

A Publication for Alumni and Other Friends of Mercer County Community College

SPRING 2001

Love Was in the Air for Mercer Aviation Couple

cer's Aviation
Flight Technology program
have so much
in common,
united in their
love for flying and strong
commitment
to their education. It's easy
to see how they
could end up as
partners – in the
sky and in life.

tudents in Mer-

Introducing Roy and Jennifer (Anagnostis) Johnson, Mercer aviation students who were married in 1997. Roy graduated from Mercer in 1989 with an Associate in Applied Science in Aviation Flight Technology. Jennifer started at Mercer that same year with her private pilot license already in hand, intent on pursuing a career in aviation. They met while he was an instructor for Mercer at Robbinsville Airport and she was looking for someone to help her finish up her instrument training.

"Some people are born with the natural ability to fly and she had that ability," Roy recalls of Jennifer. "I was impressed with her smoothness, coordination and professional attitude from the first day we started flying together. We finished her instrument training in two weeks. That's determination!"

They have, quite literally, been soaring ever since. Both attribute their success in the air to the solid foundation they received at Mercer. "Mercer provided me with invaluable skills necessary to succeed in this industry," said Jen. "The program is intense and structured so students must learn immediately to prioritize their time. I learned so much about teamwork, leadership and communication, which are what airlines look for in a pilot. I think what separates Mercer from other larger flight schools is the commit-

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Roy and Jennifer Johnson, graduates of Mercer's Aviation Flight Technology program, at their wedding in 1997.

"The MCCC aviation program is a great first step. I found the courses to be challenging and very rewarding. I also made many lifetime friends there, including my best friend and wife, Jennifer." — Roy Johnson '89

ment of the instructors, which far exceeds any other college I have seen "

Jen and Roy reflect fondly on their years at Mercer. Both remember good times spent with fellow students, developing strong friendships in the course of studying and flying together. For Jennifer, one of the highlights was the Flight Team Competition in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, an annual event of the National Intercollegiate Flying Association, in which Mercer students compete in

flight and ground events such as preflight simulation, accuracy landings and cross country navigation.

"The MCCC aviation program is a great first step," Roy said. "I found the courses to be challenging and very rewarding. I also made many lifetime friends there, including my best friend and wife, Jennifer."

After serving as an MCCC flight instructor, Roy moved on to Trenton-Mercer Airport as (wo instructor and gill)

Outstanding Graduates of 2001

Kim Thompson was one of 4,000 students chosen from 62,000 applicants nationwide for the Gates Millennium Scholarship. The award will cover her educational expenses through the Ph.D. level. She plans to teach in inner city schools and has a special interest in helping teen mothers and children.

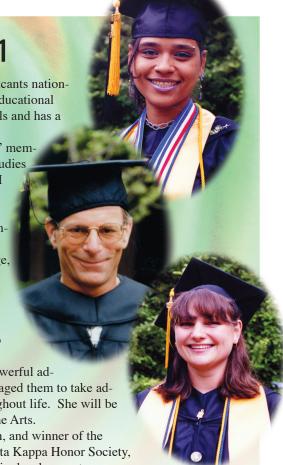
Thompson, a "Distinguished Scholar" and "All Star Academic Team" member, did it all while raising three sons. Her next step is continuing her studies at Rider University. "I am nervous to leave Mercer," Thompson said. "I have felt really supported."

Dennis Connaughton has won a full Phi Theta Kappa scholarship to Rutgers University. He plans to become a hospital social worker to counsel patients suffering from hepatitis, HIV and cancer. He began his college education around the same time his daughters were ready for college, after working as a truck driver for many years.

Connaughton leads a support group at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital at Hamilton for people affected by hepatitis and other liver diseases. He also maintains his own website as a resource for hepatitis patients. "Mercer's a great school," Connaughton said. "I don't want to leave."

Johannah Hutchison, an honors graduate in fine arts, delivered a powerful address to students at commencement ceremonies on May 23. She encouraged them to take advantage of every opportunity, to take risks and to measure growth throughout life. She will be continuing her studies at Rutgers University's Mason Gross School of the Arts.

Named "Student of the Year" by the Student Government Association, and winner of the Student Community Service Award, Hutchison led the college's Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, which won five-star status for its extensive charitable work and leadership development.



ON THE

"Conversations About Writing" Brings Teachers Together Via Interactive TV

Teaching students to be good writers doesn't start and end in English class. In every discipline at every educational level teachers recognize that the ability to express oneself on paper is a key ingredient to lifelong success.

