Nursing Program Unveils New Labs
Generous Donors Thanked at Ribbon Cutting

On Nov. 20 the college thanked two generous donors and celebrated the opening of two newly-equipped Nursing laboratories in the Math/Science building. The renovations were made possible by former Chair of Nursing and Allied Health, HelenMarie Dolton, and Johnson & Johnson through its “Campaign for Nursing’s Future.”

The laboratories are now equipped with state-of-the-art mannequins, new hospital beds and side tables, wheelchairs and other hospital equipment. Two of the mannequins simulate human functions such as heartbeat, blood pressure and coughs. An adjoining computer lab has been equipped with new laptop computers.

Donor HelenMarie Dolton’s financial support underscores her lifelong commitment to nursing education. She initiated the college’s Nursing program when she began her career at Mercer in 1967, then became chair of Nursing and Allied Health and chair of the Division of Science and Allied Health.

Johnson & Johnson’s “Campaign for Nursing’s Future” is a multi-year public awareness campaign launched to enhance the image of the nursing profession, recruit new nurses and faculty, and help retain nurses currently in the profession.

New Program Launched

With support from Johnson & Johnson, Mercer has launched a new program to prepare participants in one semester for jobs as Certified Nursing Assistants or Home Health Aides. The noncredit program is designed to be an entry point for students interested in the health professions. MCCC is partnering with Lawrenceville Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, which will serve as the clinical site for hands-on training.
The campus community recently honored long-time vice president, Dr. Thomas N. Wilfrid, on his retirement. Dr. Wilfrid began his 38-year career at Mercer as an instructor of Physics, and served in numerous leadership positions including assistant dean of faculty, associate dean for Academic Affairs, executive assistant to the president, dean of Academic and Student Affairs, chair of Engineering and Physical Sciences, dean for Academic Affairs, vice president for Academic and Student Affairs, acting administrator and acting president.

A Board of Trustees resolution, presented in October, states that Dr. Wilfrid supported the college’s mission and guided the college with dedication and diligence during his career. He has accepted a position with the Charlotte W. Newcomb Foundation in Princeton.

New Transfer Legislation Eases the Way

On September 13 Governor John Corzine signed legislation that promotes the seamless transfer of New Jersey community college graduates into baccalaureate degree programs at public four-year colleges and universities throughout the state. Under the new law, each public higher education institution will enter into a collective statewide transfer agreement in consultation with the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education and the New Jersey Presidents’ Council. The legislation requires a common statewide approach that will better serve students no matter which community college they attend and no matter which four-year college they transfer to.

MCCC Takes Charge of Fire Academy; Receives Training Truck from Hamilton

MCCC assumed supervision of the Mercer County Fire Academy in May, located at the Dempster Fire Service Training Center in Lawrence Township. The college also welcomed Scott Loh as the academy’s new director. Loh has been active in the county’s fire and emergency services for many years, serving as chief of the Mercerville Fire Company, captain of the Nottingham Emergency Services Squad, and as chief academic operations manager at the Mercer County Fire Academy. He most recently served as assistant chief and site protection specialist at the Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory.

In his new position, Loh plans to enhance and build upon current programs. “Our main focus is to strengthen what we have and then grow from there,” he said. Loh will focus some of his energy on expanding the academy’s emergency management services.

Loh received almost immediate support for his efforts in the form of a fully equipped fire truck, donated by Hamilton Fire District #4 after 30 years of use in the township. Loh, who is also coordinator of the MCCC Fire Science degree program, notes that the truck will serve as a tremendous learning opportunity for MCCC students and other trainees of the academy.

Students Design Landscapes for Drumthwacket

Ornamental Horticulture students in a “Landscaping and Planning” class were honored to complete landscape designs for New Jersey’s governor’s mansion, Drumthwacket, located in Princeton. Pictured presenting their design for “The Celtic Garden” at the mansion on Dec. 4 are, from left, Cindy Feehery, Joe Nosker, Matt Boegemann, and Ted Kearns. The class completed designs for three areas of the grounds.

Students Speak Their Minds, Audience Responds, at “Swirl Fest”

With personal anecdotes, humorous stories, poetry and more, students participated in the “Fall Swirl Fest” on Oct. 9. As part of their Public Speaking course with Assistant Professor Kathi Paluscio, they presented short speeches in front of a lunchtime crowd, drawing laughter, applause and a few tears with topics ranging from reflections on the heroes of 9/11 to the joys of a good pillow. No doubt, they also persuaded a few students that public speaking is not only doable, but actually fun.

Some of the students who developed the “Swirl Fest” theme and served as hosts include, from left, Bart Battista, Kristin Branchizio, Ashley Brown and Victor Ruiz.

Dr. Thomas N. Wilfrid Retires; Will Lead Newcombe Foundation

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Adult Literacy Center Seeks Volunteers

Funded by a grant from “New Jersey Reads,” a new Adult Literacy Center at the James Kerney Campus in Trenton is seeking volunteers. The Saturday program offers individual and small group instruction in reading, writing, math and computer skills, and identifies student learning styles. An ongoing assessment system tracks student progress. Staffed by volunteer tutors from the college and community, the center welcomes new students of all ages. For further information call 609-570-3138.

