In wake of recent racism, MCC forum digs into its roots

Middlesex C.C. recognized for diversity

A group of Middlesex Community College students join President James Mabry, center rear, and his wife, Judy, second from right, at the recent Bedford Day 2015 Parade.
"We see these transformations take place, we foster this success, and our work transforms us."

Middlesex Community College President James Mabry, speaking about students in his inaugural address.

James Mabry enjoys the moment as he is inaugurated Thursday as Middlesex Community College’s fourth president. The ceremony was held on the Bedford campus. Watch video at lowellsun.com.

Mabry vows to build on MCC student access, success

Institution’s fourth president inaugurated

By Grant Walker
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BEDFORD — James Mabry was inaugurated Thursday as Middlesex Community College’s fourth president, pledging to build on what he called community college “twin pillars of access and success.”

Mabry spoke about the college’s dedication to closing the achievement gap and giving opportunities to students who he said “transform their lives against the odds.”

“Many of them arrive troubled (and) uncertain,” he said, “but they have also found a place where they can find their way, where they can become leaders among their peers, within their families and throughout their communities in ways they never imagined.”

“We see these transformations take place, we foster these transformations,” he said.

Middlesex Community College President James Mabry greets students Denia Taylor of Lowell and Tucker Middlebrook of Andover after the ceremony.
Mabry inaugurated as Middlesex’s fourth president

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this success, and our work transforms us," he said.
The ceremony took place in a tent on the quad of the Bedford campus, and Mabry entered as part of a long procession of faculty, staff, students and others who were led by members of a file and drum corps.

With his wife, Judith, two daughters, siblings and close friends seated in the first row, Mabry thanked those who supported him personally and those who helped him professionally. A former department chair from his first teaching job at Dutchess Community College in New York was the keynote speaker, and Mabry's boss from his previous job, at Mesa Community College in Arizona, also attended.

George Stevens, who is now retired from the Hudson Valley college, said he remembers listening from his office adjacent to Mabry's as Mabry would dedicate countless hours to tutoring students who needed extra help. "Jim believes so deeply in the community college mission that he wanted to make a difference beyond a single classroom," Stevens said. "Jim is still enamored in the community college vision," he said later.

Mabry began his career as a high school social studies teacher in New York City, and his studies have also taken him to London and Tokyo. He attended Bowling Green State University in Ohio on a swimming scholarship, and remains an active bicyclist and competes in triathlons.

Mabry has spent nearly his entire career in community colleges, and has said he determined early in his time teaching that he had found his passion. In his job at Mesa Community College, he was the vice president for academic affairs.

Mabry was appointed in December, and began at Middlesex in February. He succeeds Carole Cowan, the Middlesex president for 24 years who oversaw the college's growth both in Bedford and Lowell, with a full-time equivalency of 13,000 students. When she became president in 1990, the college was still in scattered locations across Bedford and Burlington.

"Her strong leadership allowed this college to flourish and be the trailblazing leader it is today," he said.

Mabry's tenure already includes overseeing a planned new science, technology, engineering and math building on the Bedford campus, and a performing arts space at the former Boston & Maine building in downtown Lowell.

Mabry said he will incorporate diverse voices from faculty and staff to improve the college, and will continue working closely with community partners and donors to build a stronger community. The college will use the latest technology to engage students and foster creativity, he said, and use data and analytics to improve teaching.

"We will work together to embrace innovation, encourage entrepreneurship, and promote change that will help continue our mission of transforming lives through education," he said.

Follow Grant Weiker on Twitter and Tout @Sun_GrantWeiker.
James Hicks, acting chairman of the MCC Board of Trustees, presents the Middlesex Community College Medallion to President James Mabry.

Middlesex Community College President James Mabry listens to his former colleague, George Stevens, professor emeritus at Dutchess Community College, speak at his Inauguration Thursday.

Middlesex Community College President James Mabry with his wife Judy and daughters Sara, second from left, and Tess Mabry, after the inauguration ceremony.
Joseph Wiggins addresses the crowd at a forum on racism at Middlesex Community College's downtown Lowell campus Wednesday. Wiggins said that when he moved here from the Baltimore area, he heard a lot of people saying the "N" word. See video at lowellsun.com.

In wake of recent racism, MCC forum digs into its roots

By Amelia Pak-Harvey
apak harvey@lowellsun.com

LOWELL — Middlesex Community College students called for action to address racism in their community, sharing their thoughts at a school-sponsored forum that brought students together after two racial incidents near both of its campuses.

The two events occurred within days of each other — one in Bedford, where someone spray-painted over the word “black” in a “Black Lives Matter” banner hung from the First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church. The banner later had “all” written over it instead.

Another occurred at Lowell High School, when a racially charged group text message went viral after students elected an African American class president.

Seeing these events, history professor David Kalivas wanted to organize a forum to address racism’s sociological and cultural roots.

“We’re here today because this is an important issue. It always has been for some time,” he told the crowd of roughly 100 attendees. “But sometimes it’s an issue, racism in our community, that we don’t think about until an event occurs.”

Kalivas said he asked a Lowell High School representative to come to the forum, but no one attended.

Sociology professor Binns explained that race is socially constructed by a person’s outside appearance, but actually has no biological basis.

“All those outside appearances have developed long after basic human qualities have developed in the evolutionary scheme,” she said. “So there is really no genetic basis for race. As a matter of fact, there is more genetic variation within a race, as we define it, than between two races.”

Erem ruled off at a suggestion to provide examples of institutional racism.

One study found that a white person with a criminal record has a better chance of getting a callback in a job application.

Please see RACISM/4
Racism forum held at MCC

RACISM/From Page 1

than a black person without one.

She also cited U.S. Census data from 2009 that broke out the percent of families in poverty based on race — 9.4 percent were white, 12.5 percent Asian, 25 percent Latino, and 25.8 percent were African American.

"You can't tell me these people are all lazy, that's why they're poor," he said.

"One thing that's common in all these categories is they have been institutionally discriminated against."

Rev. John Gibbons, pastor of the Bedford church whose banner was vandalized, said the church put the banner up just as it puts other messages up in support of peace or LGBTQ people.

