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Ward Shares Success Path At Mesa Community College

Born and raised in Arizona, Cameren Ward is ideally qualified to guide individuals through higher education opportunities in his role as student services specialist in Mesa Community College's Testing Services Center. He knows how to advise recent high school graduates about completing the enrollment and financial aid processes because he did that when he graduated from McClintock High School in Tempe, Ariz. He also knows about navigating the MCC campus and finding the best resources because he did that while earning his Associate in Arts.

Students looking to move from MCC to a four-year university again can take advantage of his personal knowledge because Ward transferred to an Arizona university where he is pursuing a Bachelor of Communication.

Ward began working part time at MCC in 2003 and began his first-ever, full-time job in 2005 in the college's Admissions and Records Office. Here, he learned a multitude of systems and details about student entry operations. In 2008, he brought his extensive higher education administrative experience to MCC's Testing Services Center.

Testing is one of the many free services MCC offers for which many other colleges charge. Other free service found at MCC include parking, enrollment, tutoring, career counseling, academic advising and more.

"The word 'test' can be intimidating but the tests you take to enter MCC are designed to place you in the math or English class or other courses where you will be the most likely to succeed," said Ward. "You don't receive a grade for the placement tests, not even pass or fail. They are knowledge assessments. Although those who are the most anxious often do very well, if you feel you had a bad day and think you could do better, you can take the test again."

MCC uses ACCUPLACER, an adaptive test used for course placement into English, reading and math courses. It is a computerized test with no time limit. The questions are chosen on the basis

of answers to previous questions. This adaptive technique selects just the right questions for your ability level. You can go to mesacc.edu/testing-services for additional information including sample questions and practice tests.

Ward points out that although early in the mornings are when testing is least crowded, with 80 computer stations, he has not seen anyone turned away. In addition to placement tests, the center offers assessment for English as a Second Language, faculty make-up exams, program specific testing, workforce certification, correspondence and eLearning testing.

National CLEP testing offers 33 exams in five subject areas, covering material taught in courses that you may generally take in your first two years of college. By passing a CLEP exam, you can earn 3 or more college credits. Exams cost \$80 and students sign up with CLEP at clep.collegeboard.org/exam. Ward explained that time and money can be saved by getting credit for what you already know.

Drawing on his experience at MCC as a young student, graduate, transfer student and staff member, Ward says the diversity on campus is welcoming to a wide range of people from our ACE high school students, to those new to college or re-careering or seniors starting a new life chapter.

“We have a great International Program that continue to grow,” he said. “It offers opportunities to meet people from around the world and learn about different cultures. I’ve found this campus teaches you about how much we all have in common and that we can respect each other. MCC is a place to start pursuing high education and feel you belong.”

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