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Study Evaluates Economic Impact of County’s Colleges

A report released in November states that Mercer County’s five institutions of higher education directly generate more than $820 million in annual wages and create almost as many jobs as the entire manufacturing sector in the county. MCCC, Princeton University, Rider University, The College of New Jersey, and Thomas Edison State College contributed over $1.2 billion in direct spending to the state’s economy during the 2005 fiscal year, according to the report.

As a group, the five schools rank as one of Mercer’s leading employers, accounting for 5.7 percent of all non-governmental jobs in the county. The colleges generated almost 13,000 jobs throughout the state, measured in full-time equivalents. Total wages and fees generated by the institutions were $828 million. The report also highlights the community outreach efforts of the five institutions.

Banner Year for Kelsey Review

Enter the world of Kelsey Review, peopled with characters bravely connecting and disconnecting – moving away, coming home, exploring love, and acknowledging loss. Available free at county libraries, this literary and arts journal features short fiction, poetry, non-fiction essays and illustrations by 22 contributors who live and/or work in Mercer County. Now in its 26th year, Kelsey Review is an annual MCCC publication.

According to co-editors Ed Carmien and Holly-Katharine Mathews, both members of the MCCC English faculty, selections this year take familiar themes in unusual directions, make intriguing use of language, and invite the reader into realms they may have never visited. The cover’s winged and bespectacled Pegasus was drawn by Holly Harrison Johnson, a local children’s book illustrator.

The submission deadline for the 2008 edition is May 1. For more information, email Kelsey.Review@mccc.edu.

Funding for Kelsey Review is made possible in part by the Mercer County Cultural and Heritage Commission through funding from the Mercer County Board of Chosen Freeholders, and the New Jersey State Council for the Arts/Department of State, a partner agency of the National Endowment of the Arts.
Faculty Artist Shines Light on Celebrity

First came his movie roles as the quintessential American teenager. Then there were the plum parts as fighter pilot, Vietnam veteran, and international secret agent. In current times, there is a private life gone agonizingly public. Tom Cruise is the kind of high-profile popular figure whom we dwell on—whether we choose to or not.

Just ask MCCC Assistant Professor of Fine Arts Mark Stockton. Stockton toiled for 18 months with the image of Tom Cruise, producing 27 oil paintings and five charcoal drawings that were exhibited at the Acuna-Hansen Gallery in Los Angeles’ Chinatown in September and October. The show, called “1983,” focused on Cruise’s breakout year—when he appeared in “Taps,” “The Outsiders,” “Losin’ It,” “Risky Business” and “All the Right Moves,” and before he moved fully into mainstream consciousness and supermarket tabloids. The works vary in size, with one drawing that measures 9” x 6” and with paintings as small as 2” x 3”.

Stockton’s source materials include stills and publicity shots. Stockton didn’t get bogged down in his feelings for the superstar. “I didn’t worry about whether I liked him or not,” he explains. “Tom Cruise is an icon of the culture, like Marilyn Monroe or Elvis. I chose him for his recognition factor. Using popular subject matter allows more people to participate in the experience,” he said.

Stockton notes that American abstract art is not always accessible in this way. “Sometimes, people feel that a joke is being played on them. They don’t get it.” He recalls Andy Warhol, a genius at using popular culture to make a statement. “Warhol was the last big name in pop art. Many people are working off what he created,” he said.

Stockton said that he tried to walk a line between glorifying Cruise and being critical of him. “I was particularly drawn to images that show him in a state of contemplation. I’m especially fascinated by the ‘all-American’ roles—especially Northern Renaissance portraits—whose first five major roles pretty much covered the bases of idealized American male-ness, embodying the soldier, the rebel, the party boy and the jock.”

Stockton, a member of the MCCC faculty for five years, moved to the East Coast from Oregon. “I took a field trip to New York City as an undergraduate at Oregon State and knew that this is where I wanted to be. New York is unlike any other place—it’s concentration of art is the best in the world.” Now living in Brooklyn, Stockton shares a studio with his wife, Cindy, also an artist.

Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Inducts Students

Seventy-two students with GPAs of 3.5 or higher were inducted into the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) honor society at a ceremony at Kelsey Theatre on Oct. 25. The society’s purpose is to recognize and encourage scholarship among two-year college students, providing an outlet for leadership development, fellowship, community service and continuing academic excellence. The group also offers scholarship opportunities for members. Mercer’s chapter sponsors several community service projects each year.

“Ed 2 Go” Provides Successful Route to Grad School

Last winter, as April Butler prepared her application for graduate school at Roosevelt University, she decided to polish her professional writing skills. A six-week, online business writing course offered through MCC’s Center for Continuing Studies proved the ideal solution. “I wanted to bolster my writing skills before submitting my admissions essay and I wanted to practice with the online learning experience,” she said, since she was applying to Roosevelt’s online program.

