recruitment events such as Mesa Op Shop.

MCC Security Officer Builds Life in America

Living in America wasn't part of Amirjan Amiri's plan. It has been just over one year since the friendly, mild-mannered MCC security officer brought his family to the United States.

"I was a translator for the U.S. Military in Afghanistan, and the opposition forces, such as the Taliban did not like peace and security; I was at risk," Amirjan said. "We were helping the Americans and the Afghan government and they wanted to kill the translators. That is why they gave us visas. I came to the U.S. to save my life."

After learning English as a teenager and subsequent study at a university, Amirjan had hoped to become an English professor in Afghanistan. Because of his fluency, he was asked to be a translator for the United States Armed Forces from 2003 – 07. It was while working for the military that Amirjan served as a translator for Steve Corich, MCC's director of public safety. Steve was in Afghanistan training Afghani security forces.

"He was out there in Afghanistan traveling with every day," Steve said. "It is not unusual for murdered and yet he still worked for us. To me,

Amirjan's relationship with Steve and a retired Glendale and Steve helped him find a job, apart-

"One thing I am happy about is the education Afghanistan it is hard to find a job and when school," Amirjan said. "Here I have a full-time great. It is important for my life."



Americans. His life was in danger translators to be kidnapped and he is a real hero."

Lt. Colonel from Glendale helped He initially lived with his friend in ment, furniture and a car.

and job opportunities that are here. In you have a job you cannot go to job and I can go to school which is

Amirjan is enrolled in a math and reading course at MCC and his wife, who didn't attend any school in Afghanistan, is enrolled in an English course at a local library. Although the couple has many advantages from living in the United States, life here is not without challenges.

"Life is fast and complicated here. There are a lot of expenses like taxes and car insurance. In Afghanistan we don't have all that paperwork," Amirjan said. "Life here is very hard; still we are trying to adjust ourselves."

The Amiris also miss their family, all of whom are in Afghanistan, where extended families live together and provide substantial support for one another. Amirjan doesn't know if he will ever be able to return.

"I don't know how long it will take (for peace) in Afghanistan. If it takes longer, this might be my country," Amirjan said. "I will study here; something good so that I can better support my family. I try to be a good citizen, that is my hope."



Profile of Theatre Set Designer Brian Daily

In a workshop packed full of theatre props and carpentry tools, Brian Daily leads a crew of students as they create the atmosphere for the next theatre production at Mesa Community College, Bram Stoker's classic, Dracula.

Daily's skill at turning odds and ends of materials into just the right theatrical backdrop recently earned him his third AriZoni Award for scenic design in MCC's production of The Children's Hour. By working closely with the director, Daily's sets allow the actors to effectively portray the action and emotions of the play.

"I usually take about a month to prepare a set," Daily said. "It's important to work with director and keep the lines of communication open throughout the process."

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He begins the design by putting ideas in a sketch book which eventually end up in an AutoCad computer design program. He then shares the renderings with student helpers to begin construction. Daily and the students use power tools to construct actual doors, walls, fireplaces or whatever is needed.

“Working with the students is great—some of them have never worked with tools before—power saws, drills, etc.,” Daily said. “They learn skills that are always good to know, even if they don’t go into this for a career.”

Daily has built everything from ships to porches to birdcages in his six years at MCC. His favorite set design was for Musical Comedy Murders of 1940. The play took place in the mansion of an eccentric woman and featured trap doors, rotating walls and trick bookcases. The play’s director encouraged Daily’s sense of humor and fun, and the production took home several AriZoni awards.

Daily recycles set materials as much as possible, reusing props for monetary and environmental factors. His energetic pace keeps things hopping, but students say he’s really pretty laid back and fun to work with. He encourages them to consider set design as a career.

“I know how much I enjoy this,” Daily said. “Even with the economy the way it is right now, there are a lot of opportunities. A lot of theatres are crying out for (set design) people.”

Daily, a graduate of West Virginia University, teaches Theatre Production I and II. MCC offers an associate of fine arts degree in acting, technical theatre, educational theatre and film.

MCC’s production of Dracula runs December 4, 5, and 6 at 7:30 P.M., and December 7 at 2:00 P.M. at the Theatre Outback. Tickets are available by calling the Box Office at 480-461-7170, Monday-Friday, 12-5 p.m.



Recognitions

I’d like to recognize Jackie Gill, Director of Career and Educational Planning, for her quick response and reply to my inquiry.

I had been in search of information concerning a professor whom I’d had while attending MCC in the late 70’s and found Jackie’s email address on the Internet. She was extremely prompt with reply - and bothered to extend her sympathies to me concerning the fact that Dr. Carolyn Disjardins had passed away. Jackie further gave me ideas to pursue more information concerning my beloved Professor Carolyn - along with her cordial wishes - along with a follow-up email response.

Ms. Gill’s considerate and caring response concerning a mere personal request surely deserves notation, and I am very grateful for MCC and the type of personnel which serves we the public.

