

## Meet Cody Jones and Molly O'Dwyer, the 2003-04 alumni scholarship recipients

Cody Jones received the Alumni and Friends scholarship for the fall 2003 semester. A freshman at MCC, Cody intends to pursue a degree in either business management or real estate, then transfer to Arizona State University or Ohio State University.



"I felt the combination of Anthropology and GIS would make me a more marketable candidate for future jobs in Anthropology." Once she's an alumna, Molly would like to partner with various academic programs to promote continuing education.

### Scholarships make a difference

For many people in our community, financial limitations keep higher education just beyond reach. While tuition costs for MCC and the other Maricopa Community College's remains low compared to other educational institutions, increasing costs coupled with lower support from the state have made tuition increases a reality. Based on the current tuition rate of \$51 per credit hour, the average full-time student at MCC pays \$2,500 a year for tuition, books, and fees.

Upon completion of his studies, Cody would like to become involved in the alumni association and eventually establish a scholarship in his mother's name. "It is my goal in life to be able to create this scholarship to honor my mother and the hard work that she has done for me to help my dreams come true."



### Alumni and Friends Scholarship fund

The scholarship Cody and Molly have benefited from was created by the Alumni Association in 1997. Since its creation, seven students have received the scholarship. The scholarship is awarded each fall by a volunteer committee. If you would like to volunteer to serve on the committee or to contribute to the fund, please contact Marcy Snitzer at 480-461-7792 or marcy.snitzer@mccmail.maricopa.edu. If you would like to learn more about other existing scholarship funds or learn how to establish a new fund, please

The association's spring 2004 scholarship recipient is Molly O'Dwyer. Molly will complete her Associate of Art's degree this spring and transfer to a 4-year university to pursue a Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology. While at MCC, Molly discovered that she had an interest in Physical Geography, leading her to extend her studies at MCC so that she could complete the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Technician Certificate.

contact Deb Devore at 480-461-7356 or deb.devore@mccmail.maricopa.edu.

## Community education offers diverse opportunities

Are you interested in learning about financial planning, home improvement, or a new art? Check out MCC's Community Education program. Community Education offers a wide array of non-credit classes, workshops, seminars, and employment preparation courses.

Among the most popular classes are conversational Spanish, basic computer training, floral design, and dance classes. According to Barbara Thelander, MCC alumna and Director of Community Education, "Variety is what we do. We respond to the community interest in lifelong learning." The diverse curriculum addresses more than just leisure pursuits; there are also a variety of classes geared toward career development and intellectual growth.



Community Education is also home to New Frontiers for Learning in Retirement, a vibrant, active membership organization that supports people's need for lifelong learning and other activities to enhance their lives in retirement. Over 300 members participate in interactive study groups as well as travel, social, and volunteer activities.

To register for a course or learn more about Community Education's programs, contact 480-461-7493 or visit their website at

[www.mc.maricopa.edu/organizations/community/comm\\_ed](http://www.mc.maricopa.edu/organizations/community/comm_ed). The Community Education department is always looking for ideas for new classes and instructors. If you would like to propose a non-credit class or teach, contact Barbara Thelander at 480-461-6256.

## MCC happenings

Find out what's happening at your alma mater by checking out MCC's new online events calendar. The calendar is available at [www.mc.maricopa.edu/events](http://www.mc.maricopa.edu/events) and is divided into six categories to help you find information more easily: arts, athletics, community, employees, holidays, and students.



The Maricopa County Community College District is an EEO/AA institution.

## Visit the new alumni website



The Office of Alumni Relations has been working to make our website more user friendly. You can update your alumni record and request your alumni card from the website. A listing of all the alumni chapters is also posted, as well as the 2003-2004 Alumni Board members. By visiting the Alumni Relations webpage you can learn more about ways to reconnect with MCC and get involved! Visit the Alumni website at [www.mc.maricopa.edu/alumni](http://www.mc.maricopa.edu/alumni).

*Alumni & Friends* is published by the Office of Institutional Advancement (IA) three times a year for alumni of Mesa Community College.

- Coordinator, Communications and Alumni Relations: Marcy Snitzer, marcy.snitzer@mccmail.maricopa.edu, 480-461-7792
- Assistant, Communications and Alumni Relations: Jennifer LaForge, jennifer@mail.mc.maricopa.edu, 480-461-7794
- Contributing Writer: Karen Peters, karen.peters@mccmail.maricopa.edu

Alumni Relations  
1833 West Southern Avenue  
Mesa, Arizona 85202-4866

Address Service Requested

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# Alumni & Friends

SPRING 2004



## President Bush visits MCC

Mesa Community College was honored to host the President of the United States, George W. Bush, at the college's Southern and Dobson campus on Wednesday, Jan. 21. Approximately 250 guests enjoyed a close-up view of the President in the Theatre Outback, while additional faculty, staff, and students watched on a direct electronic feed.