While online learning can be a challenging adjustment for some students, Butler took it to easily. “The course was exactly what I was looking for,” she recalled. “My instructor set the bar high. The one-on-one interaction was fantastic. It was also really convenient. I could complete the work any time, day or night.” Butler adds that the online experience was intense. “If you've never taken a course online, you don’t realize how much is involved.”

As a result of her online class, Butler finds that she is more focused and aware of her writing, a huge asset now that she had started her online master’s degree in Training and Development at Roosevelt. She is also putting her writing and other business skills to work for MCC. Formerly with the Support Center for Non-Profit Management in Trenton, Butler joined the staff at the Center for Continuing Studies in August. She serves as coordinator for Training and Development, working with corporate clients and instructors to arrange professional training courses.

MCCC offers hundreds of “Ed 2 Go” courses in a wide variety of subjects, for both professional and personal enrichment. Classes start every month. To learn more, visit www.ed2go.com/mccc.edu.

“Ed 2 Go” student April Butler joined the MCCC staff in August.
Students Inspire Future Scientists During National Chemistry Week

Fourteen MCCC students, five Rider University students, and instructors from both schools fanned out across the county from Oct. 22-26, traveling to 25 different classrooms in six elementary schools to celebrate National Chemistry Week. The annual event is organized by MCCC Associate Professor Helen Tanzini with support from the Trenton section of the American Chemical Society. Pictured at Dutch Neck Elementary School are, back row from left, Krystyn Defino, Pajju Ondusola, Catherine Robbins, Nicholas Rodriguez, faculty members Tanzini, Ron Smith and Mary Ann Nacoross and alum Rocky Gervasi. Kneeling are Anuja Parikh, left, and Rebecca Maller.

McGraw-Hill Institute at MCCC Graduates First Class

In October, 102 employees of The McGraw-Hill Companies graduated from a specialized training program of Mercer’s Center for Training and Development (CTD), representing the latest achievement in a successful, long-standing partnership. Since 2006, Mercer has provided customized post-baccalaureate training for technology professionals and future leaders of the company, a leading global information services provider based in New York City, and with operations in East Windsor.

The McGraw-Hill Companies launched the program, known as “The McGraw-Hill Institute at MCCC,” to help technology professionals further develop core skills. Employees traveled from as far as London and Brazil to Mercer’s West Windsor campus for the training. Study topics included leadership, project management, business analysis, architecture and design, and quality assurance.

According to Mercer’s Elaine Weinberg, CTD director, “The courses were developed to reflect industry best practices and address the company’s focus on emerging technologies and changing business models. It has been a real success story.” Weinberg, who works with 5,000 to 7,000 business people each year in customized training programs, said McGraw-Hill took its training to a higher level by making it a coordinated business initiative.

Graduates of the program received a certificate for 16 Continuing Education Units (CEUs), or 160 hours of training. A new group of McGraw-Hill students recently started the program.

Student Gene Tobia Leaves Orchid Legacy at MCCC Greenhouse

One of the most useful qualities MCCC student Gene Tobia has cultivated in his life is patience – patience in pursuing his education, patience on the job, and patience in growing orchids. In the three years Tobia studied at Mercer, he grew so attached to the hybrid orchids he developed in the MCCC Greenhouse that he named some of them after members of his family. Several of his “babies” have been officially approved and accepted by the New Jersey State Horticultural Society.

A 30-something student who returned to college in Spring, 2003, Tobia worked his way through three degrees at Mercer, completing associate degrees in Nursing and Biology in December, 2006, and finishing up a degree in a field of intense personal interest – Plant Science – in December, 2007.

Originally from the Philippines, where exotic flowers bloom year-round and wild orchids are sold at flea markets, Tobia was working in a local nursery when he decided to study botany in Mercer’s Ornamental Horticulture program, coordinated by Assistant Professor Amy benecker. One semester later, he shifted into Nursing – another program with an emphasis on caring for fragile things – because of the promising job prospects in the field.

Tobia said he devoted time to his orchids, working in a local nursery when he decided to study botany in Mercer’s Ornamental Horticulture program, coordinated by Assistant Professor Amy benecker. One semester later, he shifted into Nursing – another program with an emphasis on caring for fragile things – because of the promising job prospects in the field.

In developing approximately 150 orchids, Tobia concentrated on creating hybrids that are easy to grow. He notes that growers hybridize for other factors as well, including heartiness in cooler temperatures, the creation of new color combinations, increased numbers of blossoms, and increased size.

Tobia says the process of developing hybrids is painstaking. First there is pollination from one orchid to another, followed by the production of a seed pod. Then the pods are sent out to a lab to be sown in a flask. The seedlings are then returned to be repotted. And then they grow. “Over time, some die off,” Tobia said. “I pruned them when one of his orchids languished. “You try to figure out why one plant is not as vigorous as the one growing right next to it. I would report, fertilize. Still I lost some.”

For Tobia, Mercer turned out to be the perfect place to study both plant science and nursing. “Lots of nursing students are adults. The evening program worked so well with my schedule. The program prepared us for the boards.” Tobia is still learning every day as a dialysis nurse for Da Vita Dialysis Center, a job he started in August. He commutes to Philadelphia, working four days in 12-hour shifts that sometimes start as early as 5:30 a.m. In addition to the inpatient clinic, where patients come for treatment up to three times per week, he also makes house calls, teaching patients how to do dialysis at home.