He argued why it's important to specify "black" and not just "all" in the "Black Lives Matter" slogan, which has come to represent a movement for African Americans killed by police.

"If you're going to say, 'I love you' to somebody, you might say, 'I love all people and all people include you, so I don't really need to say "I love you" because "I love you" includes everybody," he said. "You try that with somebody you love the next time and see how it works out."

Forum attendees offered their suggestions to address racism, sharing their own experiences with race.

Joseph Wiggins, an African American, said when he came here from Baltimore he heard a lot of people saying the "N" word.

He referenced LHS Class President-elect Anye Nkimberg, who was at the center of the LHS racial texting incident.

"All that stuff with this kid and all that, I grew up seeing that sort of stuff, so that wasn't something new to me," he said.

Black people, he said, just want opportunity — something that Nkimberg will have to fight for like others.

"Me coming from Baltimore, I grew up fighting all the time," he said. "Fighting not only against other races but for opportunity."

Student Jai Jasset argued that racism isn't just a black and white issue.

"It's everybody, racism is all colors, everybody," he said. "It can happen, you know what I mean, everywhere. It's not just black and white."

MCC student Christine Kalemera argued that the community should come together to solve the problem.

"What affects one group is going to affect everybody else," she said. "If one group doesn't want to do anything about it, it's going to continue and spread everywhere. Nobody's going to want to figure it out."

Julius Sekayi, an MCC student who works with youth at the Boys and Girls Club, said change starts with the youth.

"Working with the youth, you see kids growing up not knowing what racism is," he said. "I feel like all of this starts from the youth, because they're going to grow up learning to do something. Whatever we teach them, they're going to reflect off of us."

Follow Amelia on Twitter and Tout @AmeliaPakHarvey.
LOWELL CANDIDATES ON THE ISSUES

Council hopefuls grade city’s relationships with the colleges

(Editor’s note: One in a series of articles on issues in the Lowell city election. Answers have been edited for brevity. Repeated attempts to obtain answers from candidate Cheth Khim were unsuccessful.)

Question: How do you feel about the city’s relationship with UMass Lowell and Middlesex Community College?

This week’s questions/9

Do you envision the colleges having a different or stronger role in the city?

Corey Belanger: The city has a tremendous relationship with UML and MCC. We are constantly working together.

Please see COUNCIL/9
Jordan Gys: I think MCC and UML have been extremely beneficial to the city. Increasing our partnership with the colleges will only benefit us more. I'd be interested in seeing how we can use UMass Lowell as a resource when figuring out a plan for a new high school. UML is after all one of the top engineering schools in the area.

Martin Hogan: UMass Lowell and Middlesex Community College have brought much to our city over the years, however, I feel that both of these institutions could bring more opportunities and assistance to and work closer with the city. We need to urge UMass and MCC to help develop and enrich all of our neighborhoods, instead of just the downtown areas and the small sections of the North and South Campuses. I would like to see greater offerings for training and continuing education opportunities for our Lowell residents.

Edward Kennedy: The city has a good relationship with the UMass Lowell and Middlesex Community College.

John Leahy: I feel that we have a strong and healthy relationship and it is only getting better. We are collaborating so many different levels right now that I only see good things in our future.

James Leary: The current relationship is strong and has many opportunities to continue to grow positively for the City of Lowell, UMass Lowell and Middlesex Community College. The three should continue working to make Lowell an education center as a top priority. I envision Lowell to be the next Cambridge and 495 technology corridor. Graduate students should be encouraged to jobs' and startups into the city they were educated. This will in turn work to grow our tax base, easy our residential tax base and provide employment opportunities.

Joe Mendonca: The colleges have been a positive factor in the community. I would like to see more economic spin-off in the future.

Rita Mercier: The city has fine relationships with the colleges. It was proven time and again when UMass came before the City Council for parking, zoning changes and property taken, and this council supported all their requests. This is a great partnership. I feel the colleges are as strong as the city as an equal partner.

Robert Merrill: The City of Lowell, its current manager, staff and council have a blind eye. UML has way too much control of the city. MCC not so much. The council is ignoring the fact that many lowincome families are becoming homeless because of higher property associated with UML purchasing property and taking it off the tax rolls.

David Conway: UMass Lowell and Middlesex Community College are major contributors to the overall success of our city. Just a few of their contributions include: strong partnerships with the public schools, dual-enrollment programs, cultural events, and Division 1 sports. In the future, I would like to see more students from the college and university who could provide support to our students throughout the grades in our public schools. The future of collaboration among the public schools, UMass Lowell and Middlesex Community College will continue to be strong and result in a better Lowell.

Rodney Elliott: I feel the relationship has been productive and the relationship benefits both the city and the colleges. They have been a large part of the revitalization of the city and I hope it continues. Colleges bring jobs and students to Lowell and the downtown. Colleges also bring resources into the city and we've been able to consolidate these resources with the city and get a better bang for the buck, public safety, marketing, etc.
Dan Rourke: UMass Lowell and Middlesex Community College have been pillars in our community and have positively contributed to the vibrancy of our city for decades. Hosting these incredible institutions presents many economic opportunities to the city and it is in our best interest to take advantage of chances to partner with UMass and MCC whenever possible. Not only does each school bring thousands of students (as well as their families) to the city where they frequent the many restaurants and businesses Lowell has to offer, they are also centers for innovation and culture. For example, UMass Lowell's Massachusetts Medical Device Development Center in the Hamilton Canal District offers smaller medical device companies access to the some of the best researchers in the country and Middlesex Community College is transforming the historic Boston & Maine Building in downtown into an academic arts center. Clearly, UMass Lowell and Middlesex Community College already have strong roles in the city but as we continue to move our city forward, I believe it is essential that we build upon the strong relationship we already have and work together to create even greater opportunities for residents, businesses, and our city as a whole.

William Samaras:
When you think of the university and the community college, you must think of them the same way as you think of a natural resource. Lowell was created as a city based on an innovative idea that utilized a natural resource, the Merrimack River, to serve as the power for the manufacturing of textiles. Today's power is information—so we must use the university and the community college to create an enlightened workforce for the 21st century economy. These institutions play a very important role in making Lowell a city for the future.

