

January 23, 2007

the Bulletin

MESA COMMUNITY COLLEGE'S EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

Education major focus for Napolitano



Setting forth a theme of "One Arizona," Governor Janet Napolitano kicked off her second term in office by speaking at the 2007 East Valley Breakfast with the Governor at Mesa Community College on Jan. 12. The event, jointly hosted by the East Valley Partnership, the East Valley Chambers of Commerce Alliance, and MCC, drew local educators, business leaders, and city officials.

Napolitano, joking that the speech at MCC was the "Cliff's Notes version" of her 45-minute State of the State address from earlier in the week, named education as the top priority of a plan that emphasizes education, foundation, and innovation.

"If we are to succeed as a state, we must focus on 'One Arizona,'" Napolitano said. "One person can't do it alone. We must link our arms and do it together."

The Democratic governor outlined her plans to revamp the state's education system with several proposals for the 2007 legislative session, including:

- * Boosting starting teacher pay to at least \$33,000 a year.
- * Increasing the minimum dropout age to 18 from 16.
- * Requiring four years of math and three years of science for high school graduates.
- * Providing affordable health care for every Arizona child under the age of 19 whose family makes less than \$60,000 per year.
- * Keeping higher education accessible, affordable, and excellent by building up state funding.

"We must make sure our students graduate from high school and receive higher education," Napolitano said. "(In the 21st century), all students require a higher level of education because of technology. They really need to understand it and use it."

Napolitano said of the jobs that pay a livable wage in Maricopa County, less than two percent are available to those with only a high school diploma.

The governor also spoke of the tremendous infrastructure needs of Arizona, the nation's fastest growing state. She emphasized the need to cut the "time tax," which we pay every time we sit, stuck in traffic that should be moving. Napolitano proposes refinancing existing bonds by extending terms from 20 to 30 years, freeing up more than \$400 million for roads. Mass transit options must also be explored.

Napolitano put forth proposals in regard to housing, water usage, air quality, public lands, and senior care. She spoke of the need to coordinate growth in East Valley cities.

"We are running into each other," Napolitano said. "We are far past the time when one city can build housing without considering the surrounding roads and schools."

The governor ended her speech with a reference to the third key point in her plan—innovation. Napolitano said innovation would attract new high-wage jobs to Arizona, bringing it into the 21st Century, an age of "creativity and innovation."

Napolitano pledged to accomplish her objectives without raising taxes and without touching the state's "rainy day fund."

"We're a young, vibrant state," Napolitano concluded. "We're 'On Arizona.' Let's do it."

After her speech, Napolitano answered a few questions from audience members, including MCC anthropology professor Annalisa Alvrus, who delivered five questions from the second-grade class of Alvrus' daughter at Dobson Montessori in Mesa. When asked what her hobbies are, Napolitano admitted to playing the guitar, but "not very well."

Adjunct Faculty Developer



Nicole Lohrbeer

Nicole Lohrbeer, Mesa Community College's Adjunct Faculty Developer, is experienced, energetic, and passionate about her role supporting MCC's adjunct faculty community. With more than 900 adjunct faculty who currently teach classes at MCC, there's a clear need for leadership and support.

The Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs funds the new position and, Nicole noted, only one of the ten other Maricopa County Community Colleges has an adjunct faculty developer position.

"While this is only a part-time position, it is a big step on the part of Mesa Community College to reach out to its adjunct faculty," Nicole said. "I am honored to have this opportunity to serve the college in this capacity."

Nicole, an adjunct faculty member in MCC's English and Women's Studies department, said she has noticed a shift lately as MCC and other colleges go beyond simply recognizing what a valuable asset adjunct faculty are to supporting their adjunct instructors in new ways.

"We have an incredibly wide variety of skills that these women and men bring to the classroom," Nicole said. "It makes sense for the college to take a greater interest in the professional development and growth of adjunct faculty, especially since they teach the majority of students in many departments."