After switching to nursing and joining the workforce full time, Tobia could have left the botany field behind. But there was only one more class to go – and then there were the orchids to consider. Even when Tobia moves on to Rutgers’ Cook College to continue his study of plant science, his orchids will live on in the MCCC Greenhouse – for him to visit and for other Horticulture students to learn from and care for.

Free Training Offered for Businesses

Area businesses and nonprofit organizations can now send their employees to free classes in English as a second language, basic communications, and math.

Provided by MCCC’s Center for Training and Development, the classes are held at the college or at the place of employment when the number of employees being trained is more than ten. There is no charge to participating companies, other than normal wages during working hours. If the class is scheduled at a time other than working hours, the employer must pay the worker for his or her time. The opportunity ends June 30; educational institutions are not eligible.

The project represents a new partnership between the New Jersey Business & Industry Association, the New Jersey State Horticultural College Consortium for Workforce and Economic Development, the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, and New Jersey’s community colleges. For more information contact Doreen Blanc at 609-570-3375.

Students in Mercer’s grant-funded DREAM program, for students with cognitive disabilities, performed their original poems at The Gallery on Nov. 6 to an appreciative audience. Pictured is student John McCormick. Instructor Joan Goldstein, standing, looks on.

Now in its second year, the program is nearing the end of its grant, and is seeking new funding sources. For more information call 609-570-3375.
The Urban League of Trenton Funds Scholarship

MCCC Vice President Beverly Richardson, left, accepts a $2,500 check from the Urban League of Trenton’s past president, James Jennings, and current vice president, Janice Gilliard. MCCC Foundation Coordinator Elaine Stout is at right. Mr. Jennings is a successful Mercer alumnus.

Evening to Benefit Student Scholarships

Save the date for MCCC’s 19th annual Scholarship Dinner Dance, set for March 8 at the Hyatt Regency, Princeton. The festive event will feature The Melanie Rice Orchestra. The chairperson of this year’s event is MCCC Foundation member Nina Mellker of The Bank of Princeton.

Five long-time volunteers who are members of the MCCC Foundation will be honored by the college with the “Spirit of Education” awards. They are Marjorie Blaxill, James Floyd, Karen Kennedy, Tom Kull, and Timothy Losch.

All event proceeds go to student scholarships. The community is invited to participate by attending the event, becoming a sponsor or donor, donating an item to the silent auction, or purchasing an advertisement in the program booklet. For more information contact Foundation Coordinator Elaine Stout at 609-570-3607.

Twelve Incoming Students Receive Freeholder Scholarships

The Mercer County Freeholders provided full scholarships to 12 new MCCC students, and continuing scholarships to 12 current students. Pictured during an Aug. 9 ceremony is scholarship recipient Christopher Yable of Ewing High School, center. From left are Freeholders Keith Hamilton and Anthony Carabelli, MCCC Vice President Beverly Richardson, and Freeholders Elizabeth Maher Muoio, Tony Mack, Pat Colavita, Ann Cannon and Lucylle Walker.

Student musicians from the Westminster Conservatory at Westminster College of the Arts of Rider University perform at WWFM’s 25th anniversary celebration.

WWFM The Classical Network Celebrates 25 Years on Air

WWFM The Classical Network (88.1 FM) gathered close to 200 members of its “family” at the MCCC Conference Center on October 4. The event was held to thank volunteers and members as the station celebrated its 25th anniversary year. In typically enthusiastic fashion, a station manager listener from Pennsylvania called WWFM an “oasis” in her hectic life. For many guests, the event was their first opportunity to visit the MCCC campus. WWFM’s ambitious plans for the digital age include reaching a larger audience with both music and educational podcasts.

As part of its highly successful fall fundraising campaign, the station created a CD entitled “Celebrating Our Musical Community,” which was mailed as a gift to all those who made a credit card donation to support the station. The CD features more than 60 minutes of music performed by local musicians including the American Boy Choir, Princeton Pro Musica, and the Princeton University Orchestra. General Manager Peter Fretwell noted that the idea behind the CD was to “highlight the exceptional musical talent the central Jersey region has in its backyard.”

Help Sought for Health Education Funding

The Charlotte W. Newcombe Foundation of Princeton has awarded a $50,000 challenge grant to MCCC’s Foundation for programs in the health professions, including Nursing, Physical Therapist Assistant, Radiography and Laboratory Technology. The college’s challenge is to match the grant through donations from interested individuals and organizations. You can help by sending your check to the MCCC Foundation, AD 111, MCCC, PO Box B, Trenton, NJ 08690, or calling Director of College Advancement Kay Eaton for more information at 609-570-1250.

The college’s Foundation is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to rally community support to help students achieve their goals through scholarships, and to assist the college in meeting vital needs that advance student learning.

