

# Nursing – new alumni chapter and president, new programs

## New chapter

When MCC requested help in forming a Nursing Alumni chapter, Rick Elward volunteered to be a “temporary chairperson” and then became the chapter’s first president. He established the chapter’s board of directors, wrote letters, persuaded people to join, and generated ideas for numerous chapter activities. Due primarily to Rick’s efforts, MCC’s Nursing Alumni chapter now boasts 75 members. This year Rick received the MCC Alumni Award for Outstanding Chapter Service (see article, page 3).

Rick is a 1990 MCC graduate who worked in both long-term care and medical surgery at Banner Desert Medical Center. He now enjoys a career as a Home Health Nurse and pursues other interests as well. For the past two years, Rick’s band, Silver Wings, has entertained MCC Homecoming guests with Old-Time Rock and Roll and Country and Western tunes. Rick donated his earnings from the Homecoming performances to the Alumni Scholarship Fund.

## New president

New chapter president Sherry Lee has big plans for MCC’s Nursing Alumni group. She will invite educators to speak on three topics that new nurses often find a bit scary. The topics relate to care for patients with (1) diabetes, (2) ostomies, and (3) end-stage renal disease. “Hopefully,” she said, “this will tie into some of the technical training the students get in their classes.” Sherry also plans to invite a panel of three experienced nurses to share a glimpse of nursing history with today’s graduating nurses.

Sherry graduated from MCC in 1984 and continued her education, earning two master’s degrees, one in Health Services

Administration and the other in Nursing with a minor in Education. Her work history is colorful. Sherry has been employed by hospitals, the Department of Corrections, and an HMO, and she also worked as a forensic nurse and an investigator of long-term care facilities.

## New programs

MCC’s newest Nursing program is “Enfermeras en Escalera,” scheduled to begin in Fall 2004. It identifies highly motivated foreign-educated nurses, helps them to improve their English language skills, and prepares them to pass the licensing exam through the Arizona State Board of Nursing.

Other Nursing Department programs are in the planning stages or already enjoying success:

- An online nurse refresher course to draw rural nurses, in particular, back into the workforce
- A Certified Nursing Assistant program for people who speak Spanish as their native language
- A fast-track program designed for fire-fighters who want to become nurses after they retire



MCC Nursing students promote community health by providing blood pressure screenings on campus, educating both employees and students about the risks and symptoms of high blood pressure.

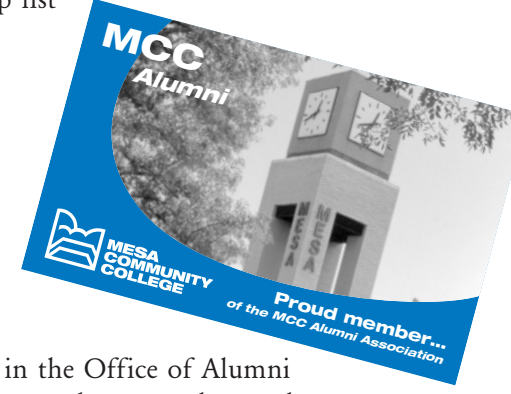
## ALUMNI CARDS AVAILABLE TODAY!

MCC alumni can now request an alumni card that identifies them as members in MCC’s alumni association. The card is free and available to anyone who has attended MCC. Requesting your alumni card puts you on our active membership list and entitles you to a variety of services:

- Invitations to special events and ceremonies
- Free admission to all athletic events
- Discounted tickets to the Theatre Outback
- A 10 percent discount on merchandise bearing the MCC logo (excluding textbooks) at the college bookstore.
- Free library privileges
- Free use of MCC Career and Re-entry Services

To receive your card, please contact Jennifer LaForge in the Office of Alumni Relations at 480-461-7794. Leave your first and last name, phone number, and current mailing address.

You may also e-mail your request to [jenner@mail.mc.maricopa.edu](mailto:jenner@mail.mc.maricopa.edu).