Nicole brings her own combination of experiences to her position at MCC. After graduating from New York University with a bachelor's degree in English literature and creative writing, she spent some time in the Peace Corps in the Czech Republic teaching English as a Second Language to high school students before completing her master's degree in women's studies at the University of Alabama. She joined the faculty at MCC four years ago.

As she begins her new position, Nicole hopes to accomplish a number of goals. She's already working toward better communication by publishing a monthly adjunct faculty newsletter about professional development opportunities and other campus and district-wide activities. Nicole would also like to create an adjunct faculty mentoring program and will be working with administrators to revamp the orientation program for new adjunct faculty for the fall of 2007.

Nicole advises new adjunct instructors to make use of the Center for Teaching and Learning's resources, workshops and seminars. Located across from the Jazzland Café near the Paul Elsner Library, it's open Monday through Thursday, 8am – 6pm and until 5pm on Fridays.

"The CTL has so much to offer," said Nicole, who has taken many workshops there herself. "I'd be more than happy to give people a tour and provide an in-depth look at the resources we have available."

For adjunct faculty who are new to campus or those who are still trying to find their way around campus, check out a new CTL workshop titled, *So You Survived the First Week. . . MCC 101 for Adjunct Faculty* on Friday, Jan. 26th from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Visit the CTL Workshop Calendar at <http://ctl.mc.maricopa.edu/> for more information and to register.

Nicole said she looks forward to getting to know members of the MCC adjunct community and invites them to contact her by email at nicole.lohrbeer@mcmail.maricopa.edu, call her at (480) 461-7997, or drop by her office in the CTL.

"Hopefully we can raise visibility about the positive things adjunct faculty are doing and discover their needs as well," Nicole said

Committee seeks environmental scanning input

What are the key trends, issues or events that may impact Mesa Community College in the next five years? How can MCC develop the “strategic intelligence” needed to stay ahead of the curve in a fast-changing higher education environment?

The MCC Strategic Planning Committee is asking for input from faculty and staff as they update MCC’s Strategic Plan for Fall 2007. The committee has more than 30 members who submit items each year for the environmental scanning process, but this year the committee would like additional input.

“This year we felt the submissions should be solicited campus-wide; the more breadth of perspectives we have, the better,” said Andrea Buehman, committee chair.

Environmental scanning is a process by which the external environment of an organization is examined to identify new, or unexpected, trends or events that could have implications for the future of an organization. These trends could be social, economic, technological, educational, or political in nature. This information, combined with a comprehensive assessment of the organization’s internal conditions, is the foundation for planning.

MCC employees can use newspapers, professional journals, conferences, websites, radio, or TV as sources for information. For example, a local newspaper story with information on the rise in popularity of online college courses might impact MCC’s goals to expand access to college programs and use technology efficiently. A story with statistics on recent changes in the East Valley’s Hispanic population would affect MCC’s

goal to recognize diversity. New research on solar energy in a professional journal might lead to saving money on energy costs at the college. Reports and information from conferences might prove valuable either directly or indirectly for a combination of strategic goals.

The committee uses the following points when conducting environmental scans:

- * Seek signs of change.
- * Look for signals of potential events on the horizon.
- * Look for forecasts of experts.
- * Look for indirect effects.
- * Be aware that there are few guidelines on how to do scanning.
- * Write abstracts.

“We’ve made the submission process very quick and user-friendly,” Andrea said. “We encourage all members of the MCC community to contribute.”

To submit information for consideration, click on MCC’s Office of Research and Planning link at:

http://www.mc.maricopa.edu/about/orp/planning/Environmental_Scanning.html.

Simply include a citation, a brief description of the key points, and the implications for the college. Submissions may be made from now until March 30.

Disney College Program

MCC student Sara Banks has turned her lifelong passion for the Walt Disney Company into college credit by participating in the Disney College Program on site in Orlando, Florida. The program allows Sara to earn six MCC credits as a paid intern and three credits for a Management and Leadership class while living, working, and studying near the Florida theme park.

Sara, who works in an entertainment position at Walt Disney World Resort, said her experience in the Disney Program has been like no other experience in the world.