Ways of Giving to the MCCC Foundation

- Make a general donation for use as needed.
- Designate your gift to a particular program or for a specific purpose.
- Consider establishing a scholarship, which can be in memory or honor of someone.
- Establish an endowed scholarship. At levels of $10,000 or more, endowed funds are invested; only the interest is used to provide a scholarship annually.
- Create a non-endowed scholarship. Generally established with funds under $10,000, these named scholarships also earn interest, but provide a scholarship at a designated amount.
- Make a matching gift by asking your company to match your donation.
On Oct. 11, celebrity chef Robert Irvine dazzled a packed house in the MCCC Communications Building with a two-hour presentation that included a cooking demonstration and a candid, humorous question-and-answer period. After the program, Irvine signed copies of his new book, "Mission Cook," while audience members enjoyed samples of one of his signature dishes, Red Snapper with Pepper Sauce and grits, prepared and served by MCCC’s Hospitality students.

Irvine, who stars on Food Network’s "Dinner Impossible" series, offered Mercer’s culinary students three sterling pieces of advice: “Listen carefully, have fun and be dedicated.”

On Dec. 14 MCCC’s county-wide cable television station broadcast the “Mercer Cares” Telethon, a five-plus hour live event which raised money for Mercer Street Friends, one of Mercer County’s largest charities.

The telethon was the product of the MCCC Television Program’s professional development production courses. Programming consisted of live studio interviews as well as a variety of student-produced segments, including a documentary about the services of Mercer Street Friends. On-air hosts included MCCC faculty members.

MCTV-26 broadcasts to nearly 100,000 households throughout Mercer County, via Comcast, Cablevision and Patriot systems.

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The Viking has been enhanced to serve you better. Our new online system for graduate updates allows you to submit current contact information and let us know about your “life after college.” Another new feature enables you to reconnect and communicate with long-lost friends from a variety of programs.

Attention Alumni! Stay Connected

The MCCC Alumni Association web page has been enhanced to serve you better. Our new online system for graduate updates allows you to submit current contact information and/or let us know about your “life after Mercer.” Another new feature enables you to re-connect and communicate with long-lost friends from a variety of programs.

Did you know? As a Mercer alum, you are eligible to use the MCCC library, receive discounted membership at our Fitness Center, are eligible to use the MCCC library, receive discounted membership at our Fitness Center, and more. Visit us at www.mccc.edu/student_alumni.

“Seven Sins” Explored in Student Production

A unique collaborative performance event premiered at Mercer in November. Created by MCCC students, faculty, alumni and professional award-winning guest artists, “Seven Sins” featured four original one-act plays and three dance numbers in a production that was “every bit as fanciful, dramatic, raucous, and deadly as the sins themselves,” said MCCC Theatre program coordinator Jody Person, the show’s creative director and producer. In addition to roles for the 34 featured actors, the show gave students an opportunity to choreograph, work behind the scenes and contribute to a visual arts portion of the show.

Careers in Corrections Highlighted

Mercer’s Criminal Justice Club sponsored its annual “Careers in Corrections” workshop in October to highlight career opportunities in federal, state and local corrections. Presenting information were representatives from a variety of correctional agencies, pictured with students and faculty members. From left, first row, are Criminal Justice Club President Luis Vega, Club Secretary Kyle Craver, Paulette Savage of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, V. Karen Green-Allen of the U.S. Probation Office, Christine Simone-Dill of the New Jersey Department of Corrections, and MCCC Professor Peter Horne. The back row includes Lionel Henderson of the Mercer County Youth Detention Center, Richard Bearden of the Mercer County Correction Center, David Steele of the Federal Bureau of Prisons and MCCC Assistant Professor Cavit Cooley.
MCCC Makes Flight Dreams Possible

For many young people, pilotin an aircraft is a dream. Yet pursuing a career as a pilot can seem unattainable for those without substantial financial resources. At Mercer County Community College, many such students have realized their dreams.

One of them is Sylvia Sanchez, a petite young woman who may not look like a typical pilot. Her family came to the U.S. from Colombia when she was 15. Today she flies a Boeing 737 throughout the U.S., Canada and Mexico. She achieved her goal with the help of financial aid and grants, graduating from MCCC in 1997.

Caesar Meneses, who grew up in the shadow of Newark International Airport in Elizabeth, N.J., always wanted to fly. He is now a pilot for Express Jet, a regional airline out of Newark. The 2001 Mercer graduate was recently promoted to captain, nearly doubling his salary. He credits MCCC with helping him find the financial resources he needed to pursue his dream.

Recent graduate Evan Conley now works as a flight instructor for Mercer’s Aviation program, clocking 15 to 20 hours per week in the air. His goal is to fly for the military as a reservist. “I came out of college without any debt,” he said.

All three pilots agree on several points. They love to fly, they love their careers, and they loved their educations at Mercer. According to Conley, “Mercer was absolutely phenomenal. I would not change one thing about it. The people who trained me are the best in this business without doubt.”

Mercer’s Aviation Flight Technology program is one of only two in the country that is accredited by the Aviation Accreditation Board International. It is also the only community college aviation program in the state. Mercer employs its own flight instructors and has a fleet of airplanes housed at the Trenton-Mercer Airport—seven Cessna 152s, two Cessna 172s, and one Retractable Cessna 172 RG.

