Student Leadership Recognition Ceremony

“We are in need of a spirit of community, a sense that we are all in this together.”
— President Bill Clinton

Last May, Middlesex students, staff and faculty gathered with family and friends at the annual Student Leadership Recognition Ceremony. Attendees mingled among life-sized cutouts of U.S. presidents Obama, Clinton, Bush and Kennedy that were strategically placed around the room. Campus organizations thanked advisors, recognized outstanding students and highlighted many service activities. Mary-Jane McCarthy, retiring Provost & Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, was thanked for her leadership.

“Mary-Jane has been a strong supporter of student programs that promote student engagement both in and out of the classroom.”

Amy Maldonado
Student Emcee, Leadership Recognition Ceremony

Opening Day Activities

Opening Day at Middlesex kicked off last September with a first-time service project. Working alongside staff from Lowell National Historical Park, 21 newly enrolled Bedford and Lowell students volunteered 75 hours to beautify the Prescott Street area adjacent to MCC’s City building on the Lowell campus.

IN THIS ISSUE

• STUDENT LEADERSHIP RECOGNITION CEREMONY
• SEASONS OF SERVICE
• PATRIOT DAY AND NATIONAL DAY OF SERVICE & REMEMBRANCE
• CCE NEWS
• LEARNING COMMUNITY NEWS
Last fall, Middlesex began a year-long, collegewide Seasons of Service (SOS) initiative offering students, staff and faculty multiple ways to perform community service with flexible scheduling opportunities, in a variety of locations. Participation is ongoing within college departments, classes, clubs and individuals. The goal is to offer every MCC student an opportunity to have a service experience, while simultaneously striving to surpass the 2,400 collective volunteer hours performed in one day as part of MCC’s 2008 Day of Service. Fall SOS highlights include:

➣ Although rain drenched the area, it did not stop 24 MCC students, staff and family members from walking in October’s Greater Merrimack Valley Start Heart Walk.

➣ MCC students, staff and faculty donated 45 bags of Halloween candy to U.S. soldiers in Iraq (http://www.mass-localheroes.org/index.html). These reminders of home were delivered by CCE Coordinator Sheri Denk to Wilmington Veterans Officer Louis Camaglia.

➣ Eight Middlesex volunteers gathered on the Bedford campus to cut and sew 50 colorful pillowcases for children and adolescents undergoing cancer treatment at local hospitals, as part of ConKerr Cancer’s A Case for Smiles program (www.ConKerrCancer.org). The project was organized by MCC Purchasing Coordinator Maureen Hudson, and the fabric was donated by quilter Susan Fitzpatrick, an administrative assistant in MCC’s Facilities Management Department.

➣ Mary-Jo Griffin, MCC’s Director of Outreach & Development, and Paul Sullivan Leadership Institute student fellows volunteered at Lowell’s City of Lights Parade. They assisted in assembling Christmas stockings at Lowell National Historical Park and assisted along the parade route (http://www.middlesex.mass.edu/sullivan_institute/).

➣ Professor Mary Lou Horn and her English Fundamentals students held an early-evening bake sale and raised funds for New England Pediatric Care, a unique nursing home for children who are “medically complex” and have severe cognitive and neurological impairments.

➣ With the support of MCC’s Health Services and Seasons of Service student volunteers, the American Red Cross held a fall Blood Donor Drive on campus with more than 120 people participating in the donation of 65 pints of blood.
A campus highlight each holiday season, the Salvation Army Toy Drive is spearheaded by MCC’s Student Activities Office. This event is supported by generous donations from many members of the campus community. Seasons of Service expanded support for the Toy Drive when Melissa Welch, Coordinator of Student Activities, and four students sorted and wrapped hundreds of toys at the Salvation Army Christmas Castle in Lowell.

MCC students joined Melissa Welch, MCC Coordinator of Student Activities, to support the Special Olympics Equestrian Games held at Ironstone Farm/Challenge Unlimited, Andover.

Professor Patricia Richards’ Nutrition class created a poster display in Bedford and collected donations on World Food Day.

MASSPIRG’s student chapter sponsored a Zombie Walk for Hunger, which raised $330 for local food pantries. MCC Service-Learning students assisted in the collection and delivery of 150 items of nonperishable food items.

Members of MCC’s Division of Business, Engineering & Technology collected and delivered 200 pounds of nonperishable food items, and spent several hours sorting and unloading food donations.

November’s “Take A Turkey to Work Day” was organized by Judith Hogan, MCC’s Dean of Business, Engineering & Technology. The Merrimack Valley Food Bank received 79 Thanksgiving turkeys donated by the MCC community. For more photos visit: http://community.middlesex.mass.edu/blogs/mccblog/archive/2009/11/17/Poultry-in-Motion.aspx

The MCC Bowling Club conducted a food donation competition between the Bedford and Lowell campuses. The clients at the Merrimack Valley Food Bank were the winners.