To share ideas on this challenging topic, educators from area high schools and faculty from MCCC met throughout the spring in "Conversations About Writing" workshops. Arranging the workshops were Fran Davidson, professor and coordinator of the faculty's "Writing Across the Disciplines" committee, and Martin Kushner, coordinator of MercerNet Interactive Television (ITV). Thirteen county high schools are fully "wired" through MercerNet, a county-wide fiber optics network that connects them with each other and with MCCC. Using the system for the professional development of educators is a top priority, according to Kushner. "This is a pilot project that we hope will be ongoing," he said.



Teachers from area high schools and MCCC faculty met at an introductory session of "Conversations About Writing" facilitated by MercerNet Interactive TV throughout the spring. From left, standing, are Fran Davidson of MCCC; Matthew Cordonnier, Deborah Graham, Nicholas Cirillo and Barbara Fryar of Trenton Central High School; Sharmila Sen of MCCC; Donna Mitchell of West Windsor-Plainsboro High; Martin Kushner of MercerNet; Ann Breitman of West Windsor-Plainsboro High; Janice Latella of Trenton Central High; and Marianne Reynolds of MCCC. Seated are Helen Chiappetta and Mina White of Pond Road Middle School, and Patrice Connell of Trenton Central High.



MCCC Signs Transfer Agreement with Temple University

Students who complete an associate degree at Mercer will now be able to transfer more easily to Temple University after a "Core to Core Transfer Agreement" was signed by the two schools. At the signing ceremonies are, from left, Sandy Diamond, MCCC transfer counselor; Beth Tartaglia, associate director of transfer admissions at Temple; Robert Schneider, director of core and transfer programs at Temple; Laurene Jones, MCCC transfer counselor; Marilyn Pender, acting assistant dean for student academic support services at MCCC; Dr. Virginia Carter, associate vice president of continuing education at Temple; and Thomas Wilfrid, vice president for academic and student affairs at Mercer.

The new agreement adds Temple to the long list of colleges that hold transfer agreements with Mercer throughout the region and the country. The college grants associate degrees in 62 major areas that are designed for transfer, in addition to associate degrees in applied science and certificate programs designed for career preparation.

Mercer Arts Enlivened in Trenton

MCCC has teamed with Trenton's Passage Theatre Company at Mill Hill Playhouse to provide new opportunities for students in theatre and dance. Coordinating the program is Nick Anselmo, Passage Theatre's associate artistic director. "We give students the opportunity to be on stage more often, and to work with professional actors," Anselmo said.

With theatre classes now meeting at the college's James Kerney Campus in downtown Trenton, students are just blocks from the playhouse, a historic, city-owned church building. "I'm excited about bringing more students into an urban environment," said Anselmo, who is an experienced actor, director and choreographer. "At Kerney there is a real positive energy. People are excited to be here and to have these opportunities." Mercer's associate degree programs in theatre and dance enable students to



The Visual and Performing Arts Thrive at Mercer

With ten majors in the visual and performing arts, Mercer provides abundant opportunities for creative and talented students. Small group settings, individual attention, and state-of-the-art equipment all lead to a learning environment that puts students first.

Mercer offers majors in fine arts, art history, photography, illustration, ceramics/sculpture, advertising design, computer graphics, music, dance, and theater. Associate in Art and Associate in Fine Arts degree programs prepare students for transfer to four-year colleges. Associate in Applied Science degree programs prepare students for direct entry into a career field. All arts programs at Mercer provide a solid grounding in the liberal arts and sciences, enriching students' lives and preparing them for wherever they want to go.

High Technology Training Center Comes to Mercer

New Jersey businesses will benefit from high technology training now being of-



At a press conference announcing the startup of the Central New Jersey Centers for Workforce Excellence in Information Technology are, from left, Congressman Rush Holt; MCCC Acting President Eric Perkins; Mercer County Executive Robert Prunetti; and Chairman of the Mercer County Workforce Investment Board Calvin Iszard.

fered at Mercer through the Central New Jersey Centers for Workforce Excellence in Information Technology (IT Centers). Congressman Rush Holt, Mercer County Executive Robert Prunetti, and Chair of the Mercer County Workforce Investment Board Calvin Iszard met recently at the college to announce the IT Centers' startup and describe the role the Centers will play in Mercer and Middlesex Counties.

According to Congressman Holt, "Even entry level jobs demand an ability to work with high technology and information technology. We are experiencing labor shortages that cost the U.S.A. a total of \$100 billion a year. We have to support these competitive industries," he said.