Many of Mercer’s graduates transfer their credits to pursue a bachelor’s degree. Others are hired right out of school, by the airlines or in military jobs. According to Conley, “Everything is transferable, which is really good. The name goes over very well in the business. This whole area has a lot of Mercer grads and it’s really good to know that. It’s very motivating.”

Professor Joseph Blasenstein, coordinator of the program, says, “Mercer is an excellent place to start. Students save a lot of money compared to university programs.”

Sylvia Sanchez is especially appreciative of Mercer’s affordability. “I think for most people who want to be pilots, the biggest concern is the money, because the training is expensive. I would tell them there are ways to do it. Those people were so great. If there was a grant I could apply for, they let me know about it. It makes me very sad when people say, ‘I can’t go to college because I don’t have any money.’”

While flying might not be for everyone, those who pursue it seem destined for the field. “I love the fact that every day is something different,” Meneses said. “Every day there is something unexpected, and when I’m up there, it’s fun. We have the best seat in the house. People come off the plane and say, ‘Thanks for a good job.’”

Conley is just as enthusiastic. “You catch the airplane bug and you have it forever,” he said. “It was just a dream I always had — the speed, the responsibility, and the leadership skills you gain. Just the challenge of it is really cool. There is nothing routine about flying. That is why we train, train, train and we never stop training.”

According to Meneses, “Anyone can be a pilot. It’s not brain surgery, but it is a lot of hard work. If someone has that dream they should definitely follow it.”

For more information about MCCC’s Aviation degree and certificate programs contact Professor Joseph Blasenstein at 609-570-3487.

Flight Team Captures Regional Title

Members of MCCC’s Flight Team took first place at the Intercollegiate Flying Association’s regional competition in October, competing against four-year and two-year colleges. Pictured are team members, from left, Sean Capaiak, team coach Evan Conley, Kathleen “Charley” DeFilippo, Angela Owens, Andres Hidalgo, Michael Suozzo, Judith Galayda, Rajief Johnson, Roslyn Castle, Marc Schambors, John Guszang, Luis Nazario, Andrew O’Neil, MCCC advisor Diane Loving, team captains Colin Stewart and Tabatha Ialacci, Ian Johansen and Ryan Forbeck.

MCCC students Colin Stewart and Ian Johansen were the top scoring male contestants, while the top scoring female was Mercer’s Tabatha Ialacci. The college’s Flight Team has won the regional competition for the past four years under the leadership of Teaching Assistant Diane Loving, and has qualified for the national competition every year for the past 19 years.

Tuskegee Airman Trainer Speaks at MCCC

Roscoe Draper, right, is pictured with MCCC student Ricardo Astillero during a talk Draper presented to Aviation students Nov. 12. Now 88, Draper was one of the first ten men of color to serve as a flight instructor for the “Tuskegee Experiment” of the Army Air Corps. During his talk, Draper showed students historic photographs and video, and related his many fascinating experiences of the 1940s. After completing his pilot training in 1942, Draper taught cadets from 1942 to 1946, and also served on the academic board for the Tuskegee Institute.

Caesar Meneses, a 2001 Aviation graduate
Men's Soccer

With a record of 6-5-1 earlier in the season, a trip to the nationals did not seem likely for the Mercer men’s soccer team this year. Yet, after a near perfect performance in the Northeast District Tournament, the Vikings earned their place at the NJCAA tournament in Tyler, TX, for the seventh consecutive season.

Facing Marshalltown CC (IA) in the quarterfinal round on Nov. 15, the Vikings lost a tough battle 2-1. Mercer scored first on a pass from sophomore midfielder and team captain Victor Hernandez to powerhouse forward Rob Cabrera. But the score did not stand as Marshalltown came back to tie it and go ahead. The Vikings then faced Illinois Central in a consolation game, losing 4-1 in overtime.

Coach Charlie Inverso observed that any games at the national tournament are intense and highly competitive displays of skill. He noted that Mercer dominated the play in the second half against Marshalltown and credits the team with playing its best game of the season. “We started the season with eight freshmen. Considering where we were in September and how far we came, I’m very proud of these players. They accomplished a lot.”

In the Region 19 playoffs, the Vikings defeated Del Tech 3-0 in the semifinal round on Oct. 24 and Essex CC 4-1 in the finals on Oct. 27. Cabrera was named the Offensive Player of the Game and Phil Blake was named the Defensive Player of the Game. The Region 19 final also marked a milestone for Coach Inverso, who tallied his 400th win with the Vikings. The Vikings next traveled to Franklin, MA, for the Northeast District tournament, beating Massasoit CC 3-1 on Nov. 4 and Monroe CC 3-0 on Nov. 5. They ended their season with a 14-7-1 record.

In addition to Hernandez and Cabrera, Inverso recognized defenders Kenos Panchoo, Phil Blake and Chuck Svenson, along with outstanding goalie Alexander Eliasson. Among the other contributors were Lester Omboayo, Lamin Sidibeh, Luke Sterdmont, and Jackson Sengbloh. Hernandez was named a second team All-American by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America. All-Region and All-GSAC honors went to Eliasson, Ponchoo, Hernandez, Omboayo, and Blake; Sidibeh was named to the All-GSAC team.