MCC’s Facilities Management staff worked with various deans on campus to conduct two campuswide holiday collections. Instead of spending money on interoffice gifts and holiday get-togethers, money was collected and donated to area food banks and pantries.
September 11 is now recognized across the country as Patriot Day and National Day of Service & Remembrance Day by the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, which was signed into law by President Barack Obama in April 2009.

“I call upon all Americans to join in service and honor the lives we lost, the heroes who responded in our hour of need, and the brave men and women in uniform who continue to protect our country at home and abroad,” said President Obama.

“Deriving strength from tragedy, we can write the next great chapter in our nation’s history and ensure that future generations continue to enjoy the promise of America.”

Middlesex students, staff and faculty, organized by CCE Coordinator Sheri Denk, answered the call in innovative ways:

➤ CCE staff set up computer stations on both campuses where electronic thank-you cards were sent to soldiers serving in Iraq (http://www.letssaythanks.com/)

➤ MCC alumna Elizabeth Baldwin and members of MCC’s intramural basketball team cleaned Lowell’s Open Pantry and a truckload of food was unloaded and sorted.

➤ Middlesex students were joined by MCC President Carole Cowan and U.S. Congresswoman Niki Tsongas to sort clothing for the Lowell Wish Project. Forty-five large bags of clothes were readied for pick-up by Lowell Wish Project staffers (www.thewishproject.org).

➤ MCC Health Services signed up students for Red Cross Blood Drives at Fenway Park or Boston City Hall.

➤ MCC students assisted the Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts with their yearly registration.

Thanks to Assistant Dean Darcy Orellana, MCC Professors Julia Mirras and Jennifer Pisarik, admissions staff and basketball coaches Reggie Nichols and Jeffrey Tejeda, Director of Health Services Dorothy O’Connell and Student Activities Coordinator Melissa Welch for supporting this first-time initiative.

Civic Reflection Series

Cynthia Lynch, MCC Service-Learning Coordinator, and Sheri Denk, CCE Coordinator, participated in a recent three-part Civic Reflection Series, sponsored by the National Project on Civic Reflection, and hosted by Massachusetts Campus Compact (MACC). With a focus on fostering community among MACC Massachusetts Campus Compact members across the state, participants gained fresh perspectives on day-to-day work, and left with a heightened commitment to, and understanding of, civic engagement. By reading and talking together, the small group discussed underlying questions such as, What obligations do we have to others in our community? Why join one association and not another? To whom should we give? What do we really expect of those whom we serve? Among the writings discussed were: “What We Don’t Talk About When We Don’t Talk About Service” by Adam Davis; “Walking with the Wind” by John Lewis; “The Lesson” by Toni Cade Bambara; and “The History Teacher” by Billy Collins. For more information visit: http://www.civicreflection.org/.

Service-Learning Faculty Workshop

Middlesex faculty members were invited to a three-part spring workshop on service learning developed by Service Learning Coordinator Cynthia Lynch. The workshop covered how service learning works at MCC, and how faculty can integrate it into their courses to enhance classroom learning, meet essential community needs, improve class discussions, and foster civic responsibility. Using the newly developed Service Learning Toolkit, faculty also met with community partners, who contributed site needs and shared expectations for Service-Learning students.

Community Engagement Project Highlights

Electronic Imaging Posters

Excited by the prospect of developing posters to raise awareness and fundraising for community organizations, 30 students from Professor Jan Arabas’ fall semester Electronic Imaging course researched organizations, designed posters and staffed campus tables to collect money for the Dana Farber Cancer Institute, and the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Thanks to Professor Arabas for incorporating community into her courses, and thank you to the students for making a difference. Special thanks to student Pat Monroe for sharing the Jimmy Fund Poster created for the class project.

Cultural Anthropology, Sociology

Accolades to Professor Binuur Ercem for her article, “Hearing Students Voices: What, How, and from Whom Do They Want to Learn?,” published in the National Teaching and Learning Forum October 2009 issue. Professor Ercem has always incorporated service learning into her Cultural Anthropology and Sociology courses, and shares her research centering on the Carnegie Educational Question of the Year, “What knowledge or skills will students need to be effective citizens of our world in the future?” Ercem’s article can be read in its entirety at: http://www.ntlf.com/html/ti/v18n6comp.pdf
How to Succeed

With the support of Cynthia Lynch, Service Learning Coordinator, students in professors Cathy McCarron’s and John Femia’s How to Succeed in Business Learning Community recently made creative business presentations to leaders of Billerica’s Middlesex Canal Museum. The museum features interactive exhibits and artifacts that detail the history of the canal, hosts numerous educational programs for local school groups, and rents out its meeting rooms. This LC collaboration was designed to assist a neighboring community partner, while giving the business students real-world experience. Groups of students generated, researched and presented a host of innovative business ideas, with an eye toward keeping the museum alive and vibrant. Thanks to MCC Professor Deb Walsh for connecting the Middlesex Canal Museum and the Center For Community Engagement. For more about the museum visit: http://www.middlesexcanal.org/museum

Power: Who Has It? Who Gets It?

