

## Governor Napolitano focuses on education, anticipates bright future



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Governor Napolitano greets F. Rockne Arnett, (middle), President of the East Valley Partnership and MCC alumnus, and Larry K. Christiansen, MCC President.

Governor Janet Napolitano offered recognition and support to Mesa Community College in a packed room of East Valley community, educational, and business leaders. The 2004 East Valley Breakfast with the Governor, sponsored by the East Valley Partnership, the East Valley Chambers of Commerce Alliance, and Mesa Community College, occurred the day after President George W. Bush's visit to MCC. Napolitano applauded the college for achieving national recognition.

The governor's remarks focused on changes that have occurred over the past year, noting "What a difference a year makes." Accomplishments included the state's success in balancing the 2003 and 2004 budgets without cutting education, the approved expansion of Phoenix Civic Plaza, and approval to fund research at Arizona's state universities. The year was not without its challenges, however, with incidences such as the break in the gas pipeline and the Aspen and Kinishba fires being mentioned.

Napolitano then looked to the future, stating that Arizona is moving forward and doing things that will position the state well. Education remains her top priority, focusing on the full range of educational opportunity from pre-kindergarten through bachelor's degrees. Napolitano spoke at length about plans to initiate all-day kindergarten statewide, noting that research indicates that all day kindergarten increases achievement, leaves children better prepared for first grade (a benefit which follows them throughout their school years), and ultimately boosts the economy. Other issues noted included economic development, working to balance growth and natural resources through a statewide drought management plan, and the military.

The presentation concluded with a question and answer session that covered issues such as small business and transportation taxes, use and research of solar energy, and funding for Arizona's state universities.

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# JAN the 30 '04 MESA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

# Bulletin

## President Bush visits MCC



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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 and staff 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 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

*continued on inside, see President Bush*



*continued from front, President Bush*

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 the 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.

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!"

## MCC's Health Improvement Center, a community effort

It was 1978. Rumblings about equal access in public places for disabled citizens were just beginning.

Perhaps ahead of their time, MCC coaches and physical education instructors Carvel Jackson and Joe Nix approached the college's new president, Theo Heap, with a request for a new weight room – plus a facility that would provide exercise opportunities for disabled students.

Carvel and Joe's hopes were realized. In the fall of 1982, the Health Improvement Center (HIC) opened its doors at MCC's Southern and Dobson campus. The building reflects a college/community vision to provide a health and fitness resource for previously under-served community members.

Theo Heap remembers well the details of the Center's beginnings. As MCC's president, he contacted the Maricopa Community College District (MCCD) about funding such a project. Basically, the District said that a facility with specialized equipment for disabled students would be very expensive and there simply were no funds available for this purpose.

Unwilling to give up on the idea of providing for the exercise needs of MCC's disabled students, Carvel, Joe, and Theo decided to proceed on their own. They received permission from MCCD to move forward. The three men contacted local businesses and contractors, who committed to providing building materials. The Mesa Baseline Rotary Club adopted the Center as a special service project, and a crew of volunteer construction workers provided the manpower. Wearing coveralls and steel-toed boots were MCC coaches, administrators, maintenance personnel, students, and athletes. When workout equipment vendors learned that the Center was being built through donations and free labor, they donated much of the specialized equipment or offered it at a very reduced price.

"Without dedicated, resourceful, and hard-working people like Carvel Jackson and Joe Nix, MCC's HIC would never have been built," Theo said. He appreciates and applauds MCC coaches and

instructors (past and current) for their dedicated service to disabled students: Lot Christensen, Ed VanWinkle, Jim Frye, Frank Egenhoff, Bob Minitti, Paul Widmer, Selmer Olson, Dave Gerlach, Jim Haggerty, Roger Shmuck, Ken Stites, Allen Benedict, and Denver Latimore.

### HIC gets a lift

A typical semester draws 600 students to MCC's Health Improvement Center (HIC), according to Jim Haggerty, coordinator for the HIC, Fitness Center, and Group Activity Center at MCC's Southern and Dobson campus. This number represents athletes, non-athletes, and disabled students.

In time, such high traffic causes a faded and worn look to an interior space. During the winter break, MCC's fitness facilities installed new carpet throughout and increased their inventory of the latest and most advanced exercise equipment, such as "ellipticals," which provide a great cardiovascular workout.



*Historical photos courtesy MCC archives*

*Coaches build muscle while preparing the HIC foundation. Three at left: Unknown, Joe Nix, Theo Heap. Two in center: Carvel Jackson (front), Allen Benedict (back). Four at right: clockwise from left: Unknown, Bob Minitti, Ed VanWinkle, Unknown.*



*MCC coaches, administrators, staff, and faculty work to build the Health Improvement Center after hours (1982).*



*Former MCC president Theo Heap works with the volunteer construction crew (1982) and today works in MCC at Red Mountain's Fitness Center.*