With a starting line-up so dominated by freshmen, Inverso is already thinking ahead to a bright season in 2008. He was assisted this year by Larry Povia, John Pietrowski and Brian Rostro.

Marc Vecchiolla Named Head Coach for MCCC Men’s Tennis

Marc Vecchiolla has been named head coach for the MCCC men’s tennis team. In announcing the appointment, MCCC Assistant Dean John Simone noted that as head coach for women’s tennis since 1997, Vecchiolla has created a nationally recognized program. “Marc is a first-class professional who is the logical choice to coach the men’s team. It’s a real opportunity for the college that will enhance both programs,” Simone said. Additionally, Vecchiolla has assisted with the men’s team under recently retired head coach Stan Dlugosz, traveling to the national tournament with the Vikings the past two years.

Vecchiolla’s success at Mercer has been stellar. Since he established the women’s program 10 years ago, the Viking women have won the NJCAA national title four times (1999, 2000, 2002 and 2005) and placed second three times (1998, 2001 and 2006). The Vikings were Region 19 champs from 1997-2005. Responsible for all player recruitment efforts, he has coached 26 NJCAA All-Americans. He is the youngest coach ever to be inducted into the NJCAA Tennis Hall of Fame (2005) and was named the NJCAA National Coach of the Year in 1999, 2000, 2002 and 2005.

Vecchiolla plans to approach the men’s team with the same winning philosophy that has proven so successful with the women: work hard and have fun. “I want my players to make a commitment to the program and to themselves, with the ultimate goal of not only winning tennis matches, but learning how to manage their time. You can do it all – study, work, play tennis, and socialize – if you put your mind to it,” he said.

Vecchiolla has served as director of tennis operations at the Mercer County Tennis Center since 1994, managing two tennis facilities and a 20-member staff. He is a member of the Mercer County Tennis Council and the Mercer Tennis Hall of Fame Committee.
**Women's Soccer**

New Head Coach Jodie Ricciardi is upbeat about her first season with the women's soccer team, but the squad was completely different this year. While clearly showing the characteristics of a young team, head coach Maria Goines, and sophomore defender Marlene Chotkowski, freshman forward/midfielder Christina DeAngelis, sophomore forward Maria Goines, and sophomore defender Jorunn Eyj have been nice, but noted that injuries played a role in a few of the losses. "At one point, five starters were out. That was the difference in a couple of games," she said.

Standouts included freshman midfielder Marlene Chotkowski, freshman forward/midfielder Christina DeAngelis, sophomore forward Maria Goines, and sophomore defender Jorunn Eyj. Goines and DeAngelis were selected to the All-Region 19 team; Goines and Chotkowski were selected for All-GSAC honors.

Ricciardi says that as her players learned from her, she learned from them. "We had five girls from other cultures, which added an international flavor. We also had numerous team activities off the field. You can have individual players or you can have a team. These girls learned to work together as a team." She points to their passing game, which improved steadily as the season progressed.

Ricciardi is already looking forward to putting her cleats back on for a 20-day spring season that will allow the team to practice, scrimmage, stay focused and stay in shape. Recruitment for the 2008 Vikings squad has already begun.

Commenting on Ricciardi’s appointment as head coach, MCCC Assistant Dean John Simone notes that Ricciardi did a superior job in her first season. "We are very happy with the progress we saw in the program this year. From day one, Jodie was an excellent representative of the college, establishing a great rapport with players and working extremely well within our mission to support student-athletes both on the field and in the classroom," Simone said.

**Women's Tennis**

Despite a second losing season after 11 years of competing at the nationals, Marc Vecchiolla, head coach for women's tennis, said the team still accomplished its goals. "We learned a lot and we had fun. The players had a great attitude. The 1-9 record did not reflect the tremendous bright spots." The Vikings’ no. 1 player, Hilary Gall, finished second in the region with a 10-5 record. (Four of the losses were to the same Gloucester player.)

According to Vecchiolla, "The competition was a lot better this year and our players didn’t have as much experience coming in." She noted that their overall commitment was evident, as they regularly attended practices and worked hard. He notes that Gall provided the team with excellent leadership and elevated the level of play for her teammates.

With the men’s team also under Vecchiolla’s leadership for the first time this year, the women enjoyed the support of Mercer’s male players, who practiced with the women and came out to matches. (The men play their season in the spring.) Vecchiolla predicts that the roles will reverse in the spring with the women continuing to come out for practices and supporting the men during their matches. "That will propel us right into next fall," he said.

Vecchiolla predicts a seriously improved squad next year. Key players are returning and a solid recruiting class is expected. "I tell the girls that winning in the post-season is icing on the cake. This year was a failure because we had to build a foundation," he said.

Other players on this year’s squad were Katie Walsh, Katrina Brophy, Vanessa Pierre, Jessica Fleming, Kasia Rebus, Nicole Nicola, Kamila Oglejog and Rihanat Jolusam.