Sincerely,
A Proud, former MCC student
Gayle Conklin

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Applause to all who were involved in MCC's inaugural participation in the **City of Mesa's Veteran's Parade**. It was a fantastic event! Kathleen Perales reports that Valerie Vigil and Greg Reents did a wonderful job of gathering student and staff support, decorating MCC vehicles and providing for a fantastic MCC experience. The teams worked diligently to showcase and create an MCC presence that was well-noted. Greg extends his appreciation to all of the staff and students who participated in or supported the event, including **Dr. Pan, Dean Pearson, Aramark, Automotive Technology, MCC Student Veterans, Veteran Affairs, Athletics, Financial Aid Department, M & O, Honors Dept, Student Life, Mascots, Cheer Squad, ASMCC and IA.**

Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society - Omicron Beta Chapter - is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2008 Mentor Award. This honor is designated for employees of Mesa Community College and are nominated by a newly Inducted Member or an Officer of Phi Theta Kappa. We would like thank the honorees for their dedication and commitment to the students of MCC by encouraging them to go above and beyond in their academic field, and making a positive impact on their lives.

Fall 2008 Mentor Recipients:

Dr. Mohammad Abuhannoud - Dr. Jeff Messer - Artura Arguayo - Janet Morgan - Andy Baldwin - Kerry Muelenbeck - Linda Bergquist - Dr. David Nackman - Bob Blatz - Duane Oakes - Evonne Bowling - Dr. Pete Padilla - Ester Brown - John Payne - Steven Budge - Lorna Peralta - Preston Cameron - Kathy Pollard - Dr. Alexander Cheroske - Dr. Susan Pollock - Doug Conway - Hubert Ross - Dan Dunn - Bob Samson - Donella Eberle - Michael Santilli - Richard Effland - Mona Scott - Dr. Ann Ewing - Ken Seidel - Tim Florschuetz - Kathryn Sheffield - Brenda Fonseca - Tom Shoemaker - Fred Forney - Corki Stewart - Yola Ghammashi - Brianna Trauscher - Cathy Hauan - Carol Vaughn - Dr. Susan Horton - Mary Ann Walker - Lynette Mahon - Nathan Wilkens - Kristina Makris - Marji Young - Terri Martinez - Dr. John Zikopoulos - Tammy Zubeck

Newsbytes



Steve Corich, MCC's Director of Public Safety has been asked by a Washington D.C. governmental security agency to act as a consultant to assess police training in Mongolia. He will be heading to Mongolia and will spend 8 days (early January 2009) reviewing that country's police tactics and policies.



MCC's elite musical theatre ensemble, Standing Room Only, is available for special performances during the holiday season. Many of the performers have appeared in our productions that have been nominated for ariZoni Awards. This dynamic group of singers/actors will be providing entertainment throughout the East Valley in lieu of a fall show as their scholarship fund raising activity. Music selections can include traditional holiday tunes or a variety of Broadway tunes. The ensemble will be available for scheduling from Nov. 15 through Dec. 19, 2008. Suggested donations range with the number of performers requested and times/length of the performances. Contact Pam Schuler at 480-461-7895 for more information.

Newsbytes



MCC's Disability Resources and Services and the Athletic Department have set up a partnership to co-sponsor and host the Summer Olympic Games for the Special Olympics at MCC April 30 through May 1. In exchange for our hosting this great event, the Special Olympics will donate \$10,000 into an endowed scholarship fund for students with disabilities for every year we host them. The student athletes from MCC can participate as well as part of their service learning component, and DRS will work at soliciting as many other volunteers as Special Olympics may need to round out their own crew. Look for upcoming announcements.



The Athletics Department would like to invite all other departments over to view our new offices in PC56.



MCC departments are invited to participate in MCC's Summer Youth College during June and July, 2009. Send your ideas to Barbara Thelander, Director of Community Education, at Thelander@mail.mc.maricopa.edu or 461-6256 so that you can be included in the program schedule.

Young people of all ages can come to Mesa Community College for a variety of learning experiences designed to let students explore interest areas for now, and for future pursuits. Workshops, classes and camps are offered at the Southern & Dobson Campus in a safe, supervised environment.

Examples of fun and interesting opportunities include: MAGIC OF MUSICAL THEATRE WORKSHOPS, 21st year! • STUDIO 180 CAMP • FASHION DESIGN CAMP • ROBOT CAMP • NETWORKING CAMP • COMPUTER EQUIPMENT & REPAIR CLASSES • YOUTH CULINARY CAMP • SCIENCE CAMP • FUN & FITNESS – HEALTHY KIDS CAMP • THUNDERBIRD YOUTH SPORTS CAMP

MCC HR LAUNCHES TOOLBOX

In response to our customers who indicate they need “readily available information at their finger tips,” MCC HR is creating a web-based ToolBox of HR related documents and resources. The toolbox, under the leadership of Linda Canez, Manager, MCC Human Resources, is in a pilot format, and will be housed on the MCC HR web-page after planning is complete. The first 10 people who access the toolbox and suggest a tool to add or who provide feedback to HR in our suggestion box will receive a sweet surprise. The temporary toolbox can be viewed at: <http://www.myeport.com/published/m/cc/mc-ctoolbox/home/1/>



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