

## New dental program meets community needs

In response to Arizona's growing need for more dental hygienists and assistants, Mesa Community College is offering a new program in collaboration with A.T. Still University's Arizona School of Dentistry and Oral Health. Lecture courses are offered at the Red Mountain Campus of MCC and all clinical coursework is done at a nearby ASDOH facility.

"One of the unique benefits of this program is the opportunity to work with dental students," said Phebe Blitz, MCC's Dental Hygiene Program Director. "We offer professionalism and team work with state-of-the-art equipment."

### Degrees offered:

- **Dental hygienists** provide preventive and therapeutic oral health care to patients in a dentist-supervised work setting. Students can earn an **Associate in Applied Science degree in Dental Hygiene** in four semesters, once general education requirements are met. Graduates are then eligible to take the written and clinical exams to obtain Arizona state licensure.
- **Dental assistants** are part of the dental care team that helps dentists during exams and treatments. Students can earn an **Associate in Applied Science degree in Dental Assisting** in four semesters, once general education requirements are met. Graduates are then eligible to take national dental board exams. Or students can earn a **Certificate of Completion in Dental Assisting** in two semesters.

Employment of dental hygienists and assistants is expected to grow much faster than average for all occupations through the year 2012, according to the Occupational Outlook Handbook. In 2003, Arizona employed nearly 1,700 dental hygienists and 5,200 assistants. To keep pace with the area's population growth, the state is expected to need about 1,400 more hygienists and 5,200 more assistants by 2013.

In 2005, the salary range for dental hygienists was between \$28 and \$38 per hour. For dental assistants, starting salaries ranged between \$25,000 and \$30,000 per year.

For more information, visit [www.mc.maricopa.edu](http://www.mc.maricopa.edu) or contact the MCC Office of Admissions by phone at 480-654-7600.



## Brush up on your Spanish skills

MCC is offering a new study program in Cuernavaca, Mexico this summer for professionals and adult learners who want to brush up on their beginning Spanish conversation skills. The two-week trip is shorter than most of the study-abroad programs, requiring a shorter time commitment for employed individuals. Enjoy full immersion in the culture of Mexico as you stay with local families, take bus trips, and dine in Mexican restaurants. Highlights include a weekend excursion to Mexico City, plus trips to nearby Taxco, an historic silver mining town. The cost of \$1,432 includes tuition, airfare, and accommodations.

For more information, visit: [www.mc.maricopa.edu/services/international/study\\_abroad/index.html](http://www.mc.maricopa.edu/services/international/study_abroad/index.html) or call Maria Martell at 480.654.7301

A Maricopa Community College  
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Alumni Relations



# Alumni & Friends

SPRING 2006

## Cutting-edge program keeps pace with media arts field

Mesa Community College's (MCC) dynamic media arts program is attracting industry veterans and degree-seeking students alike as they seek to learn the latest tools in graphic design, digital imaging, and animation under the direction of MCC's Media Arts Instructor, Cyndi Greening, and other art faculty members.

Several students from MCC art programs have found employment editing and producing television programs and films, including the animated movie "Robots," the FX series "30 Days," and an award-winning independent film, "The Promethean."

Greening keeps track of her students' successes and plugs their projects on her blog, [www.cyndigreening.com](http://www.cyndigreening.com). The blog is packed full of information on the latest trends in filmmaking, animation, and media arts. Greening's blog was recently featured on [azcentral.com](http://azcentral.com) when she covered the 2006 Sundance Film Festival with two MCC students. Greening and students posted podcasts and videocasts from the festival on the blog to update readers at home on the festival happenings.

"I always tell my students that I want them on the bleeding edge," Greening said. "When they graduate in two years, they don't want their stuff to already be old. You want to know where the market is going and take hold when you get there."

MCC students use software tools such as Final Cut Pro, Shake, Maya, and other programs used by professional filmmakers and designers, which make them immediately employable. Greening said MCC graphic design interns are in demand with local businesses because the students' skill level is high and they don't require training.

But sophisticated tools and employable skills aren't the only things emphasized in MCC's media arts program. "Even though

we have a really big focus on students getting employed, we also want them to have an independent vision and self expression and a personal point of view," Greening said. "We want them to be successful and commercial, but at the same time, we want them to be unique individuals."