**Check out what’s happening at MCC this Summer**

Events continue through summer at MCC. Don’t forget to check the online events calendar at [www.we.mc.maricopa.edu/events](http://www.we.mc.maricopa.edu/events) to see what’s happening at your alma mater. Don’t miss out on all the fun!

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Alumni Relations



# Alumni & Friends

SUMMER 2004

## MCC Alumni Association welcomes new friends

Are you an MCC alumnus? For those who have earned degrees and certificates from MCC, the answer is obviously Yes. But what about the students who attended MCC for two years and then transferred to a four-year institution without officially graduating from MCC? The Mesa Community College Alumni Board recently revised the Alumni Association Constitution to include in the alumni database anyone who has completed 48 credit hours or more – degree or not.

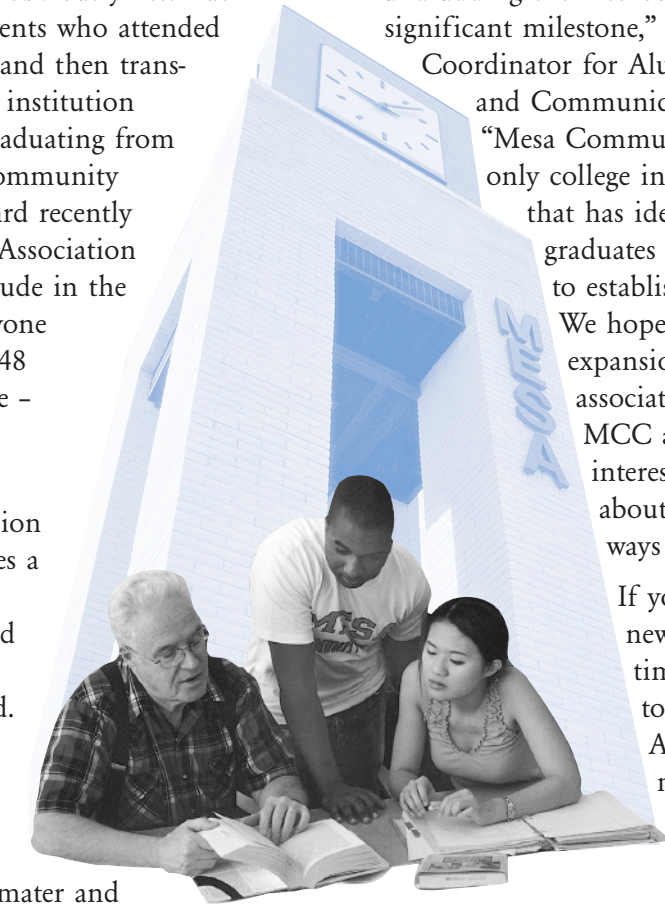
“As a community college, MCC’s mission is broad and includes a significant transfer program,” said David Udall, Chair of the MCC Alumni Board. “Including people who complete 48 hours or more acknowledges the nature of our alma mater and one of its important functions without making membership in the Association so broad that it is meaningless.”

The alumni database has also been expanded to include everyone who graduated from MCC between 1965 and 1983. Alumni who attended MCC prior to 1983 had not been systematically added to the database because their records existed only on microfilm. The one-year data-

base update was completed in March. “Identifying the records of all our graduates and adding them to our database is a significant milestone,” said Marcy Snitzer, Coordinator for Alumni Relations and Communications at MCC.

“Mesa Community College is the only college in the Maricopa District that has identified all of its graduates and is now working to establish contact with them. We hope that our recent expansions strengthen the association and help all MCC alumni who are interested in learning more about the association and ways to get involved.”

If you are receiving our newsletter for the first time, we welcome you to the MCC Alumni Association. Please learn more about us via our website at [www.mc.maricopa.edu/alumni](http://www.mc.maricopa.edu/alumni).



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Message from the President

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 Maricopa County Community College District (MCCCD) bond will appear on the ballot as proposition 401. The request is for new capital dollars for all 10 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.

