



The 2023 “Community College Initiative” class at Mesa Community College. Back Row: Sandra Tchakoute, Argha Shomoy Barmmon, Hazel Soy, Marco Antonio Abreu Costa, Ansa Mathai, Delali Afram, Adam Amisu Talika, Shameema Miller, MD Zobaer Hossen, Alion Belau, Rifqi Ibrahim, Front Row: Yuliner Rejoice Yestiyani, Yamini, Santiago Mejia Gomez (Photo courtesy of MCC Institutional Advancement)

NEWS

Government sponsored program brings more international students to Mesa Community College

Rey Covarrubias Jr. 09/21/2023

Mesa Community College welcomed 14 students from across the world as part of a U.S. State Department program to attend a one year degree program and join a thriving community of international students in Mesa, according to a recent press release.

Students from 9 different countries became part of the [“Community College Initiative Program,”](#) and joined an international community at MCC that has had representation from over a third of the world, according to student service director for international education, Aziz Alhadi.

These new students are from Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, India, Indonesia, South Africa, and Turkey, according to the release.

For nine years, MCC has hosted more than 130 international students under the CCI program, according to the announcement.

“The more diversity we have on campus, the more we learn and the more they [international students] learn,” said Alhadi.

The students who arrived in July will complete a one year certificate degree program.

Alhadi said that those one year programs included EMT, early childhood education, sustainable agriculture and health sciences.

The July international students, part of MCC's federal government sponsored program, includes students participating in volunteer work and community service, according to Alhadi.

This work includes 75 hours of community service, along with 50 hours of an unpaid MCC internship, according to the announcement.

"One of the exciting projects students worked on last year, during Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service was making welcome cards in different languages for refugees settling in the Phoenix area with the Welcome to America Project," said MCC international education program analyst Teresa Kalloch, in the announcement.

Alhadi hopes that the international education at MCC will also continue to provide experiences for U.S. residents who want to experience the world.

"Going forward we hope to establish some short term study away visits for students who cannot be away for a month, that would be a short term, one week to 10 days maybe a little bit longer to visit other countries, students who would not be traditionally be involved for economic or other reasons," said Alhadi.

MCC currently offers abroad classes that take students to destinations like Ireland, Mexico, and Japan.

The international education department at MCC has also recently made advances to allow both F1 and J1 visa students into the college, expedited by the inhouse admission office specifically for foreign students, according to Alhadi.

It is these advancements that will now allow students on a J1 visa to attend MCC for as little as two weeks, the minimum for some classes, or up to a full degree pathway.

Alhadi says MCC can provide the sponsorship for a visa necessary for foreign embassies to approve of in order to establish the education.

“Everything we do relates to promoting global awareness amongst students, faculty and staff,” said Alhadi.

Author



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Rey Covarrubias Jr. is a freelance reporter for the Mesa Legend. As a lifelong Arizonan, he has found his passion in learning and sharing the diverse cultural and natural wonders of the state.

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