“I get to do what most people dream of doing and I love it,” Sara said. “The guests come here to be entertained and I get to help that experience come to life.”

In addition to polishing her performing skills, Sara said her Management and Leadership class has taught her about different leadership styles and teamwork. Disney instructors who teach courses are industry and content-area experts and hold one or more advanced degrees. The management and business courses can lead to certificates and degrees in the MCC Business Department and MCC advisors are also able to work with other departments like engineering, music, and theater to provide additional courses on an individual basis.

Disney recruiter Sarah Hinchberger, who recently visited the MCC campus for a student information session, said the program offers students an excellent opportunity to not only gain practical working experience, but also network with



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industry leaders, develop communication skills, and enhance other marketable skills that lead to better job opportunities, whether at Disney or elsewhere.

“The Disney College Program is a good chance to put Disney on a resume and work for a Fortune 100 company,” Hinchberger said.

Along with paid internships in the entertainment field, Hinchberger said students can take advantage of approximately 600 paid working opportunities in hospitality, operations, merchandise, or food and beverage, to name a few. Students live in gated apartment complexes, with living costs automatically deducted from their paychecks.

Disney recruiters will return to the MCC campus again this spring. Interested students should contact the Career and Re-entry Services office at 480-461-7592 for official dates, or visit

www.mc.maricopa.edu/students/career. More information can also be found on the Disney College Program website at www.wdwcollegeprogram.com.

Ron Gaschler, Director of Career and Educational Planning at MCC, said he is hoping for new approval of more Disney courses this spring. MCC students can meet with Ron or Suzanne Hipps to choose or set up individual courses to coincide with the Disney opportunity. For the spring 2007 semester, approximately 20 MCC students received Disney offers and 10 have accepted.

“We’ve worked hard to offer this program to MCC students,” Ron said. “We’ve seen a lot of success come out of this program—some students stay and work for Disney,”

Advancing her position at Disney is something Sara is considering as she ponders future employment goals.

There is no other experience in the world that gives you the feeling Disney does,” Sara said. “What can I say ... it’s magic.”



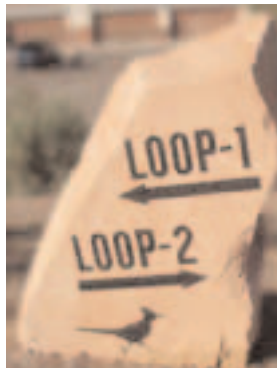
Get in shape on Red Mountain fitness trail

Feel like getting some fresh air and exercise after the busy holiday season? The fitness trail at MCC’s Red Mountain campus offers faculty, staff, students, and the community the opportunity to exercise while experiencing the beauty of the native Sonoran desert.

This two-mile footpath begins just outside the Mesquite building and wraps around the perimeter of the campus. Boulders etched with desert critters mark quarter-mile increments for walkers and joggers as they make their way around the loop.

The campus employs sustainable gardening practices along the trail that conserve natural resources and reflect the mission of the college to be environmentally responsible. In addition, during Red Mountain’s recent fifth anniversary celebration, the campus conducted a Native American blessing of the trail to symbolize a harmonious relationship with the land.

Dave Gerlach, director of the Red Mountain campus fitness center, incorporates the trail into several fitness classes.



“The trail offers those using it the opportunity to exercise in a relaxing, natural environment away from the accelerated pace of the central campus,” Dave said.

Dave, along with Jim Adams, A.J. Lombard, Yvonne Schmidt, Dennis Wilson, and Michael Wintz, combined efforts to develop the Red Mountain Sonoran Desert Fitness Trail through an Innovative Project Grant in 2005. The trail creates hands-on learning experiences crossing over several different curriculums as students, staff, and the community benefit from a heightened awareness of Sonoran Desert ecology.

The trail is open every day during daylight hours. Maps are available inside the fitness center in the Mesquite building.

--“Feeling a connection with nature’s intelligence brings access to infinite creativity, freedom and bliss.” Deepak Chopra