The IT Centers provide training for individuals and for businesses who need to broaden or upgrade the skills of their workforces, according to Ray Ingram, director. They are administered by MCCC's Division of Corporate and Community Programs. "Our overriding objective is to create training programs that match the real world needs of businesses in the short and medium term," Ingram said. "The programs are geared to real-world problems and solutions."

The IT Centers were made possible through the resources of MCCC, Middlesex County College, and a Department of Labor grant awarded to the Mercer County Workforce Investment Board (WIB). To become a business partner of the IT Centers or to take

Perkins Grant Funds Technical Education

Mercer's multimedia lab, television studios, and aviation and horticulture programs, as well as services for disabled students, received a \$416,206 boost from the New Jersey Department of Education's Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Grant. Awarded to Mercer for the second year, the grant will upgrade equipment for students in these programs.

Science Plus Soap Equal Success



Janssen Pharmaceutica staff members who acted as mentors, and high school students who participated in the Trenton Science Institute, James Kerney Campus, present a \$770 donation to the Trenton YWCA. The money was earned through a soap manufacturing and marketing project. From left are mentor Kenneth Walton of Janssen; Trenton Central High School student Tolu Onigbanjo; YWCA Executive Director Sasa Montano; mentor Loye Rose of Janssen; MCCC Provost Beverly Richardson; and Science Program Coordinator Nadine Kaiser. Participating students, from Trenton Central High School and the Granville Academy, named their company "Paradise Essentials." The project, which emphasized chemistry education, was funded by a Johnson and Johnson grant through the Bridge to Employment Program, with the goal of motivating high school students to pursue education and careers in science.

advantage of its training opportunities, contact Ray Ingram at 609-586-4800 x3635, or email ingram@mccc.edu. More information is available at www.

nj-itcenters.com.

Mercer to Build Corporate Conference Center

The target date for completion of Mercer's new \$7 million, 34,000-square-foot Corporate Conference Center is Fall 2002. Funding for the project has been provided by the State of New Jersey and the County of Mercer. The two architectural firms are Faridy Veisz Fraytak, P.C. of Trenton and GBQC of Philadelphia.

"We are very excited about our new conference and training center and its benefit to corporations, businesses and the community at large," says Rose Nini, dean of the college's Division of Corporate and Community Programs. "We're particularly pleased with the highly flexible interactive teaching environment which is ideally suited for adult learning."

The conference center will house numerous computer laboratories and conference rooms, plus a 200-seat multi-media auditorium. In addition to expanding its continuing education programs, the college will offer a range of conference management services.

Breaking ground on May 3 to begin construction of Mercer's new Corporate Conference Center are County Executive Robert Prunetti, Board Chair Connie Maglione, Architect Jami Faridy, Freeholder Anthony Carabelli, Senator Peter Inverso, MCCC Acting



Spotlight on Faculty Authors



Mercer faculty members who have authored their own textbooks are, from left, Betty Cornelius, Edith Silver, Stephen Richman, Laura Knight, and Jim Franklin.

This is the first in a series focusing on full-time Mercer faculty members who have authored books.

Mercer professors will gladly tell you about the special satisfaction that comes with the teaching profession. But a particular group knows the even greater satisfaction of teaching from a textbook that they've written. Their subject areas differ. Their particular reasons for embarking on a textbook project vary, but Mercer professors say that teaching from their own textbook is the ideal instructional situation.

When Professor Stephen Richman began teaching his two-semester "Spanish 107 and 108" in 1975, he conceived the courses as "an alternative to the standard beginner language courses available at every college." Designed especially for travelers and for practical situations like the workplace, "these courses emphasize oral communication – practical vocabulary in realistic situations," said Richman, who has served as coordinator for Foreign Languages since 1990.

Using an original series of course handouts as his foundation, Richman published *Conversational Spanish for Everyday Use* in 1975. He took a onesemester sabbatical to complete the task, turning to the college's graphic arts department to help with illustrations and the college print shop for printing.

Now in its sixth edition, the book's material has been refined over the years. Activities and vocabulary have been added, and other material eliminated. Richman enjoys being the author of a textbook that is printed in-house. "When the need arises for a new edition, it can be carried out more often and with less expense," he said.

For Math Professors Edith Silver

and Betty Cornelius, the idea of writing a book together was a natural extension of their long-time relationship as office mates. They have been at the college for 34 and 33 years respectively, and have co-authored textbooks for two introductory math courses.