A panel of seven, including President Bush, participated in a discussion entitled "Jobs for the 21st Century." Other panel members included:

- Dr. Larry K. Christiansen, MCC President
- Dr. Mary Vanis, Director of the Center for Workforce Development for the Maricopa Community Colleges
- Martin Bean, chair of Public Policy for CompTIA (Computing Technology Industry Association), and
- MCC students Stacey Leedhom, Robert Chapman, and Bill Moses

Each of the students related personal life stories about how their education at MCC has created new opportunities for them in the workforce after layoffs and career changes.

President Bush began, "Last night in my speech (State of the Union) I talked about spending additional money to focus directly on collaborative programs at the community college level that takes the input from business, takes the desire of workers, and matches them so people can find

good work. Congress needs to pass \$250 million in job training money that goes specifically to community colleges to fund the kind of programs we're going to talk about here today."

Among the programs and systems discussed were MCC's Business and Industry Institute, campus Career Centers, and NITAS (National IT Apprenticeship System). President Bush also touched briefly on his plan for a Temporary Worker program for people coming

from Mexico to work in the United States.

MCC was selected for Bush's post- State of the Union address largely because of its collaboration with the technology industry through MCC's Business and Industry



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Message from the President

Spring semester at MCC started off as no other semester ever has: a visit by the President of the United States, followed the next day by the college welcoming Arizona Governor

Janet Napolitano. It was an honor and a privilege to host both distinguished leaders.

During his visit, President Bush recognized the MCC Business & Industry Institute's information technology program as a "model program in workforce training" and called MCC a "great" college.

At MCC, excellence spans the breadth and depth all of our programs. As an alum, you know this firsthand.

Today, MCC is facing an enormous challenge. By 2020, studies show that student enrollment will double, reaching 50,000-60,000 students. This will happen when our children, grandchildren, and neighborhood children are ready for college. That time is not so far away.

Last year we completed a two-phase 20-year master plan. Phase one calls for four new buildings on the Southern and Dobson campus, refurbishing some of our 30 plus-year old facilities, increasing our technology capabilities, adding necessary parking spaces, and continually upgrading campus security. At our Red Mountain campus, we need to add three new buildings with more classrooms and laboratories. MCC is also engaged in discussions and early planning with the City of Mesa to create a MCC Downtown Campus.

MCC's ability to meet the growing educational demands of our community will not happen without new capital funding, which is why the Maricopa Community College District is planning for a bond election in November 2004. I encourage you to call our Alumni Office at (480) 461-7792 for more information.

Thank you for your continued support.



Larry K. Christiansen

## Bush (continued)



Institute and Network Academy. Dr. Pinny Sheoran, Director of the Business and Industry Institute, and numerous other MCC faculty sit on national boards that help to increase MCC's visibility beyond Maricopa County and the State of Arizona. The sheer size of MCC also helps to bring national attention. With an enrollment of more than 27,000 students each semester, MCC is one of the largest community colleges in the nation.

The college is thrilled that the President's visit was for all the right reasons – to recognize MCC academic programs and students. MCC alumnus Ron Rangel was impressed with Bush's demeanor and interaction with the students. "He was very personable with the students – it wasn't about our deans and college president – it was about the students. I was proud for my school." MCC's director of Technology Support Services, Bill DeHaan echoed Ron's sentiments, stating "It was powerful to be in such an intimate setting with the President of the United States, where he encouraged the students to visit candidly about their lives and their futures."

President Bush expressed his confidence in the community college system. "I think the community college system in our country is one of our great strengths," he said. "As this economy changes, there is opportunity. You just have to seize it!"

### Presidential visit translates to teachable moments

Faculty capitalized on a number of teachable moments that grew out of President Bush's visit to MCC. Journalists from MCC's student newspaper, *The Legend*, had the opportunity to observe the event firsthand and visit with members of the national media and White House staff. Picket lines of Bush's supporters and opponents provided rich fodder for classroom discussions, with topics ranging from political and social issues to the ability of U.S. citizens to exercise their first amendment rights of free speech.

## Spotlight on psychology alumni

**Dr. Michael Ropacki** is a neuroscientific liaison for Ortho-McNeil Pharmaceutical, an operating company for Johnson & Johnson. "I develop relationships and start research projects," Michael said. "I serve as a field-based medical information expert, educating physicians about company products." Michael is also a faculty member at Loma-Linda University School of Medicine, where he is involved in research and has taught neuroscience classes.

Michael started on the path to a neuroscience career when he enrolled at MCC in 1989. "When I originally started, I didn't even know I wanted to go into psychology," he said. "I thought psychology was a joke." Michael's first experience in Psychology 101 turned out to be a disappointment. He earned only a C and wanted an A, so he took

the class again – this time with Dr. Ann Ewing. "Ann got me excited about psychology," Michael said. "I didn't see it as a soft science any more."

After earning his degree at MCC, Michael studied neurosciences at the University of Arizona. Post-doctoral work and internship/residency requirements broadened his experiences even further. Michael is considered an expert in estimating pre-

morbidity and is often invited to present nationally on various topics, such as migraine headaches.

"I feel that MCC is where it all began," Michael said. "MCC was a wonderful launching block for me, and the faculty within the Psychology Department are phenomenal. I think I was one of the first of Ann's students to go on and get a doctorate."



