

October 28, 2008

the Bulletin

MESA COMMUNITY COLLEGE'S EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

Bone Detective



MCC adjunct faculty member Scotty Moore uses first-hand knowledge of ancient artifacts learned from his journeys around the world as host of the Discovery Channel show "Bone Detectives."

When MCC instructor Scotty Moore tells his students tales about ancient Egyptian tombs, buried treasure and archaeological mysteries, his descriptions aren't based on facts gleaned from books. Moore uses first-hand knowledge of ancient artifacts learned from his journeys around the world as host of the Discovery Channel show "Bone Detectives."

He's traveled to archaeological digs from Belize to Bolivia to Cairo, filming episodes such as "Cave of the Headless Corpse," "The Floating Cemetery," and "Ghost of the Island Queen," among others.

"It was a fabulous experience," said Moore, who has worked as an adjunct faculty member at MCC since 2005. "I spent a year traveling around the world meeting top scholars and going to all the places I could ever imagine."

Moore became a "bone detective" after his wife, Kimberly, talked him into submitting a demo video tape in response to an email from a casting company looking for professional archeologists.

"We used a 20-year-old camera and our video was not at all professional, but a month later the Discovery Channel called," Moore said.

An entire season of shows was filmed and aired last winter and spring, with talk of a second season. At the moment, Moore brings his adventures into the classroom as he teaches archaeology classes at MCC. Moore said he understands that sometimes the subject can be dry and dull, so he does his best to bring the material to life by sharing his incredible experiences with the students.

"Most students won't become archaeologists," Moore said. "But what I want to teach them is a passion for learning. It's hard if the teacher isn't passionate. I try to convey my excitement in the classroom."

Moore said he didn't discover his passion for the subject until he went to an excavation site during his college days.

"We ended up excavating a small child's grave filled with valuable items," Moore said. "It struck me at that moment how much the people cared about that child. They had hopes and fears just like the rest of us. It's beneficial to share the stories of who people were and what they did."

Moore's fellow instructor, Rick Effland, said Moore's experience in the field allows him to convey that archaeology is not just about bones and stones and dead things.

"It's hard for instructors who haven't had that experience to bring it to life," Effland said. "He brings his real experience in and also talks about the experts he meets."

Moore said he enjoys the community college experience and appreciates the opportunities MCC has given him.

"The students work extremely hard to get to where they are and it's fun to introduce them to things they haven't seen before," Moore said.

Forensic Careers

Each year, more and more college students investigate the field of forensic science. Labor statistics show it's a solid career choice, with the employment rate for forensic scientists in the U.S. expected to grow steadily over the next decade.

Once students begin their studies, they find a myriad of career paths to follow, ranging from forensic photography to forensic nursing to forensic botany.

Mesa Community College student Jami-Lyn Hinson, who recently attended a national Forensic Trends Conference, was surprised to learn of the wide variety of careers available. Hinson learned each specialty has its own place in the world of forensic investigations.

"It's so much more than what is portrayed on television shows like CSI," Hinson said. "The conference presented at least 26 different fields in which to choose a career."

Forensic science is the application of natural sciences to matters of the law. In practice, forensic science draws upon physics, chemistry, biology, and other scientific principles and methods. Scientists in the field are concerned with the recognition, identification, individualization, and evaluation of physical evidence. Forensic scientists present their findings as expert witnesses in the court of law.

At MCC, many students begin their studies by working toward a certificate of completion in forensic investigation. The certificate provides the student with an important knowledge base for investigative specialization in a wide range of disciplines and careers.

"The field is flooded, but they need qualified people—that's where the certificate comes in," said Bert Ouderkirk, MCC's Forensics Program Coordinator.

Once the certificate of completion is earned, there are four pathways a student can consider: biology, chemistry/trace/controlled substances, toxicology or firearms/QD/prints. MCC's program offers a transfer degree to Arizona four-year colleges. Students might, for example, consider transferring to Arizona State University, which offers a bachelor's degree in Criminology and Criminal Justice.



Forensic club members Rick Elward and Jami-Lyn Hinson promote the benefits of the Mesa Police Department's Forensic Volunteer Program.

The emerging field of forensic nursing is also becoming a popular choice. Specialty areas within forensic nursing include forensic nurse investigator, nurse coroner/death investigator and sexual assault nurse examiner, among others.

"There are tons of jobs out there, it's just a matter of getting your foot in the door," Ouderkirk said. "Volunteer opportunities are a great way to do that."