Cyndi Greening

### Former MCC Students Who Have Climbed the Media Arts Career Ladder

- Mike Luciano said he first met Greening at MCC when she was a guest teacher and managed to teach the entire basics of Flash (an animated web-based application) in a short three-hour period. Mike, who went on to take more of Greening's classes, said, "Greening was always at the top of her game, trying to get new computers and software for the students." Mike graduated from ASU, but credits MCC with opening the door into creating his own films. "Everything I learned in Cyndi's classes at MCC has helped me in the industry and is applied in my field every day," Mike said. Mike worked on the FX series "30 Days," and is currently

associate editor at Subvoyant in New York, where he is working on a number of commercials, plus a film that was selected for the 2006 Sundance Film Festival, "Flannel Pajamas." Mike is also cutting a feature-length film shot in Los Angeles starring Lawrence Hilton-Jacobs, Mopreme Shakur (the brother of the late Tupac Shakur), and L.A. rapper Court Dog. His portfolio can be found at [www.mikeluciano.com](http://www.mikeluciano.com).

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Mike Luciano

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## Message from the President



In November of 2004, voters overwhelmingly approved a \$951 million bond for the Maricopa Community Colleges, of which \$111 million was designated for Mesa Community College.

As planning got underway for the first phase of the project – the construction of a new physical science building – we were met with an unexpected challenge – a 20 percent increase in construction costs. Rather than reducing the size of the physical science building or cutting back on future projects such as a new nursing and wellness building, department chairs in physical science, nursing, and wellness created a new plan.

Through compromise and collaboration, they created a plan to build a 56,000 square-foot physical science building in the employee parking lot just east of Dobson Road. Construction is slated to begin April 2007. Once completed, a remodel of the current physical science building will meet the nursing and wellness departments' needs for more space and give them access to new facilities sooner than originally planned. Ultimately, when nursing moves into its newly remodeled space, the existing nursing building will open up to help fill the escalating needs of the life science department.

The energy and commitment of MCC faculty, staff, and administration is in high gear. Our vision of creating a college environment where academic disciplines are clustered to foster student to student, student to faculty, and faculty to faculty collaboration is becoming a reality.

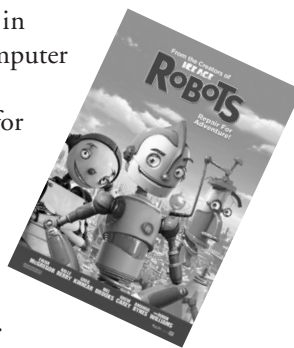
Updates on future MCC construction projects related to the 2004 bond will be provided in the next issue of MCC's *Alumni and Friends* newsletter.

As MCC alumni, we encourage, need, and welcome your involvement.

Larry K. Christiansen,  
President

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- Jake Parker took a Photoshop class with Greening at MCC in 1998, which he said helped him build a foundation of computer skills “back when there was still a big riff between computer-generated art and traditional art.” Since then, he has worked for Fox Animation Studios, Phantagram, Reel FX, and now Blue Sky Studios, where he worked as a freelance artist on the film “Robots,” and will work as a full-time artist on their next project, the Dr. Seuss classic, “Horton Hears a Who.” Jake said the most rewarding work he has done is “Flight I” and “Flight II,” a collection of stories by several writers and artists. Jake said, “After being in the entertainment industry, I have since learned that the MCC life drawing program was notorious for producing high-quality artists who went on to excel at various art schools and in the gaming, entertainment, and illustration industries.” Jake’s freelance sketches and drawings can be seen on [www.agent44.com](http://www.agent44.com).



- Kohl Glass attended MCC during the same time as Jake Parker. Kohl went on to attend Brigham Young University where he met the producer of the film “Napoleon Dynamite.” (Kohl worked on the production of the “extra scene.”) Kohl’s independent film, “The Promethean,” was selected for a number of film festivals and has won several awards. Kohl came back to MCC as an adjunct teacher for one semester and is currently completing an animated short, “Der Ostwind,” that began while Jake and Kohl were at MCC. Visit [www.eventidecreative.com](http://www.eventidecreative.com) to view Kohl’s work.

## Landscaping project cultivates Red Mountain’s environmental focus

Dennis Wilson’s life science students are in the midst of transforming an ugly, bare patch of land on Mesa Community College’s Red Mountain campus into a living, breathing Sonoran Desert ecosystem. The land was left bare after workers cleared and flattened land for the recent addition of the Rosewood building. Now Dennis and his students are using the area as an opportunity to remind people about Red Mountain’s original environmental focus.

“Every shovel of dirt that we move, every rock that we put in place, and every plant species that we add must be based around Sonoran Desert ecology and tell an important biological story,” Dennis said. “The hope is that this will become a model that we can propagate

when we build new buildings so we can combine science and biology and beauty and renewable resource all in one package.”

Dennis and his students came up with the following criteria for their 2005-2006 Innovative Project:

- Every single thing done must tell a biological story. Three information stations will have signage with stories that demonstrate the chain of life. The stories tell how nurse plants protect cacti seeds, how milkweed plants protect queen butterflies, and how the prickly pear cactus provides a microenvironment for cochineal aphids.
- Blooming flowers will fill the area every day of the year. Students generated a species list of plants that have flowering periods spanning the entire calendar year.