Contributed photo



Dr. Ann Ewing and Arlen Sykes at MCC's 2003 Homecoming celebration

**Arlen Sykes** teaches fifth grade at Kyrene de la Colina. Prior to earning his master's degree in Education, he attended Mesa Community College (1996-98). He developed the Psi Beta Alumni Chapter for MCC and recently received the Outstanding Alumni Chapter Service Award for his effort. Psi Beta is a national honor society for students in Psychology.

Arlen continues to work with Psi Beta in support of Special Olympics. He organizes volunteers, blending middle school students with Psi Beta college students, hoping to excite the younger students about attending college. "These kids get a focus," Arlen said. "They see normal everyday people going to college and begin to believe that it might be possible for them, too."

In addition to his talent for enlisting volunteers, Arlen is also adept at persuading people to give money. As president of the Psi Beta Alumni Chapter, Arlen helps to raise money for the organization's scholarship fund, with the ultimate goal of creating an endowment.

"My background in psychology has helped me so much," Arlen said. "Teaching is all psychology – dealing with students, parents, and even the public." Arlen expressed appreciation and admiration for MCC's Psychology Department faculty who encouraged him to meet new challenges.

## Psychology Lecture Series

MCC's Psychology Evening Lecture Series has been going strong for 10 years. Sponsored by the MCC Psi Beta Chapter, the Psychology Department, and MCC's Professional Continuing Education Program in Psychology, the lectures are presented three times each semester. Dr. Roy Cohen, a faculty member in the Psychology Department, engages the speakers and produces a brochure to publicize each series.

Dr. Ann Ewing, also a Psychology Department faculty member, explained that the lectures are directed to MCC's student population. They are, however, of such high quality that counselors, nurses, and other health professionals can receive continuing education credit for attending. "We have to have really good speakers to be able to do this," Ann said.

The lectures are free and open to the public. They are very well attended, drawing as many as 200-300 people.

### Spring 2004 Evening Lecture Series in Psychology

All spring lectures take place from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Navajo Room, Kirk Student Center, at MCC's Southern and Dobson campus.

### "Victimization, domestic violence and the journey back to wholeness."

Danny White, M.Ed.  
MCC Alum  
Monday, March 8

### "Important topics in gifted intelligence."

Paul Beljan, Psy.D., ABPdN and  
James T. Webb, Ph.D., ABPP-CL  
Thursday, April 29



Members of MCC's Alumni Board

## Your alumni association working for you!

Successful organizations benefit from the leadership and insights of their members. The MCC Alumni Association is proudly led by a 21-member volunteer board. In its first year still, the alumni board has focused on setting in motion the plans and processes that will ensure the association's future growth and success. The major areas of focus and accomplishments are listed below.

**Awards and Recognition:** The alumni board is pleased to announce the continuation of the awards and recognition program. The program was initiated last spring and offers awards in two categories: Alumni Achievement and Outstanding Chapter Service. The 2004 recipients have been selected and will be recognized on May 6 at the Community Recognition luncheon hosted by MCC President, Dr. Larry K. Christiansen.

**Constitution:** The association's Constitution has been updated and revised. It was unanimously approved at the January 22 board meeting. Copies are available through the alumni office.

**Homecoming:** Attendance at MCC's Homecoming celebration more than doubled

this year thanks to our alumni volunteers. The association raised \$450 for the Alumni and Friends scholarship fund and recognized the 1973 championship football team. Homecoming 2004 will be October 16 – Mark your calendars!

**Internships and Career Networking:** The internship committee is exploring ways to increase the number of internship opportunities available to MCC students.

The committee is also interested in creating a Career Shadow Day that matches MCC students with alumni. The student would "shadow" an alum at his/her work site to learn more about their chosen profession. If you are interested in participating in Shadow Day activities, please complete the enclosed card.

**Scholarship:** Two MCC students received scholarships during the 2003-04 school year (see page 5 for related story). The scholarship committee would like to increase both the number of scholarships given by the association each year and the amount of money awarded. To meet their goal, a fundraising campaign is being planned.



MCC's 1967 wrestling team

## MCC wrestlers reunion

Remember the days when MCC had a wrestling team complete with mat maids to cheer the team to victory? A reunion will be held for all former wrestlers and mat maids on April 17, 2004. Please contact Debbie (Shelley) Hentges at 480-924-4101 for more information and to RSVP.

### Volunteers needed for the Alumni Board

Interested in helping to determine the future of the MCC Alumni Association and carrying out the goals established? Consider serving on the MCC Alumni Association's board. Nominations are being accepted through March 15, 2004. Please complete the enclosed postage paid postcard to express your interest.

### Annual membership meeting!

Learn more about association activities, meet the alumni board volunteers, and share your ideas at our annual member meeting on April 29, 2004, at 6:00 p.m., in the Library, room 145, Southern and Dobson campus. The meeting is a great way to reconnect with old friends and find ways to become involved. Please RSVP to Jennifer LaForge at 480-461-7794 or jennifer@mail.mc.maricopa.edu.