One volunteer opportunity available to students, or anyone interested in forensics, is to look into the Mesa Police Department's Forensic Volunteer Program. Volunteers help police by photographing crime scenes and lifting fingerprints.

Hinson's specific area of interest is behavior analysis and the criminal mind. As she works toward completing her certificate, her career goal is to work for a crime lab in Mesa or Tempe.

"It's a good career choice," Hinson said. "It's science applied to law to solve a crime. It's very rewarding to learn all this."

Facing Fear

Mesa Community College English instructor Craig Jacobsen has a theory of his own. He believes the loss of your soul or self is the number one fear, as often depicted in horror movies featuring zombies. Jacobsen examines this fear in his new genre studies class, “Facing Fear: Horror Narrative.” Students study the horror subset of zombie narratives in films, novels and video games.

Jacobsen said he chose the zombie genre because so many examples kept showing up across all media. From the first zombie film, *White Zombie* in 1932, to *Night of the Living Dead* in 1968, and more recently, *28 Weeks Later*, the concept of a mysterious virus turning ordinary people into mindless, flesh-eating zombies has fascinated generations of movie-goers.

“There still must be something relevant,” Jacobsen said. “There’s the current fear of contagious disease as well as the lingering appeal of zombies. People have an essential fear of the loss of self or identity—the idea of still being alive, but not really you. Most people take comfort that when you die, you retain your soul, but zombies don’t die.”

Students learn how the zombie genre has evolved and changed over time. Most genres begin in literature and move to film, but the zombie genre began with the film *White Zombie* starring Bela Lugosi. The popularity of zombie narratives faded in the ‘80s, but experienced resurgence recently through video games such as *Resident Evil* and Max Brooks’ novel *World War Z: An Oral History of the Zombie War*, which chronicles a fictional zombie apocalypse.

To further explore the narratives, Jacobsen has students construct, edit and update a zombie studies wiki website. The site provides a place for students to gather information about zombie narratives in all media. Students discuss recurring themes and build a timeline which will be updated by future classes.

Jacobsen encourages the students to evaluate the narratives and take a critical, scholarly approach to find how various cultural values are represented in the texts.

MCC student Eric Breault finds the concept of the class appealing.

“It’s absolutely up my alley,” Breault said. “My major is philosophy of religion so the whole idea of questioning and discussing these things really intrigues me.”

ENH277AH: Facing Fear: Horror Narrative is offered Tuesdays and Thursdays during spring semester. Visit <http://mc.maricopa.edu/> and click on “class schedule” at the top for more information.



English instructor Craig Jacobsen incorporates a zombie studies wiki website into his genre studies class about the horror narrative.



Newsbytes

¿Qué es MTVtr3s?

In conjunction with Fall Bash, MTV RoadTrip visited our campus along with their sister station, MTVtr3s. MTVtr3s serves a college age Latino population that has grown up with both Hispanic and American cultures. MTVtr3s, reporter Lady La took a tour of the new planetarium with MCC astronomy professor, Kevin Healy. The interview will air in the near future in 5, 60 second spots on the PHX 411 and be broadcast on Cox cable, channel 147, Direct TV, channel 6 or full power channel 43.

Recognitions

--Cisco 10th Year Anniversary: MCC’s Department of Business and Information Systems Network Academy recently participated in a Celebratory Salute recognizing the 10th anniversary of the Cisco Networking Academy. MCC CATC coordinator, Mark Anderson, coordinated the event with Cisco.

Seven alumni from the academy, three of which were from our own MCC Network Academy, shared their personal success stories. Our own residential faculty member Bob Samson was included in the alumni success stories.

Representing Mesa Community College were: Dr. Shouan Pan, President Mesa Community College; Rodney Holmes, Provost for the Downtown Center; Larry Thacker, Dean of Occupational Programs; Linda D. Collins, Department of Business and Information Systems Chair and Director of B&II; Mark Anderson, CATC Director, Occupational Program Director Network Academy, and Residential Faculty Member; Bob Samson, Residential Faculty Member, Network Academy; and Mark Lierley, Network Academy faculty member.



-- NAACP Education Award: Nina Robinson, MCC’s director of Multicultural Services, received the East Valley NAACP Education Award at the recent NAACP “Building Bridges to Equality” program. Nina received the award for her commitment to making a positive difference in the lives of all the students served through her office. Nina is well known for the development of the annual Diversity Leadership Camp where she has immersed more than 450 students in activities designed to foster cultural awareness while developing positive cross cultural relationships.