"When we moved to the West Windsor Campus, the original plan was to

Some students who started with this course have gone on to become math majors."

As the textbooks' authors, Cornelius and Silver are in a perfect position to enhance their material with each edition. "It's ideal to have so much control over the material. Each time we teach the course we have better insight into what works. It helps me be a better teacher," said Cornelius. "We're proud of the fact that success rates in these courses are some of the highest at Mercer."

For English **Professors Laura Knight and Jim Franklin**, it was frustration that led to their collaboration on *And Your Point*, a text for English 101 published by Windsor Press. "I was dissatisfied with the book we were using," recalled Knight. Midway through the semester, she decided it was time to write her own and enlisted the help of office mate Franklin.

Their goal was to create one book that included challenging readings and useful grammar sections. "There was nothing on the market that satisfactorily combined the two," said Knight, who has been at Mercer since 1982. "In addition, we were seeking to match our department curriculum with

pick up where ours left off," said Franklin, a Mercer professor since 1968. "We wanted to hear directly from them what they were expecting from our transfer students."

The first edition of *And Your Point* came out in 1997; the book is currently in its third edition. With each edition, the authors have fine-tuned their material. "We've had the opportunity to see what worked and what didn't work," said Knight.

The text is organized into five sections. Readings address a variety of stimulating topics from the sciences, literature, humanities and history. Featured authors include Karl Marx, Charles Darwin, Shakespeare, Jamaica Kincaid, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Grammar sections cover such points as the writing process, improving sentence structure and punctuation.

"Since using this book, we're getting more from our students," said Knight. "The readings are more challenging, and they lead into harder readings and longer papers. Students feel that this course puts them on a solid college level and that they'll be prepared when they transfer." Knight and Franklin have gotten good responses from other faculty members who are using their book.

It took 15 months of nights, weekends and a summer break to complete, but Franklin and Knight say *And Your Point* was worth it. "Now we have a book we can really work with. Classes are much more enjoyable to teach. We are giving our students a chance to learn at a higher level." And, according to these professors, most are succeeding admirably.

"Now we have a book we can really work with. Classes are much more enjoyable to teach. We are giving our students a chance to learn at a higher level." — Prof. Laura Knight

teach introductory math classes in a large lecture hall," recalled Cornelius. "We envisioned being in a big room with 150 kids who didn't like math. We decided to give students a textbook with a structured, systematic approach that would help them develop an appreciation of mathematics in their everyday lives," said Silver.

Silver and Cornelius wrote *Concepts* of *Mathematics* in 1978, which covers numeration systems, set theory, math systems, group theory, and logic for a target audience of liberal arts and other non-science majors. *Topics in Math* picks up where the first book leaves off, giving non-technical students practical knowledge of useful math concepts including computer math, problem solving, statistics, and probability.

"We tell students that we will touch on many areas of math and hopefully they will find one they're passionate about," said Cornelius. Originally published in-house, Paladin Press began publishing the texts when larger quantities were needed.

"I liken our step-by-step approach to eating an apple," said Silver. "You can't put the whole thing in your mouth at once. You have to take small bites. the level of mastery at the four-year schools."

Before they started, Knight and Franklin consulted with instructors from Rutgers. "The idea was that the transfer school's curriculum should



Mercer's Communication Students Say It All!

Joseph Buckley is a communications major whose goal is a law degree. He is President of the Student Government Association. "I love taking part in all the activities Mercer has to offer. I also love the small class sizes."

Mercer offers 62 majors including many options in communications, humanities and social sciences.

Register now for Spring 2001 Credit classes begin January 16

Mercer Makes It Happen!



Learn more: www.mccc.edu Call: 609-586-0505

Mercer's spring ad campaign focused on some of our most successful students, representing their varied interests, majors, and career goals.

A Little Push Into A Hot New Medium for Mercer Alum

reston Harrison ('73) is fired up about an art form that's popular in Mexico and Europe: painted ceramic tiles. He discovered his new medium almost by accident after a 20-year hiatus from painting of any kind, and his bold, colorful works are gain-

ing popularity in central New Jersey, especially in commercial settings. The new Marrazzo's Supermarket in Ewing features a 350-tile installation by Harrison

Professor Mel Leipzig, coordinator of Mercer's Fine Arts program, has enthusiastic words for Harrison, who was one of Leipzig's first art students at Mercer in the late 1960s. "He is a terrific artist and a terrific person," said Leipzig. "He's immensely gifted. All these years later, I still remember his images so vividly."