Paul Ratha Yem:
UMass Lowell and Middlesex Community College are tremendous assets to the City. I know of a Cambodian family who sends their children from Cambodia to attend UMass Lowell and instead of having their children live in school dormitory, the parents bought a house in Lowell for their children to live while attending school. Middlesex Community College also has a working relationship with the American University of Phnom Penh, Cambodia, where students come to MCC to study in an exchange program.
Grants will go toward MCC student success

Middlesex Community College has been awarded two grants from the U.S. Department of Education to continue funding two highly successful TRIO student-support programs targeting low-income, first-generation-to-college and disabled students.

The TRIO Student Success Program — which serves 200 students who are low-income, first-generation and/or disabled — has been awarded a $311,000 grant for the 2015-16 academic year.

The TRIO Program for Student Achievement, which provides services to 100 students with documented disabilities, who may also be low-income and/or first-generation, has been awarded $240,000 for the same period. It is anticipated that both grants will continue for five years.

MCC's collegiate TRIO programs provide comprehensive and coordinated support services, including individual tutoring, academic and career advising, and assistance with transfer and financial aid. Their shared objectives are to enhance academic skills while increasing retention, graduation rates, and transfer to a Bachelor's degree.

"Our Student Success Program and Program for Student Achievement are model programs that have some of the best student-success outcomes — and serve our most at-risk students," Dean of Students Pamela Flaherty said. "These grants will enable us to continue to provide intensive services to underprepared students to promote academic achievement, persistence, and to facilitate transfer and career services."

MCC alum Yerkely Gomez participated in the TRIO Student Success Program and graduated from Middlesex in May. Last spring, the college named him to 29 Who Shine, a statewide honor recognizing one top student from each of Massachusetts' 29 public colleges and universities.

"The Student Success Program has truly been a key element in my successful journey at Middlesex," said Gomez, who plans to attend UMass Amherst in the fall. "Through TRIO, I received help registering for classes every semester, went on college visits, and got extra help with the transfer process. The financial-aid workshops, career and personal advising, and many other services have provided me with the tools I need to be successful and thrive, no matter where I go."

Current student Jacqueline Krozy, who is enrolled in the Program for Student Achievement, has also benefited from TRIO.

"Participating in TRIO has helped me gain both personal and professional connections, and further develop my communication and professional skills," Krozy said. "TRIO has also helped prepare me for employment interviews, working in groups, and improved my self-advocacy and decision-making skills. All these services have aided in my academic success at Middlesex, and I'm sure will help me succeed at UMass Lowell, when I pursue a Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Accounting."

For more information about MCC's collegiate TRIO programs, contact Flaherty at flahertyp@middlesex.mass.edu or 781-280-3631.
Four from MCC part of state’s Academic Team

Middlesex Community College students Puiyee Lo of Belmont, Kenneth Pike of Lowell, Aqeel Saad of Newton and Pisey Teng of Lowell were recently recognized as Outstanding Two-Year College Students and members of the 2015 All-Massachusetts Academic team during a ceremony at the Statehouse.

Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society for two-year colleges, community-college presidents and community-college state associations, annually co-sponsors the All-State Academic teams.

Originally from Singapore, Lo is enrolled in MCC’s Paralegal Studies transfer-degree program. She has been an active volunteer for many legal organizations, including the Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders, the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and the MCC Law Center. She is vice president of the MCC chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, and serves as a student representative for MCC’s Paralegal Advisory Board. After graduation, she plans to transfer to Suffolk University and intends to go to law school.

Pike is enrolled in MCC’s Liberal Arts & Sciences Program with a Concentration in Psychology. He is a member of the Commonwealth Honors Program and has received four MCC Foundation Scholarships. He is considering earning a second degree at MCC in Human Services. For more than 20 years, Pike has served as an active volunteer within the HIV/AIDS community and has served as co-chair of the Lowell Community Health Center’s Consumer Advisory Board.

Originally from Iraq, Saad is enrolled in MCC’s Engineering Program. He serves as a peer tutor in the Math Center and recently received an MCC Foundation Merit Award for the 2014-15 academic year. After graduation, he plans to continue his education in the field of electronic and computer-system engineering.

Teng is enrolled in MCC’s Nursing Program. She serves as a science tutor in MCC’s Academic Center for Enrichment and recently received a Mavis Leno Scholarship from the MCC Foundation. She previously served as secretary for Phi Theta Kappa National, a supplemental-instruction leader and a First-Year Experience Peer Mentor, and was a member for the Paul H. Sullivan Leadership Institute. After graduating, she plans to transfer to UMass Lowell to pursue a Bachelor’s degree in Nursing.
VISION PROJECT PERFORMANCE INCENTIVE FUND

Middlesex Community College wins grant to boost STEM success

Middlesex Community College and UMass Lowell were awarded a $100,000 Vision Project Performance Incentive Fund grant from the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education to increase the college completion rates of underrepresented, low-income and first generation students. The collaborative project seeks to improve the academic success of students in STEM majors at UML who have transferred from MCC.

The grant will use analytics to identify patterns related to grades and college completion rates among science, technology, math and engineering students. "At Middlesex, we want all our students to be successful. That means completing their programs of study, graduating, or transferring to bachelor's degree programs," says Philip Sisson, Provost and Vice President of Academic & Student Affairs. "This partnership grant with UMass Lowell will help students reach their goals by enabling us to use predictive analytics to promote successful transfer and completion of STEM programs at both colleges."

The project targets STEM students who complete a full year with GPAs between 2.0 and 3.0, yet fail to complete programs on schedule, take more credits than necessary, or leave before graduating. Using predictive analytics, UML will identify gateway courses for STEM majors at Middlesex that have historically been linked to lower rates of completion at UML.

This information will be the basis for the identification of students at moderate-to-high risk of non-completion. Targeted interventions - such as tutoring, supplemental instruction, and Bridge programs - will then be designed and delivered to those students at the earliest indicated point, ideally within 15 to 45 credits.

"Ultimately, the results of this analysis will inform curriculum and course-outcomes alignment in key success-marker courses for STEM disciplines," says Sisson.

