

# East Valley philanthropist, honors student to speak at MCC graduation

By **mynews** - May 12, 2017



*Jennifer Duff*

Mesa Community College (MCC) selected two speakers to address the crowd for the May 12 commencement at MCC's Southern and Dobson Campus. The keynote speaker is MCC alumna Jennifer Duff, president of Jef International, Inc. and Lobina Lures. The Class Honors Speaker is Hannah Somerville from MCC's Red Mountain Campus.

**Duff, a true alumni success story, completed her associate's degree at MCC in fashion merchandising.** After a successful career in the fashion industry, Duff rose to the top of the professional bass angler circuits in the western U.S. In 1988, she was invited by Japan's Bass Tournament Association to live in Japan for one year to compete in their bass tournaments and promote the sport. The tour was successful and as a result, Duff started Jef International, Inc. in



1990, advising for and exporting to Japanese sport fishing tackle distributors. In 1991, Duff created Lobina Lures for her flagship Rico topwater lures. Twenty-six years later, the Rico is still considered to be one of the best bass fishing topwater lures in the American market.



*Hannah Somerville*

Duff is a member of the MCC Development Board, Mesa's Planning and Zoning Board and the Mesa Rotary. She is co-founder of Retail, Arts, Innovation & Livability (R.A.I.L.) and active in the Mesa Chamber of Commerce. She is a former board chair of the i.d.e.a. Museum and is currently running for Mesa City Council District 4.

**Somerville will receive an associate in arts, associate in general studies and an Arizona General Education Certificate-Arts.**

Somerville has completed more than 300 community service hours and her short story, "Volunteerism in Modern-Day America," was published in the book 2014 Creative Communication. Her service also stretches to her church as a junior high leader with the visual and sound media team.

Somerville's accomplishments include serving as vice president of Sigma Chi Eta-Upsilon Chapter, the MCC national communication honor society, where she facilitated a birthday party for over 215 homeless and underprivileged children in honor of Dr. Seuss. She also served as an intern for Arizona Family for Home Educators. Somerville currently works at a local real estate company as a personal assistant.

She received the Outstanding Communication Student Award for her impressive academic and service performance and twice has received the Presidential Scholarship and Service Scholarship.

Somerville will transfer to Arizona State University to complete her bachelor's degree in technical communication and aspires to write and travel around the world.

**Mesa Community College's graduation ceremony will take place tonight, May 12, in the Center Courtyard of MCC's Southern and Dobson campus, 1833 W. Southern Ave. Processional begins at 7:15 p.m. Program begins at 7:30 p.m.**

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