Harrison remembers his Mercer years in downtown Trenton with fondness. "It was a golden time. Mercer's art program was blossoming with young talent," he said. "Several new art teachers had just come to Mercer from New York, including Mel," Harrison recalled.

"It was an inspirational time for me. There was a lot of energy and creativity at Mercer. We felt connected with the artistic history of Trenton. It was a very special experience." Harrison took

additional courses at the Philadelphia College of Art and graduated from Mercer with an A.A. degree in Art and Design in 1973.

After graduation, Harrison got a job with Hill Refrigeration in Trenton, where he began a career in sales and store design for supermarkets. Currently he directs sales for Cold Technology in Blackwood, New Jersey, planning refrigeration installations in the region. As he

settled into sales, Harrison's artistic endeavors came to a standstill. "Life got

nergy and creativelt connected with f Trenton. It was a nice." Harrison took

Harrison's "Graham Car" was exhibited in the juried TAWA show at the N.J. State Museum this spring.

A section of Harrison's ceramic tile mural depicting the history of Marrazzo's Supermarket on display in Marrazzo's Thriftway in Ewing.

in the way," he admitted.

According to Harrison's wife Sharon, a visit to his former professor in the mid-1990s inspired Harrison to restart his art career. The couple had returned to the college to sit in on one of Leipzig's classes. Mel invited them to his office, where he pulled out a slide projector and began showing the slides he had kept of Preston's work from 30 years earlier. "Your husband is a good painter," Sharon recalls Leipzig saying emphatically. "Mel gave Preston the push he needed."

Tile painting has offered Harrison a sense of freedom and a more relaxed style than he had with his previous work in oils. His first tile painting was of "John and Peter's" in New Hope, where Harrison has performed over the years as a singer-songwriter. One owner bought his piece fresh out of the kiln, the other owner immediately ordered a second one, and the bartender ordered a third.

Other establishments quickly began to seek out his distinctive work, including Landolfi's Pasta Company, DeBruno's Cheese Shop, DeAnna's Restaurant, Go For Baroque, and Marsilio's Restaurant in just the past two years. Upcoming projects include work for Rossi's Tavern in Chambersburg, and Olives and McCaffrey's Supermarket, both in Princeton.

"So far it seems that my customers' attraction to the tile is simply that it is fun. The expectation of tile work is of something more carefree than other art forms. I've learned that sometimes you

just don't think about these things, you simply do it and enjoy it. What more could an artist want?"

According to Harrison, working with tiles presents some advantages, along with some artistic challenges. "The colors can be tricky to work with," he explained. "They look chalky and pale before baking. You have to anticipate what they're going to look like after being fired in an 1800-degree kiln."

But once finished, tiles provide a very durable surface, he notes, making them ideal for a commercial setting. "They're different and there's an interesting esthetic. Sort of by accident, I've discovered a nice little niche." And his years in refrigeration sales are giving him an unanticipated pay-off as many of his clients are commissioning tile work for their establishments.

Leipzig is highly gratified to see Harrison's new endeavor bringing him so much success. "His works have a commercial appeal, but they're more than that. There's a sensitivity to them. Preston's terrific sense of design and color come out in these pieces."

Harrison had one of his works showcased in a Trenton Artists Workshop Association (TAWA) exhibit at the New Jersey State Museum this spring, alongside several paintings by his old friend and teacher, Mel Leipzig. "Mercer helped me get there," he said.

"There was a lot of energy and creativity at Mercer. We felt connected with the artistic history of Trenton. It was a very special experience." —Preston Harrison '73

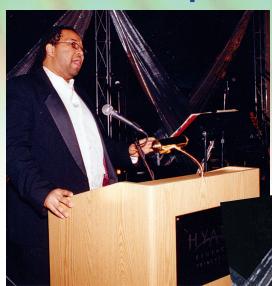


Horticulture Students Plan Landscaping

The garden area in front of Mercer's library was beautified by members of the Horticulture Club, who designed the landscaping and planted new shrubs and small trees. The club secured funding from eight student clubs whose members also participated in the planting project.



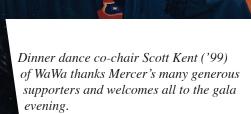
2001 A Space Odyssey



students in disguise, add to an "out of this world" evening.

Solar system visitors, MCCC

Graduate Charles Weatherspoon ('00) explains how Mercer put him on the road to success. He is now pursuing a bachelor's degree at Rutgers University.