Information: middlesex.mass.e

BRIEFLY

Middlesex Community College to offer human resources course in Bedford

Middlesex Community College will offer a human resources management course on the Bedford campus at 591 Springs Road. Classes will meet from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturdays and 1:30-5 p.m. Mondays.

The Corporate and Community Education & Training course offers an overview of human resource roles and responsibilities.

"The business world is changing every day - whether you are a manager or a regular employee, it's critical to know the rules, regulations and rights of everyone in the workplace," says Patricia Morrow, course instructor. "This certificate program gives you tools you can apply immediately to the workplace."

The 15-hour, noncredit introductory course will provide participants with critical knowledge to help reduce potential lawsuits and improve the ability to handle challenging HR issues. The course is ideal for those who are just starting out in the human resource profession, small business owners, or those who are looking for an effective way to improve their employee management skills.

Topics include human resources management, employment law, recruitment and selection, compensation and benefits, employee development and performance management.

In cooperation with the Society for Human Resource Management, a certificate and 1.5 continuing education credits will be awarded upon successful completion of all hours. Partial credit is not awarded. The cost of this course is $595 and includes all SHRM study materials. Register: 1-800-619-3434.
BRIEFLY

Middlesex Community College receives honors for diversity

Middlesex Community College was recognized as an exemplary college committed to diversity by Minority Access Inc. at its 16th annual National Role Models Conference, held recently in Baltimore.

Middlesex President James C. Mabry accepted the award, along with Darcy Orellana, assistant director of Human Resources and Affirmative Action Officer. President Mabry addressed the conference on behalf of the colleges and universities honored. Congressman Elijah E. Cummings and Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake also spoke as part of the program.

"The Minority Access National Role Model recognition is the result of MCC's college-wide commitment to diversity, and to our ongoing work to promote student success," said Orellana.

"Everyone at MCC shares responsibility to ensure that our programs, practices and policies are designed to foster success for underserved and underrepresented populations. We are fully engaged in addressing achievement and opportunity gaps."

Minority Access is a nonprofit organization committed to increasing diversity, decreasing disparities and reducing incidences of environmental injustices. It assists colleges and universities, as well as the federal government and corporations, in implementing programs and providing services to recruit, enhance and retain underserved and underrepresented populations.

CREDITS

Middlesex Community College offers winter break courses on Bedford campus

Submitted to the Minuteman

Students can earn credits during the winter break with Middlesex Community College’s new January Winter Session course offerings.

During the normal break between fall and spring semesters, students can now take classes in a condensed, three-week format. Winter Session registration begins Oct. 19, and classes run Jan. 4-22, 2016, on the Bedford campus or online.

“The taking class during the winter break is a great way to complete degree requirements and stay on track toward graduation,” said Marilyn Gallagan, dean of admissions. “Winter session classes cover the same content, maintain the same academic standards and contain the same number of in-class instructional hours as courses scheduled during the traditional 15-week semester.”

Taking advantage of the time between semesters can help students reduce their course load during the spring semester or complete a course that won’t fit into their fall or spring schedules. It also offers students a way to study one subject for a short period of time, Gallagan added.

Winter Session students can earn credits in various subjects, including humanities, science, social science, history, English, math and more.

For information: 800-818-3434, middlesex.mass.edu/wintersession.
Middlesex C.C. recognized for diversity

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Middlesex President James Mabry accepted the award, along with Darcy Orellana, assistant director of Human Resources/Affirmative Action Officer.

“The Minority Access National Role Model recognition is the result of MCC’s collegewide commitment to diversity and to our ongoing work to promote student success,” Orellana said. “At Middlesex, our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion can be found everywhere — inside and outside the classroom, and in our community connections. “Everyone at MCC shares responsibility to ensure that our programs, practices and policies are designed to foster success for underserved and under-represented populations,” Orellana added. “We are fully engaged in addressing achievement and opportunity gaps.”

Minority Access is a nonprofit organization committed to increasing diversity, decreasing disparities, and reducing incidences of environmental injustices. It assists colleges and universities, as well as the federal government and corporations, in implementing programs and providing services to recruit, enhance, and retain underserved and underrepresented populations.

MCC, UML to share $100,000 grant

Middlesex Community College and UMass Lowell have received a $100,000 Vision Project Performance Incentive Fund grant from the state Department of Higher Education to use predictive analytics to identify specific patterns related to grades and completion among STEM students.

This use of analytics will be aimed at increasing the college-going and college-completion rates of under-represented, low-income and first-generation college students.

In particular, this collaborative project seeks to improve the academic success and completion rates of under-represented students in high-demand science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) majors at UML who have transferred from MCC.

“At Middlesex, we want all our students to be successful,” said Philip Siison, provost and vice president of Academic & Student Affairs. “That means completing their programs of study, graduating and/or transferring to Bachelor’s degree programs.”

This partnership grant will help students reach their goals by enabling us to use predictive analytics to promote successful transfer and completion of STEM programs at both colleges.”

In particular, the project targets STEM students who complete a full year with grade-point averages between 2.0 and 3.0, yet fail to complete programs on schedule, take more credits than necessary, or leave before graduating, Sisson said.

Middlesex Community College was recently recognized as an exemplary college committed to diversity by Minority Access Inc. From left are Minority Access President Andrea Mickie; Darcy Orellana, MCC’s assistant director of human resources/Affirmative Action officer; and Middlesex President James Mabry.

Using predictive analytics, UML will identify select gateway/success-marker courses for STEM majors at Middlesex that have historically been linked to lower rates of completion at UML.

That information will be the basis for the identification of students at moderate-to-high risk of noncompletion. Targeted interventions — such as tutoring, supplemental instruction and Bridge programs — will then be designed and delivered to those students at the earliest indicated point, ideally within 15 to 45 credits.

For more information about Middlesex STEM programs, visit www.middlesex.mass.edu/steam. For more information on DHE strategic initiatives to boost college awareness and readiness, visit www.mass.edu.
Middlesex C.C joins Bedford Day Parade

A group of Middlesex Community College students join President James Mabry, center rear, and his wife, Judy, second from right, at the recent Bedford Day 2015 Parade.