**Men’s Basketball**

After two back-to-back seasons with over 20 wins, the Vikings basketball team is an almost completely different squad this year. While clearly showing the characteristics of a young team, the Vikings should have some good results, according to Head Coach Kelly Williams. “The sophomores are beginning to take control. We’re moving in the right direction,” he said.

He is encouraged by a balanced roster. Leading the effort is sophomore team captain Irvin Jacobsen. “We also like to run and keep up the pace,” said Tenaglia, who hopes to get significant numbers from Diggs, Regan, and Bell. He notes that Bell is a great example of the improvement that comes from hard work. “She worked with a trainer over the summer, and as a result is stronger and more fit. She is a better player all around.” Bell showed her prowess in a game against USMAPS on Dec. 11, recording her 11th double-double in a 63-22 Mercer rout.

Tenaglia reports that the team should function well inside with help from Bell and Jacobsen. “We also like to run and keep up the pace,” said Tenaglia, who hopes to get significant numbers from Diggs, Regan, and Bell. He notes that Bell is a great example of the improvement that comes from hard work. “She worked with a trainer over the summer, and as a result is stronger and more fit. She is a better player all around.” Bell showed her prowess in a game against USMAPS on Dec. 11, recording her 11th double-double in a 63-22 Mercer rout.

“Part of the process we teach here at Mercer is structure,” Tenaglia said. “We want to help the players understand what it takes to be successful – on the court and in the classroom.”

For more Sports News, visit www.mccc.edu/news_sports

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**Women’s Basketball**

Even with 18 years as MCCC head coach, Mike Tenaglia hesitates to make predictions. With a 1-3 start, Tenaglia noted that it took a few games for the team to come together and find the right combinations on the court. They quickly turned things around and, by winter break, had earned a record of 6-4.

There are only three returning sophomores – Krista Regan from last season, and Jeanette Bell and Amora Dawson White from two seasons ago. Freshmen contributors include forward Lauren Jacobsen, guard Kayleen Diggins, guard Beckly Elliot, guard Jenna Winston and forward Arielle DeMarcello.

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**Golf Classic committee members included, from left, Dave Fraytak, Doug Borden, Steve Ritzau, and MCCC Assistant Dean John Simone. The tournament is held in memory of Ritzau’s late wife, MCCC Foundation Board member and local physician, Dr. Cynthia Schaffer.**

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**Fine Day of Golf Raises Funds for Student-Athletes**

Eighty golfers supported the Mercer cause at the 16th Annual MCCC Golf Classic at Mercer Oaks Golf Course on Oct. 16. According to Assistant Dean John Simone, the event was memorable in a number of ways. “There was an overall feeling of real camaraderie among the golfers. They recognize that Mercer fulfills a role for student-athletes that is truly worth supporting,” Simone reports that 23 Mercer athletes transferred to four-year schools at the end of the 2006-07 school year, many with athletic scholarships.

Numerous golfers received prizes at an awards dinner. Among the generous contributors to the silent auction were Mrs. G TV and Appliances, Mercer County Park Commission, the Knife and Fork Restaurant in Atlantic City, and golf committee members Doug Perlman of Borden Perlman Insurance Company, and Dave Fraytak of Fairly, Veisz, Fraytak Architects.

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**Student-Athletes**

**Women’s Soccer**

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Kelsey Theatre
Spring 2008 Calendar

Full-Length Productions

Driving Miss Daisy
Feb. 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10

My Favorite Year
Feb. 15, 16, 17, 22, 23, 24

Thoroughly Modern Millie
Feb. 29; March 1, 2, 7, 8, 9

Singin’ In The Rain
March 28, 29, 30; April 4, 5, 6

Macbeth
April 18, 19, 25, 26, 27

3Penny
May 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11

Mercer Dance Ensemble
Undercover
May 17, 18

The Full Monty
May 30, 31; June 1, 6, 7, 8

What the Butler Saw
June 20, 21, 22

Kelsey Kids Series

Funny Stuff Circus
February 2

Max & Ruby
February 23

Stone Soup
March 8

Strike Up The Band
March 15

Dr. Doolittle
April 19

Sleeping Beauty
May 3

Madeline & The Bad Hat
May 10

The Little Red Hen
May 31; June 7

For Kelsey events call (609) 570-3333 or visit www.kelseytheatre.net

Events at MCCC’s Gallery

Mercer County Artists 2008
March 4 - April 3

MCCC Visual Arts Student Show 2008
April 22 - May 14

See listings of Gallery events at www.mccc.edu/community_gallery


The Distinguished Lecture Series

West Windsor Campus, Communications Building
For more, visit www.mccc.edu/news_events_lecture

“Women and Heart Disease”
Dr. Banu Mahalingam • Feb. 14, noon

Les Demoiselles d’Avignon and Picasso
MCCC Professor Mel Leipzig • Feb. 26, noon

Policewomen: The First Century and Beyond
MCCC Professor Peter Horne • March 27, noon

Drug Approval in the U.S.
Ronald Harning, Ph.D. • April 8, noon

*Thou Art...Will Give,* Photography and History of Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia
Eric Kunsman • April 24, noon