Mesa Community College's portion of the bond monies will be \$111 million. Our projects – like those of our sister colleges – are based on our master plan for 2002-2022. MCC's master plan was created over a two-year period from discussions, dialogues and input from our internal college community as well as from our external partners and advisors. Planning for two decades is a difficult and challenging responsibility. The end result of two years of focused planning, however, is that MCC will be able to meet the educational needs of our community, which is one of the fastest growing communities in our nation.

As alumni of MCC, it is important that you can answer questions from your families, friends, colleagues, and neighbors about the MCCCD bond. In late August, you will be receiving a packet of information in the mail about the MCCCD bond request. The packet will include information from a districtwide perspective as well as specifics related to the monies MCC will receive.

If you have any questions, please call my office at 480-461-7300.

Sincerely,



Larry K. Christiansen

### Wanted: Alumni volunteers

#### Talking the walk

MCC is currently developing a speakers bureau to share the MCC story through a network of knowledgeable and inspirational faculty members, community leaders, and alumni. The individuals selected for the speakers bureau may be contacted to give presentations about the college to our constituents and community partners. For more information, please call Lora Lassitter at 480-461-7475.

#### Just me and my shadow

The MCC Alumni Internship Committee will be launching Shadow Day in February 2005 in conjunction with a national shadow day campaign. If you are willing to be "shadowed" by an MCC student who wants to learn more about your profession, please contact Jennifer at 480-461-7794 or jenner@mail.mc.maricopa.edu. You may also visit www.mc.maricopa.edu/alumni to fill out a form online.

#### Show me the way

The MCC Alumni Association plans to launch a mentoring program to place MCC alumni with current students to help provide insight from those who have already attended MCC. To volunteer as a mentor for this new and exciting program, contact Jennifer at 480-461-7794 or jenner@mail.mc.maricopa.edu. You may also visit www.mc.maricopa.edu/alumni to complete a form online.

The Alumni Relations Office would like to thank five board members whose terms expire this year. We appreciate all of the support and guidance they have given to MCC's Alumni Association. In appreciation of their dedication to the association, a thank-you note and a wooden compass engraved with the text "Charting the Course" was presented to all five outgoing board members.

We look forward to working with them again in the future.

Exiting board members

- Art Betancourt, 2003
- Gerardo de los Santos, 1989
- Leslie Carlson, 1995
- Teresa Henry, 2001
- Thayer Verschoor, 1989

**Adieu and thank you**

## Annual luncheon honors outstanding alumni

Last spring the MCC Alumni Association launched an Awards and Recognition program in an ongoing effort to recognize the accomplishments of the college's outstanding alumni. Awards were created in two categories: Alumni Achievement and Outstanding Chapter Service. Awardees were honored on May 6 as part of the Community Recognition Luncheon hosted annually by MCC's Commission on Excellence in Education.

### ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

#### Roc Arnett, 1964

CEO of East Valley Partnership and MCC Alumni Board Member

F. Rockne "Roc" Arnett is a leader at MCC, in his profession, and in our community. He began an early commitment to leadership and service as MCC's first student body president. After continuing his studies at Brigham Young University, Roc launched a successful 38-year career in the insurance industry. Now retired, Roc serves as President of the East Valley Partnership, a nonprofit business coalition that focuses on improving business and quality of life in the East Valley. As a member of the Alumni Board, Roc serves on the Internship Committee, working to increase the number and quality of internships.

#### Danny White, 1976

Psychology Associate for the Arizona Department of Corrections

Danny began his education at MCC in the 70s, when he played on our 1973 National Championship Football Team while earning an Associate of Arts in Business and Psychology. He continued his education and is currently pursuing a doctorate in Psychology.



Roc Arnett



Danny White



Rick Elward

His list of community service activities includes the American Cancer Society, Special Olympics, the Southern Arizona Task Force on Domestic Violence, and United Blood Services. Danny is a Mesa Community College adjunct faculty member and an active participant in MCC's Psychology Evening Lecture Series.