GRADUATION DAY: The most recent group to participated in the LifeLinks Urban Youth Collaborative Program graduated from the program Aug. 14. The program was created to introduce young adults to the field of human services by providing an opportunity to enjoy paid summer employment to attend Middlesex Community College to earn three college credits. LifeLinks is in its 23rd year as a provider of the program.
Yary Livan, a Cambodian refugee, won a National Heritage Fellowship for his ceramics work.

MIRACLE OF CREATIVITY

Yary Livan’s award-winning art, life story set him apart

By Malcolm Gay
GLOBE STAFF

LOWELI — A man with large glasses, a tattered polo shirt, and clay-covered hands, Yary Livan can perhaps be forgiven his disbelief at a recent phone call. Until a few years ago, the Cambodian refugee had supported himself working a mix of odd jobs — helping out at a machine shop, baking pies, and covering shifts at Walmart — while spending his spare time working with clay at a home studio.

"His 'studio' was in the basement of his single-family home," said Maggie Holtzberg, a manager for the Massachusetts Cultural Council’s Folk Arts & Heritage Program. “There wasn’t a staircase down there. There was a hole in the floor — and a ladder — totally precarious.”

Now, the caller at the other end of the line was telling him the National Endowment for the Arts had bestowed upon him a 2015 National Heritage Fellowship — an award that carries a $25,000 prize. Livan accepts the honor Thursday in Washington.
Cambodian refugee’s ceramic artwork garners honors

The master ceramicist Yary Livan in 2012 built this Cambodian smokeless wood-fire kiln.

**CEAMANIST**

Continued from Page B1

“They say, ok, congratulations, you get an award,” said Livan, who is believed to be one of only three Cambodian master ceramists to survive the Khmer Rouge’s bloody reign. “Tell my wife. She says, ‘Oh! Don’t believe it. Somebody hacked you.”

The son of a fashion designer, Livan entered the Royal University of Fine Arts in Phnom Penh in 1971. He had hoped to study drawing and painting, but the university assigned him to ceramics, where he learned the traditional art of carving, wheel-throwing, and — significantly — how to construct a wood-burning kiln.

His passion for art became a liability when the Khmer Rouge swept into power in 1975, embarking on its systematic slaughter of artists and intellectuals: a genocide that would ultimately exterminate some 2 million people.

Forced into physical labor building dams, Livan survived on three cups of watery rice soup a day — a diet he says he supplemented with leaves, “little snakes” and crabs he surreptitiously plucked from the countryside.

All the while, he kept his arts training a secret.

“Drawing was OK, because it was a really simple skill, and really low people, they know how to draw, not the rich people,” said Livan. “But I didn’t say I was an artist. The word artist is a little bit, like, higher class. They would kill you.”

Relief came when his mother, who made hats for the Khmer Rouge, told them he could build the kilns they needed to make roof tiles. “At least I had enough food to eat,” he said.

With the fall of the regime, Livan returned to Phnom Penh to complete his education, but fell aslant of the Communists when he refused an offer to become a party official. Fleeing Cambodia, he escaped to the Khoi-Dang refugee camp in Thailand, from where he hoped he could eventually emigrate.

“But I have no sponsor, so I was an illegal refugee,” said Livan, who said he lived at the camp for seven years. He and his wife, Nary Thit, had three of their four children there. He earned money teaching others to draw, retreating each night to sleep in a secret hole they’d dig in the ground to hide from camp guards.

“I’d light a candle underground, and it wouldn’t burn — many times,” he said, describing a latch he’d build with a breathing hole. “I had to push the gate out, because I didn’t want us to die together.”

Eventually earning refugee status, the family returned to Cambodia in the early ’90s, after which Livan was granted a US visa. He arrived in the United States in 2001 and quickly sought asylum.

“The backstory of his artistry — it’s almost as if it was hanging on by a thread,” said Holtsberg, who first encountered Livan in 2003 while working with fellow folklorist Kathy Neustadt. “It’s a miracle that he even lived.”

When he arrived in Massachusetts, Nancy Selvage, who then directed Harvard’s ceramics program, arranged an artist’s residence for Livan, who hadn’t worked regularly with clay since 1975.

“He was just on fire, he was making so many extraordinary things, like, right away,” said Margaret Rack, an assistant professor at Middlesex Community College. “All this pent-up creativity just came pouring out.”

Since then, Livan has taught at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, a charter school in Lowell, and currently at Middlesex Community College. He now shares a studio with two other potters, and fires his work in a traditional wood-fired kiln he built in 2012 through a partnership between Lowell National Historical Park, the Parker Foundation, and Middlesex Community College.

Still, Livan continues to feel his way through his adopted home. He struggles with English, and still doesn’t have a dedicated gallery to sell his ceramics.

“When people see his work they recognize what’s unique and special about it,” said Rack. “So even though he’s living — really, it’s a struggle — he doesn’t give up on the art.”

Malcolm Gay can be reached at malcolm.gay@globe.com.
MCC Foundation hands out $86G in scholarships

The Middlesex Community College Foundation recently awarded more than $86,000 in scholarships to 72 deserving Middlesex students for the 2014-2015 academic year.

The 94 scholarships range from $500 to $2,500, and are funded by a variety of sources, including memorial donations, local businesses, private foundations and private donors.

Three new scholarships were established and awarded this year: the Audrey A. Cogliano Memorial Scholarship, the Paul Sheehy Memorial Scholarship, and the Tom McKay Memorial Scholarship.