Students chose to focus on consciousness raising and fundraising for the organization H20 in Kenya by gathering facts about the 1.1 billion people who lack clean drinking water. “The Learning Community structure helped to make this experience possible,” said Professor Ellen Nichols. “My LC colleague, Professor Lucy Ogburn, and I are grateful to all areas of the college that said ‘yes’ and opened the way for our students to pursue this project. The cooperation we received couldn’t have been better.” The students worked over several weeks developing a survey, researching issues and organizations, working collaboratively to choose a problem, planning an “event” and approaching peers with information and requests for funding. Commenting on the effort, which raised $600, Nichols continued: “One way to look at the impact this money will have, is that $25 will provide clean drinking water for a person for life in a village in Kenya. The health benefits to the community will be significant. Plenty of learning was happening here.”
Community Highlights

Sustainability Advisory Committee

MCC’s Sustainability Advisory Committee (SAC), comprised of staff, students and faculty, has been involved in numerous campus initiatives, beginning with a poster competition involving 30 students in Professor Joe Eiler’s spring 2008 Graphic Design course. Chosen from a very competitive field, the winning SAC poster was created by Vincent DiSanzo, a 2008 Graphic Design graduate. SAC’s electronic newsletter is in the works and will be available soon. Responding to input from the SAC campuswide survey, MCC Facilities Management Department ordered and placed recycling bins around campus, with committee members adding signage. For the second year, SAC initiated a campuswide drive to recycle unneeded textbooks.

The first FreeSwap Winter Clothing Exchange was held on the Lowell campus in December. Students, faculty and staff from both campuses donated usable winter items to be exchanged, free of charge, to other members of the campus community who needed them. Professor Pat Hyde and CCE Coordinator Sheri Denk, aided by several students, staffed the event. More than 45 winter coats and jackets were exchanged, along with boots, mittens, hats and scarves. This event proved to be a great way to reuse warm winter items! Thanks to everyone, especially MCC’s Facilities Management staff, for your support.

Billerica Boys & Girls Club

Following up on a 2008 visit to Soweto, South Africa, by Clea Andreadis, MCC Dean of Social Science & Human Services, and Kent Mitchell, Dean of International Arts, the college hosted South African educators Nhlanhla Sithole, Vanessa Montanus and Lillian Mwale. As part of a South African Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Office of Citizen Exchanges program, titled “On the Ground: Building Contexts for Civic Engagement Among Teenagers,” the trio’s busy schedule included an afternoon visit arranged by Sheri Denk to the Billerica Boys & Girls Club. MCC Alum and Club Director Patty Mahoney led a tour of the club’s newly remodeled facility. An animated discussion about common challenges followed the tour, as well as the exchanging of ideas. As part of a U.S State Department grant, MCC is continuing to collaborate with South African professionals on the development of projects to enhance services for children in the township of Soweto.
Girl Scouts

Virginia Burrelle, MCC’s Director of Conference Services, Sheri Denk, CCE Coordinator, and Alice Rouse, Associate Dean of College Advancement, heard inspiring stories from Girl Scouts and their mentors at Boston’s Leading Women Awards Celebration. This event recognizes outstanding women whose accomplishments make them role models for Girl Scouts. “Today’s Girl Scouts is about leadership and developing girls into leaders, to be aware of the world around them, to participate in it and to try to make it a better place,” said MCC Trustee Ruth Bramson, CEO of Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts.

Last February, Girl Scout Troop 60729 visited MCC’s Lowell campus to enjoy a campus tour, sell cookies, and meet MCC President Carole Cowan. Special thanks to Dental Hygiene Department Chair Nancy Baccari for her tour of the Middlesex Dental Hygiene Clinic on Middle Street, and to the MCC Library staff who showcased MCC resources available to students.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

SHERI DENK
CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COORDINATOR
MIDDLESEX COMMUNITY COLLEGE
33 KEARNEY SQUARE
LOWELL, MA 01852
978-656-3159 FAX 978-656-3150
DENKS@MIDDLESEX.MASS.EDU

CYNTHIA LYNCH
SERVICE-LEARNING COORDINATOR
MIDDLESEX COMMUNITY COLLEGE
591 SPRINGS ROAD
BEDFORD, MA 01730
781-280-3556 FAX 781-275-7126
LYNCHC@MIDDLESEX.MASS.EDU
WWW.MIDDLESEX.MASS.EDU/SERVICELEARNING/

OUR MISSION

The mission of MCC’s Center for Community Engagement is to enrich our students’ educational experiences, meet community needs, and foster civic responsibility throughout the college by integrating service into the academic curriculum. Through participation in thoughtfully organized service experiences, students extend what they learn beyond the classroom. The college constantly seeks new ways to foster a life-long commitment to community service by actively engaging students and faculty in meeting identified community needs.