### OUTSTANDING CHAPTER SERVICE

#### Rick Elward, 1990

Past President of MCC's Nursing Alumni Chapter

Rick has been instrumental in the development of the Nursing Alumni Chapter and served as the chapter's very first president. Through Rick's diligence, more than 60 nursing alumni became charter members of the chapter during MCC's Homecoming celebration last fall. One of Rick's greatest accomplishments has been partnering with the Student Nurses Association on various activities. Rick's openness to new ideas and suggestions has helped to lay the groundwork for the growth of the chapter. Rick no longer serves as president, but his continued involvement ensures a smooth transition in leadership and continued growth of the chapter.

For next year's awards, watch for a call for nominations in the fall issue of the *Alumni & Friends* newsletter. Special thanks to members of the 2004 Awards and Recognition Committee: Donna Backhaus, Gerardo de los Santos, Leonard Heinrich, and Thayer Verschoor.

## MCC wrestlers reunite



Many former mat maids and wrestlers attended the Wrestling Reunion in April. It offered alumni the chance to catch up on the past few years and to remember their alma mater. Special thanks to Debbie (Shelley) Hentges for coordinating the reunion.

## Three MCC students earn national honors

On April 26 *USA Today* announced the names of 60 top-ranking scholars who competed with nearly 1,600 students nationwide to earn positions on one of three All-USA Academic teams (20 students per team). MCC students Joseph Luchenta and Kelley Stewart are on the first All-USA team, and Christian Turner was named to the second.

MCC Phi Theta Kappa advisor Duane Oakes said it is highly unusual and quite remarkable for any college to have three students in the top two teams. "This is

the best we have ever done in the history of Mesa Community College!" he said. Students who achieve this honor exemplify excellence in scholarship, leadership, and service. All three MCC students are in the Honors Program and are Phi Theta Kappa officers. In addition to high grade point averages and impressive leadership skills, MCC's honorees collectively contributed more than 3,000 hours of community service during the past year.



Joseph Luchenta, Christian Turner, Kelley Stewart

## Spotlight on musical alumnus

*Twelve Princesses*, a musical written by MCC alumnus Rob Gardner, is coming to MCC this summer. Rob said he is bringing his musical to MCC because "MCC is known for doing quality work, and the college works closely with the community."

Based on the Grimm Brothers' fairytale titled the *Twelve Dancing Princesses*, Rob's musical is about 12 sisters whose father, the king, locks them into their room at night to protect them. Every morning when the princesses awaken, they find their shoes to be quite worn, as though they had danced in them all night. The tale unfolds with the father issuing a challenge to the young men of the kingdom to solve the mystery of the worn shoes. A secret door that leads to a magical world with a jeweled forest, a lake of glass, and an enormous palace creates the backdrop for this enchanting musical.

**What:**  
*Twelve Princesses*

**Where:**  
MCC Theatre Outback

**When:**  
July 8-10, 12, 14-17, 2004  
7:30 p.m.

**For tickets call the Theatre Outback box office at 480-461-7170.**

In addition to *Twelve Princesses*, Rob has written two other musicals. In 2003 he wrote *Joan of Arc* and *The Price of Freedom*. Rob also played a character in *Fiddler on the Roof* at MCC when he attended in the mid-90s. Last year *Joan of Arc* was performed at Mountain View High School in Mesa.

While a senior at Westwood High School, Rob and several of his friends formed an a cappella choir and recorded five CDs. After graduation, Rob decided to attend MCC because he thought the local community college would offer a smooth transition from high school. Most of his friends were going to MCC, so he felt confident that it would be a great experience. "MCC prepared me to move on to a university," Rob said.

In 1996, Rob transferred to Brigham Young University where he graduated last December with a bachelor's degree in Business Management. After graduation he moved back to Arizona, where he works as the Marketing Director for an Internet company, Scrapbook.com.



Rob Gardner