Following are the scholarships and their recipients:

Audrey A. Cogliano Memorial:
- Dawn Thompson

Carol Dundorf: Richard Payne

Catherine L. Godwin Memorial:
- Elifah Lette

Charles and Olga Malvern Memorial Scholarship: Paulina Llorente Gonzalez

College TRIO Program for Student Achievement: Brendan Beznarek, Maria Burgos

Emily Boudrot Memorial: Sovanna Sc

Geraldine B. Deragon: Alexandra Newmark

Kim Forte Memorial: Nicole Arnes

John Michael Delehanty Memorial: Paige Tierney

John M. Keough Memorial: Tianna Guerra, Kelsey Swan

Judith Tarter Technical Writing Certificate: Alyson Andresen

Keith Lyn (Gleason) Farley Memorial: Sandra Medeiros

Lexington & Concord Chapter of the Armed Forces Communications & Electronics: Sophie Dorn, Benita Nassali

Lora Smith: Tobi Atannon, Bekki Bremang

Markowicz-Dundorf: Benita Nassali

Mavis Leoni: Maria Abar, Bekki Bremang, Tessa Browne, Maria Burgos, Nicole Cyr, Laura Davidson, Le Do, Izamoniqa Euboda, Maryna Eppinger, Taylor Field, Julianne Fowler, Lynn Huynh, Brittany Johnson, Miriam Katenda, Monita Khuth, Volpanchana Lim, Sandra Medeiros, Melissa Metzger, Sheba Mbiliru, Angela Murphy, Cate Nnhwomba, Irene Nanono, Benita Nassali, Madeline Ndjagnon, Antoniya Nermesera, Alexandra Newmark, Diana Ordonez, Minaibn Patel, Prachi Patel, Krystle Pelosi, Carle Reed, Krista Sabatino, Gissell Salas, Diana Santana, Phvay You Seng, Kelly Smith, Shenai Talbert, Pisey Teng, Ponita Theang, Dawn Thompson, Yosibell Valdez, Amanda Varley-Brooks, Betsy Villavicencio, Casminda Whitney.

Middlesex Community College Foundation Merit: Shirley Archambault, Joshua Bedard, George DeLuca, Kathryn Labanara, Nathaniel Lee, Lindsey Lizotte, Katherine Lucas, Kerr Pike

Muriel G. Harvey Memorial: Pull Yee Lo, Melissa Metzger, Aqeeq Sadiq, Hannah Taylor

Nashoba Valley Community Healthcare Fund/Greater Lowell Community Foundation: Cassandra Elle, Amy Wilson

New England Woodcarvers: Lynn Huynh, Erin Monahan

Northeast Association of Realtors: Kaisly Rosario

Olga Costello Memorial: Melissa Metzger

Paul Sheehy Memorial: Joshua Bedard

Paul Sullivan: Diana Santana

Ray Shea Memorial: Erin Monahan

Robert Catafalo: Maryna Eppinger

Robert Minues Memorial: Monita Khuth

Securities: George D'Arceo, Kaisly Rosario

Shirley W. Tidemann Memorial: Maria Burgos

Support Staff Scholarship: Kerr Pike

Thomas O'Mahony "Spirit of Excellence": Miriam Katenda

Tom McKay Memorial: Diana Santana

Unitas Scholarship: Yosibell Valdez
MIDDLESEX COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Personal trainer program offered

Middlesex Community College will offer a non-credit personal trainer national certificate program beginning Sept. 26.

The nine-week course is a 62-hour program comprised of 16 hours of lecture, 16 hours of hands-on practical training and a 30-hour internship. Topics include biomechanics, exercise physiology, fitness testing, equipment usage and health assessment. The cost of the course is $759, not including textbooks. National exams are held the ninth week of the course. Employers like 24 Hour Fitness, LA Fitness and Gold's Gym are a few of the thousands of clubs that seek out graduates each semester. Register: middlesex.mass.edu/careertraining

MIDDLESEX COMMUNITY COLLEGE

College for Kids program expands

Submitted to the Minuteman

College for Kids at Middlesex Community College expanded to include after-school, weekend and school-vacation programs this fall.

Programming includes the After-School Tutoring Center, as well as etiquette, writing and organization courses for middle and high school students. College for Kids is designed to provide children with opportunities to gain new knowledge, develop new skills and boost confidence.

“Our new year-round programs are a complement to our summer programming,” said Marci Barnes, director of Lifelong Learning. “Many of our new courses were developed as a result of the needs of our After-School Tutoring Program students. We still offer a safe space where learning is fun, but our after-school programming is a little more academically focused.”

Customized to fit individual needs and learning styles, MCC’s After-School Tutoring Center offers face-to-face tutoring sessions for students needing homework help or assistance with special projects. It can also provide assistance to students interested in working above and beyond grade level.

“Students who have used our tutoring program have seen improvements in their grades after just one session,” said Barnes.

College for Kids’ new writing courses include How to Write a Research Paper and Common Application Essay Writing. These classes can help students learn techniques to plan, develop, draft and revise research papers and prepare responses to common college essay prompts.

Middle and high school students can also work on their organizational skills in the Organized Middle School Student for grades 5-8 and the Organized High School Student for grades 9-12.

For information: 781-280-3669; middlesex.mass.edu/collegeforkids.
MIDDLESEX COMMUNITY COLLEGE HAPPENINGS

Personal-training program

Begin a successful career as a personal trainer with Middlesex Community College’s new noncredit Personal Trainer National Certificate Program. Classes begin Saturday. The challenging, nine-week course is a 62-hour program comprising 16 hours of lecture, 16 hours of hands-on practical training and a 30-hour internship. Topics include biomechanics, exercise physiology, fitness testing, equipment usage, and health assessment. The cost is $749, not including textbooks. National exams are held the ninth week of the course. For more information, email Mary Wheeler at wheelerm@middlesex.mass.edu, or call 781-280-3312. To register, visit www.middlesex.mass.edu/careertraining.

Nursing, health-aide certification

Middlesex Community College offers a noncredit Nurse Assistant & Home Health Aide Certification Training Program that prepares students for an entry-level career as a nurse assistant or a home health aide. Upon successful completion of the program, students will be eligible to sit for the Massachusetts nurse assistant certification exam. Classes begin Monday, Sept. 28. The 100-hour, noncredit certificate program meets Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, from 6 to 10 p.m., on the Lowell campus. It includes a four-weekend day clinical training at a local long-term-care facility. Students will learn to care appropriately for residents in long-term-care facilities and hospitals. Students will learn about personal patient care, patient rights, lifting and turning patients, safety, infection control, taking vital signs, record keeping, mental-health care of residents, and stress management. Students must have a high-school diploma or GED, pass a literacy exam, give permission for a CORI/SORI background check, and be able to lift and move 50-plus pounds. Cost of the program is $995. To learn more or to enroll, email Mary Wheeler at wheelerm@middlesex.mass.edu, or call 781-280-3312.

