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Bonnie Brockway feels a 'sense of fulfillment' by achieving her lifelong dream.

— Photo courtesy Mesa Community College

At 72, MCC grandma gets her degree — and doesn't have to give up knitting

By Sally Mesarosh

Bonnie J. Brockway, a 72-years-young great-grandma and soon-to-be college graduate, was a bit worried when she went back to school at age 70.

She wondered if the professors and students at Mesa Community College would think of her as a serious student, not merely an old lady taking a break from her knitting.

She soon learned, however, that she had no need to worry.

"The students and professors were wonderful," Brockway said. "I have made such great friends. Some of them call me mom; some of them call me grandma. Going back to college has enriched my life no end. I do love to

knit, but I'd rather go to school."

Brockway's desire to go to college began in Wisconsin in 1959. Her plans for college were put on hold as she married at 17, raised four kids and divorced 22 years later. During that time she worked as a secretary at a two-year college, a deputy clerk for the State Bar of Arizona, an executive secretary at General Dynamics and a technical writer for Motorola.

Throughout the years, though, she preserved her love for writing. Brockway's work has been published in national magazines and Wisconsin newspapers, including the Crawford County Independent, the Vernon

MCC

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County Broadcaster and the La Crosse Tribune. She now blogs for a marketing company and works for Maricopa Community College's Chair Academy.

Even with these successes, the lack of a college degree weighed heavily upon her mind.

"I always wanted to earn a degree," said Brockway, who now lives in Tempe. "It was one goal I didn't want to let go of."

So, at the age of 70, she took what she calls a "leap of faith" and enrolled at MCC. She loved it immediately.

"I felt very comfortable at MCC," Brockway said. "The energy and educational atmosphere gave me life, gave me breath."

Brockway names Josh Rathkamp's poetry class as her favorite class and Rathkamp her favorite instructor.

"His creative writing classes tap into all my creative juices," said Brockway, who received an honorable mention in

a recent writing competition at MCC.

"I enjoy them so much."

Her proudest moment so far has been the induction ceremony into Phi Theta Kappa honor society.

"I cried through half the ceremony," she said. "I can't believe at my age that I have attained such an honor."

She will graduate with an associate's degree in May and plans to transfer to Northern Arizona University's Extended Campuses Program to earn her bachelor's degree in creative writing.

Brockway jokes that her friends will fill an entire section of the bleachers during the commencement ceremony at MCC. She is filled with pride at the thought of her forthcoming graduation.

"To walk across the stage with my cap and gown and PTK honor ribbons and finally hear *Pomp and Circumstance* is going to be the highlight of my entire life, except when my kids were born," she said. "Even though it took all this time, it will be such a sense of fulfillment. What I really wanted all my life, I will have now."



Hot off the press: Summer camp time is just around the corner

It's about time to start making summer plans for your kids to ensure they stay active and engaged between school sessions. Tempe offers summer camps in a variety of subjects and at convenient times to help find one that's a perfect fit for any child. Registration for most camps is now open. Information at Tempe.gov/SummerCamps.

— Photo courtesy City of Tempe

Chandler Regional to join Kyrene for immunizations

Kyrene Family Resource Center will be the site of immunization clinics to be offered in conjunction with Chandler Regional Medical Center from 3-5 p.m. Tuesday, April 28. Vaccines are given to children six weeks to 18 years of age.

A parent must accompany their children to these clinics and provide

previous immunization history.

Effective in 2012, government rules mandated that:

1. Children with private medical insurance that covers vaccines will NOT be eligible for the free vaccines at these clinics; and
2. Vaccines will be FREE to children with NO insurance; children with AHCCCS and Kids Care Insurance; and children with private insurance that does not cover vaccines and Native American children.

Tempe Union HS District Community Education Presents SummerArts@CdS 2015

Fostering Arts & Academic Achievement



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Session 2

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Student Art Show & Performances: June 24

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