

New resource for ESL students

MCC has a new service on campus this semester. In January the English as a Second Language (ESL) Student Support Center opened its doors for business. Located in the lobby of the Administration Building, it also serves as a welcome center for first-time visitors to MCC.

The Center provides an excellent service to ESL students by increasing their knowledge of MCC and presenting college as a viable option. In addition, all enrollment services – admission, enrollment, and advisement – are offered to the students at this one convenient location.

MCC's new service was developed as a result of surveying the demographics of the college and surrounding community. The greatest demographic change is in the Hispanic population, whose numbers are increasing. Jesse DeAnda, Senior Associate Dean of Student and Community Services, said " ...this is where we can make the greatest immediate impact."

Many of the Center's patrons have heard about its services through the outreach and recruitment efforts of employees who work there. The Center's team members are Elva de Marin, Daniel Zabaneh, and Betty Serrano. They provide tours of the campus to familiarize students with the surroundings and to show them where to get student IDs, parking permits, etc. Student Support Center employees want to give the students a taste of college life.

For more information about ESL Student Support Services, please call 461-7898.



Elva de Marin and Betty Serrano help a student look for classes at the ESL Student Support Center.

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MCC plans for the future

The Maricopa Community Colleges Governing Board is slated to formally approve a \$951 million bond request early this summer for placement on the November 2, 2004 ballot. The request is for new capital dollars for all 10 Maricopa Community Colleges. New capital dollars will be used for new buildings, refurbishing old facilities, upgrading and replacement of technology and equipment, additional parking, and ongoing upgrades of security equipment and systems.

Mesa Community College's portion of the bond monies will

be \$111 million. Our projects – like those of our sister colleges – are based on our master plan for 2002–2022. MCC's master plan was created over a two-year period from discussions, dialogues, and input from our internal college community as well as from our external partners and advisors. Planning for two decades is a difficult and challenging responsibility. The end result of two years of focused planning, however, is that MCC will be able to meet the educational needs of our community, which is one of the fastest growing communities in our nation.

In the next couple of weeks a packet of information about the MCCD bond request will be mailed to your home. The packet will include information from a districtwide perspective as well as specifics related to the monies MCC will receive. I hope you will take the time to read all the materials. It is part of our responsibility to be well informed so that we can inform and answer questions from our families, friends, and neighbors.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call my office at 461-7300.

- Larry K. Christiansen



MCC students earn All-USA academic honors

Not just one but *three* Mesa Community College students have been named to the All-USA Academic Team. MCC's three honorees competed with 1,600 community college students nationwide to achieve this recognition. "It's like winning the Super Bowl for academics," said Duane Oakes, Phi Theta Kappa advisor at MCC. "This is the best we have ever done in the history of Mesa Community College!"

On April 26 *USA Today* announced the names of 60 students who earned positions on one of three All-USA Academic teams (20 students per team). MCC students Joseph Luchenta and Kelley Stewart are on the first All-USA team, and Christian Turner was named to the second. Students who achieve this honor represent the very best in scholarship, leadership, and service on American community college campuses. The All-USA Academic Team recognition is sponsored by Phi Theta Kappa, *USA*

Today, and the American Association of Community Colleges.

MCC's brightest and best are not unaccustomed to the spotlight. Joseph was recently named Arizona's New Century Scholar, the top two-year-college student in the state, and Kelley was awarded a Guistwhite Scholarship, which recognizes the top 15 students in Phi Theta Kappa worldwide.

The students' achievements go beyond academics into service and leadership. In the past year, MCC's three All-USA honorees have collectively committed more than 3,000 hours to community service through the AmeriCorps program. Among the organizations benefiting from their volunteer service are the American Cancer Society, American Red Cross, Phoenix Youth at Risk, and the Mesa Fire Department. All three students are in the MCC Honors program and are Phi Theta Kappa officers.

PTK member goes global



At the 2004 Phi Theta Kappa International Convention in early April, MCC student Zahid Arab was elected to serve as International Vice President, Division IV. This is the very first time an MCC student has been elected to a PTK international office. Throughout the state's history, only three officers have been from Arizona, the most recent serving in 1986.

Zahid prepared for his journey to Division IV Vice President by first serving in the office of Arizona Regional President. While campaigning for the international position, he delivered a speech to a crowd of more than 3,000 people. During the next year, Zahid will travel to the various PTK chapters in his region – places like Canada, Hawaii, and the entire western United States. PTK's international president and four vice presidents will undergo extensive training in preparation for the challenges they will meet in their new roles.

Even though Zahid began a year ago to focus on serving at the international level, the excitement of actually winning the Division IV position temporarily overwhelmed him. "I don't remember going from my seat to the stage," Zahid said. "Only five students in the country wear this medallion, and I'm one of them."

For more information, visit www.ptk.org/directories/intofficers.htm.

MCC end-of-the-year happenings

Don't forget to check out the events calendar online at we.mc.maricopa.edu/events to view end-of-the-year activities. Don't miss out on all the fun!

Nursing shortage spurs innovative solutions

Even with 2.7 million registered nurses, America struggles to meet the demand for health care professionals. According to MCC Nursing Department chair Myrna Eshelman, it's going to get worse before it gets better. Our country's well-publicized nursing shortage is expected to "peak" in 2020.

But Myrna and her colleagues are not just sitting back waiting for the peak to pass. In recent months MCC's Nursing Dept. has developed several new programs to entice people into nursing – or back into nursing.

The newest program is "Enfermeras en Escalera," scheduled to begin in fall 2004. It identifies highly motivated foreign-educated nurses and helps them to

improve their skills in reading, writing, and speaking English. It also prepares them to pass the licensing exam through the Arizona State Board of Nursing.

Information on this program was released in early April, and eligible nurses responded almost immediately. "We have been overwhelmed," Myrna said. "We've already had over 300 calls (mid-April)." At present there are openings for only 20 students, but funding is pending for 20 more.

Other MCC Nursing Department programs are in the planning stages or already enjoying success:

- An online nurse refresher course to draw rural nurses, in particular, back into the workforce.
- A Certified Nursing Assistant program for people who speak Spanish as their native language (to address the need for Spanish-speaking nurses).
- A fast-track program designed for firefighters who want to become nurses. "The interest is there," Myrna said. "Firefighters retire after 20 years, then want to get through a nursing program quickly." A similar program in Texas moves paramedics into nursing in one year.

Developing these programs requires time and money, which means seeking funding partners or writing grants, but Myrna thinks it's worth the effort. "Adding even a single nurse into the workforce is huge," Myrna said. "We are fighting the nursing shortage one nurse at a time."