Culinary classes available

Middlesex Community College’s Corporate and Community Education & Training program is offering a variety of noncredit courses for those interested in enhancing and improving their culinary skills. Courses begin Wednesday, Sept. 30 and include Cupcakes Galore, The Art of Cheesecake, Coolest Cookies, and Trick or Treat with Fondant. For more information or to register, visit www.middlesex.mass.edu/careertraining.

Learn leadership, management

Middlesex Community College’s Community Education and Career Training program is offering a series of noncredit Management and Leadership Courses on Thursdays, from 6 to 8:30 p.m., on the Bedford campus. Classes begin Thursday, Oct. 1. Participants may enroll in any or all of the classes listed below, but must complete all six classes for a certificate of completion. Topics include: Demonstrating a High Performance Work-Style; Knowledge Management; The Leader as a Team Builder; Performance Management; Critical & Creative Thinking Skills; and Leading During Times of Change. For more information or to register, call 800-818-3434, or visit www.middlesex.mass.edu/careertraining.

Harding to speak at MILES

Middlesex Community College will host the fall opening session of the Middlesex Institute for Lifelong Education for Seniors, or MILES, on Wednesday, Oct. 7, at 1:30 p.m., in the Bedford Campus Center Café East, 591 Springs Road. The event is free and open to the public. MCC’s MILES program offers stimulating, interactive daytime seminars and workshops — with no term papers, tests or grades — for active older adults. The opening session provides community members an opportunity to learn more about MILES and the courses being offered, and is a good opportunity to meet instructors and peers. Light refreshments will be served. The MILES Opening Session will feature a keynote address by Ed Harding of WCVB Channel 5. Harding is co-anchor for the NewsCenter 5 early-evening and late newscasts. Each MILES course is $15. To register for MILES courses, call 800-818-3434.
A plan for the year

As part of Opening Week activities at Middlesex Community College, President James C. Mabry shared his agenda for the new academic year with faculty and staff under a tent on the Bedford campus quad. He also conducted a Q&A session, which was at the Middlesex meeting house. COURTESY PHOTO
2015 Opening Day

Middlesex Community College welcomes new faces to campus

New students at Middlesex Community College in Bedford took a break from their orientation obligations earlier this month for a mid-day barbecue on Sept. 8.

After inspirational speeches from administrators like President Dr. James Malory and greetings from faculty and staff, new students were encouraged to mingle, snap selfies and talk about their goals for their first semester.

Middlesex Community College held its New Student Orientation: Opening Day Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2015. They took a break from their work for a midday barbecue in the Quad.

Liberal Arts and Science student Kevin Navey, of Maynard, adds his thoughts to a message board during the Middlesex Community College New Student Orientation: Opening Day Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2015.

Dr. James Malory, president of Middlesex Community College, talks to incoming students during the New Student Orientation: Opening Day Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2015.
Higher Education

Dr. James Mabry, president of Middlesex Community College, talks with incoming students during the school's New Student Orientation: Opening Day Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2015. They took a break from their work for a mid-day barbecue in the Quad. (BEDFORD MINUTEMAN STAFF PHOTOS/ANN RINGWOOD)

Middlesex Community College held its New Student Orientation: Opening Day Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2015. They took a break from their work for a mid-day barbecue in the Quad. Incoming Global Studies major Brendan Perrier, of Billerica, is served by Emmanuel Sula from A Day to Remember and Corporate Chairs.

Middlesex Community College Liberal Arts and Sciences student Griffin Winchell, of Billerica, takes a mid-day break Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2015, on the Quad to catch up on some reading for pleasure.
MIDDLESEX COMMUNITY COLLEGE BRIEFS

Culinary training classes offered

Middlesex Community College's Corporate and Community Education and Training program is offering a variety of non-credit courses for those interested in enhancing and improving their culinary skills.

Courses begin Sept. 30. In Cupcakes Galore, students will learn how to decorate for a variety of special occasions, from birthdays, to holidays and even wedding and baby showers.

Participants will go home with an array of decorated cupcakes. A supply fee of $20 will cover all supplies for the class. Seating is limited to nine.

The Art of Cheese will join Peter Louis, owner of Concord Cheese Shop and 30-year taphophile, as he demystifies the intricacies of cheese. Participants will learn the art of cheese by tasting cheeses.

Coolest Cookies will teach students how to decorate cookies with a cool stained-glass look, goodie and royal icing. A $20 supply fee will cover all supplies for the class. Enrollment is limited to nine.

In Trick or Treat with Fondant, students will learn how to make a Halloween-themed 3-D cake. The class covers dyeing, rolling out and laying fondant properly and creating fondant accents. A $15 supply fee will cover all supplies for the class. Enrollment is limited to nine students.

For information: www.middlesex.mass.edu/careertraining.

Beer appreciation classes planned

This fall, Middlesex Community College's Corporate and Community Education and Training Program is offering a variety of new noncredit courses to help students refine their appreciation for beers of all types, including craft beer, cider, mead, pumpkin beers and India pale ales.

Classes are held at Craft Beer Cellar, 142 Littleton Road, Westford. Introduction to Craft Beer and Tasting will get students up to speed on the basics of craft beer. In this class, students will discuss the difference between ales and lagers, stouts and even sour beers.

In Introduction to Ciders and Meads, students will try a variety of ciders and meads with this new course. Students will discuss and taste various types of cider, including oak-aged and dry cider. They will also explore a variety of meads, which are fermented honey and comes in a variety of styles, including dry, sweet, fruity and flavored.

Pumpkin Beers — Get Your Gourd On provides students an opportunity to explore and taste the different ways pumpkin is incorporated into so many different beers. Beer styles to taste include balanced pumpkin, imperial pumpkin, seasonal harvest, pumpkin stout, barrel-aged pumpkin and Belgian pumpkin.

The IPA Flight Class offers all the answers of IPA questions and lets students taste a variety of IPA beers, including English IPA, session IPA, double IPA, farmhouse IPA and Belgian IPA.