- No supplemental water will be used. This goal was revised so captured rain-water could be used to irrigate the area. To beautify the 300-gallon water tank that holds the water, a bench will be constructed over the tank and placed inside a ramada. Solar lights will illuminate additional signage inside the ramadas.

Dennis said Red Mountain administrators, particularly Jo Wilson, have been extremely supportive of this endeavor and made it possible to expand classroom learning into the outdoors, a valuable experience for the students.

“It’s almost frightening what they learn just by getting out there with a shovel,” Dennis said. “I tell them you have not had the full experience unless you’ve gotten cactus spines in your hand.”

Work on the project began in fall of 2004. Dennis said more students become involved each semester with hope that the area will convey a campus dedicated to environmental awareness.



The Rose Garden at MCC, Southern & Dobson Campus

## Check out what’s happening at MCC this Spring

MCC offers a variety of exciting opportunities for the East Valley community. For a complete listing of events and times, visit the college’s online events calendar at [www.mc.maricopa.edu/events](http://www.mc.maricopa.edu/events).

### March 7

**“Speedy Gonzales: Negative Anglo Stereotype or Latino Cultural Icon?”**  
Part of an ongoing series entitled The Media: The World – How the U.S. Media Influence our Global Perspective  
Kirk Student Center, Navajo room

### March 8

**End of Life Directives**  
Kirk Student Center, Kiva room

### March 8 – 11

**A Night at the Opera**  
Act 1 Musical Theatre – Theatre Outback

### March 22

**Beyond ‘The Sopranos’: Investigating the Real Mafia**  
Phoenix College, Bulpitt Auditorium  
Information:  
[www.mcli.dist.maricopa.edu/honors/forum.php](http://www.mcli.dist.maricopa.edu/honors/forum.php)

### March 23 – 24

**Spring 2006 Dance Concert**  
Theatre Outback

### April 1 – 14

**Student Art Show**  
Paul A. Elsner Library, LB145  
Reception: April 3, 6:00 – 8:00 PM

### April 13

**Kick Butts Day, Great American Smoke Out**  
Kirk Student Center, Kiva room  
12:00 PM

### April 19

**Find the Cost of Freedom: Censorship in the Arts**  
Phoenix College, Bulpitt Auditorium  
Information:  
[www.mcli.dist.maricopa.edu/honors/forum.php](http://www.mcli.dist.maricopa.edu/honors/forum.php)

### April 27 – 30

**The Importance of Being Ernest**  
Theatre Arts – Theatre Outback

## Local FIELD TRIPS for Alumni

### WINE TASTING AT KOKOPELLI WINERY WITH MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT BY THE MCC SCUBA KATS

MARCH 23  
6:00 – 9:00 PM



Taste wines produced in the Bonita Valley Region of Arizona as you listen to music performed by MCC’s The Scuba Kats! The Scuba Kats fuse traditional music students with community members to deliver Vintage American Popular Music with integrity and groove! The evening will highlight

Kokopelli Winery is located in Downtown Chandler several MCC alumni members of this popular ensemble.

Kokopelli Winery, the largest winery in Arizona, proudly presents wines made from the largest organic vineyard in the Southwest United States. Serving 24 wines including sparkling and ports, you are sure to find several to taste from Kokopelli’s six for \$6 tasting menu. Kokopelli’s wines have been awarded numerous medals in national wine competitions. (Information from Kokopelli Winery, <http://kokopelliwinery.com/kokoh.htm>)

Food and beverage expenses to be covered by individual attendees.

### MCC’S AWARD WINNING ROSE GARDEN

APRIL 11  
8:00 – 9:30 AM

Tour the largest public rose garden in the desert southwest at the height of its blooming season! Mesa-East Valley Rose Society volunteer Mary Lou Coffman will introduce you to the more than 500 varieties of roses contained in the garden and highlight aspects ranging from parentage and hybrids to color and fragrance. You’ll also learn about rose care, the unique design of the garden and the volunteer partnership that sustains it, and its national designations as a test garden and Blue Star Memorial Marker honoring America’s veterans.

Please let us know that you’re coming! RSVP to Nikki Stroughter at [nikki.stroughter@mccmail.maricopa.edu](mailto:nikki.stroughter@mccmail.maricopa.edu) or 480-461-7445.

Please include your name, your guest’s name, and a contact phone number and email address.

Admission is free. Additional information about the Rose Garden is available at <http://www.mc.maricopa.edu/organizations/community/rosegarden/>