For information: 800-818-3434; www.middlesex.mass.edu/careertraining.

Small business entrepreneurship classes scheduled

Middlesex Community College offers its Entrepreneurship in Small Business Management Certificate program to students planning to start a small business, grow a business or who are planning to play a role in a growing business through innovation, regardless of academic discipline.

In this certificate program, students develop an entrepreneurial mindset and explore the essential tools to help identify and evaluate opportunities in their related fields. Students will gain a foundation in small-business management, accounting and communications. The program also prepares students to develop business plans and strategies for launching.

MCC's entrepreneurship program and activities have been recognized by the National Association for Community College Entrepreneurship as a best practice.

It also received a $15,000 grant from the Coleman Foundation to establish a cross-disciplinary internal team of faculty dedicated to broadening student understanding of, and engagement in, entrepreneurship.

For information: 800-818-3434; middlesex.mass.edu.
Creative Journey

Janet Lambert-Moore

by David Iverson  photos by Adrien Bisson

The people responsible for developing the city of Lowell’s seal, which includes the motto “Art is the Handmaid of Human Good,” likely had no idea how prescient their design was.

Lowell has long been reinventing itself by embracing an art-based, creative economy, and award-winning painter Janet Lambert-Moore, 76, has been at the forefront for decades.

Lambert-Moore remembers approaching the Lowell Regatta Committee (which later became the Lowell Festival Foundation, one of the leading producing partners of the Lowell Folk Festival) in the ‘70s about displaying her artwork at the ethnic celebrations they were sponsoring at Lucy Larcom Park. “There was no ‘arts scene’ to speak of in the city at that time, and I wanted to introduce a visual element to the festivals, which focused on food and music,” she says.

Michael Dailey, co-director of UnchARTed, one of the city’s up-and-coming galleries, praises Lambert-Moore for her role in that era. “I don’t know Janet well, but we all respect her trailblazing greatly,” he says.

Lambert-Moore began her creative journey at a young age by taking lessons at the Whistler House Museum of Art, home of the Lowell Art Association since 1908. This led to incessant sketching and an award for her effort by the age of 9.

She extended her trajectory by enrolling in continuing education classes at Lowell Technological Institute with local painter Leo Panus, who encouraged her to forge ahead. She took his advice and got her bachelor’s degree in fine arts (painting and illustration) from Massachusetts College of Art and Design in Boston in 1960, and in 1962, her master’s degree in education from Salem State College (now Salem State University) in Salem, Mass., so she could become an art teacher. She worked as such for the town of Dracut throughout the 1960s.

Lambert-Moore’s mural of the famous Lowell mills along the Merrimack River on an interior wall of Middessx Community College’s Neumith House on Andover Street in Lowell.
Lambert-Moore has fond memories of teaching and feels strongly about being seen as a "people's artist." She believes that helping children to appreciate art was a wonderful means to that end.

Lambert-Moore is adamant about avoiding debates regarding the nuanced distinctions between fine art and illustration. "I'm not bifuhtui about my work by any means; I think art is for everyone," Lambert-Moore says.

From Sept. 30 through Nov. 7, Lambert-Moore will come full circle by returning to the Whistler House after 60 years of involvement for an exhibit reflective of her life's work. Entitled "Janet Lambert-Moore: A Retrospective," it will span her entire career and include everything from cityscapes and landscapes in watercolor, acrylics and oil to ephemera she has created over the years for a vast range of local events, businesses and organizations.

Whistler House President and Executive Director Sara Bogosian is excited to curate what she considers an important regional show. "Janet is one of the most famous living Lowell artists," Bogosian says. "Highly successful and well recognized, she continues to work on private commissions every day and remains one of the busiest and most well-respected artists in the area. She has received many awards and recognitions over the years in Lowell and Boston."

While some may see the retrospective as "local-centric" due to the overwhelming amount of brochures, fliers, clippings, etc. that are represented in Lambert-Moore's oeuvre, there will be plenty of variety. Vivid seascapes from Cape Ann, and sketches and paintings of Ireland and other travel destinations will be shown alongside her locally themed work.

Lambert-Moore explains why the Parker Gallery at Whistler House is the perfect location to host the retrospective: "My first solo exhibit was at the Parker back in the '70s. I was also a charter member of the Brush Gallery [in the Lowell National Historical Park], but have always considered the Parker my home base."

Lambert-Moore's humility is evident when she talks about the exhibit. "I don't want to seem ostentatious. As far as my art, I've always followed the ethos: 'Pick something you like to do, and you'll never work a day in your life.'"

Janet Lambert-Moore: A Retrospective: Sept. 30 to Nov. 7
Whistler House Museum of Art
Lowell, Mass. | (978) 452-7641 | WhistlerHouse.org
Stepping into The Nesmith House in Lowell is like stepping back in time. Left: The upstairs oval room offers a creamy palette with a rich array of textures. The room, often used by brides, is warm and inviting. The chandelier and ceiling detail are a testament to the power of lighting. Top: Set behind a stunning grand piano, this bookcase, with bluish-orange shell backs, elevates the room’s style and sophistication. Bottom: A collage of mirrors and framed art adds interest and elegance to the upstairs hallway. Photos by Emily O’Brien.
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www.middlesex.mass.edu
2015 Honorees
Salute to Women of Our Region

The Women Working Wonders Fund (WWW Fund) congratulates the 2015 Salute to Women of Our Region Honorees and recognizes each of them for their distinguished contributions to our community.

We sincerely thank Lowell Sun Charities for their generosity in donating all proceeds from the September 15th Recognition Luncheon to our Fund. We also appreciate the numerous event sponsors and attendees for their gracious support.

The Luncheon fundraiser proceeds, combined with our upcoming Power of the Purse fundraiser on Thursday, October 15th will enable us to award additional grants to local non-profits for programs that enhance the lives of disadvantaged women and girls. It is our hope that the support of these programs that empower women of this community serves as a fitting tribute to the Women of Our Region Honorees.

With great appreciation,
Women Working Wonders Fund Board of Trustees

Thank you to the 2015 Salute to Women Sponsors:

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