Scott D. Kent ('99), Wawa, Inc., Co-Chair Richard P. Perlman, Borden Perlman Insurance, Co-Chair

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Foundation Board Ge Made It Possible

MCCC's Foundation Board member it possible for two Mercer horticulture stu. Nancy Bond and Nicole Soltis, to join their class on an educational trip to Puerto Rico. Students in "Tropical Agriculture and Natural Resources," in cooperation with Rutgers University/Cook College, visited a tropical rain forest, mangrove swamps, coral banks, an orchid farm, pineapple and coffee plantations, greenhouses, botanical gardens, a desert, and even a chicken processing plant.

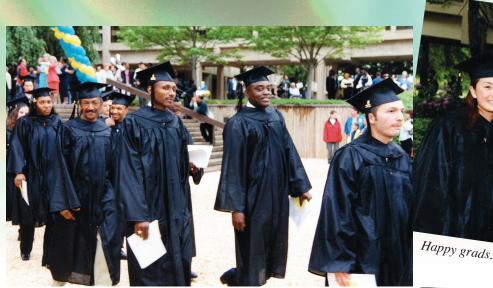
Both students agreed that the trip not only gave them a first-hand view of what they were studying, but also was an experience they will never forget. They are grateful to the Foundation Board for making it financially possible. They also cred-

it their professor, Amy Isenecker, with outstanding support. "She is really great.
She will go out of her way to help you in every way possible," Soltis said.
Bond is pursuing a career in landscape

design while Soltis plans to continue her education after Mercer with the goal of owning her own horticulture business.



MCCC Confers 781 Diplomas



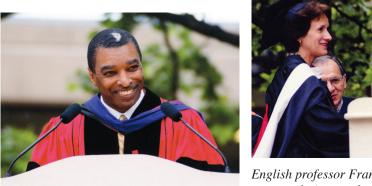
Graduates march into the quad.

Faculty member Marianne Reynolds, left, the 2000 winner of Mercer's Distinguished Teacher Award, presents a scholarship to Christy Byrnes. Byrnes also won an Academic Affairs Award, a MCCC Faculty Association scholarship, and an Albert B. Kahn Scholarship. She will continue her studies at The College of New Jersey in elementary education.





Commencement speaker, New Jersey Secretary of State DeForest Soaries Jr., delivered a rousing address, urging graduates to give their time to public service.



English professor Fran Davidson accepts congratulations at the podium from MCCC Acting President Eric Perkins upon being selected for the "Distinguished Teacher Award 2001." Davidson has been a Mercer faculty member for 16 years.

Mercer Golf Tournament Raises Funds For Athletic Scholarships

Brilliant sunshine and warm temperatures provided the perfect backdrop for an exceptional day of golf, as friends and supporters of Mercer County Community College came out for the Tenth Annual Golf Classic hosted by the Athletics Department on Monday, May 7. Ninety golfers completed the course at Olde York County Club in Columbus, voted one of the top ten private golf clubs in the state. Proceeds of the event will be donated to the MCCC Student Athlete Scholarship Fund.

The winning foursome was from Furlong & Krasny. Second place went to the foursome from Sturhahn, Dichenson & Bernard. Each of the top finishers along with winners of the "closest to the pin" and "longest drive" holes, received gift certificates for merchandise from the Olde York Pro Shop.

An awards dinner followed the day of golf, with a silent auction featuring sports memorabilia. Top offering at the auction was a one-year membership to Olde York Country Club, donated by owner and Mercer alum Ed Eget.

"The golf classic provides an opportunity for us to spend an enjoyable day with community members and business people who help the college fulfill its mission throughout the year," said MCCC Athletics Director John Simone. "At the same time we are raising funds for our college athletes and putting the spotlight on the important contribution our sports program makes to life at Mercer and to the students who participate." Last year 17 of Mercer's studentathletes transferred to four-year schools

Ragan.

Special thanks to corporate sponsors: First Union, DMR Consulting Group, Simkus and Ventura Group, Scibal Associates, Mercadien Consulting, Sturham, Dichenson & Bernard, Schoor DePalma, Margolis Edelstein, Borden Perlman Insurance, Furlong & Krasny, Princeton Video Image, Locker Room Sporting Goods, Yardville National Bank, Millevoi Photography, Schragger, Lavine & Nagy, Arthur J. Gallagher & Co., Princeton Orthopedic Associates, Dino's Café, 3 Seasons Sporting Goods, Stark & Stark, Ken Hess Stables, Atlantic Financial Group, Faridy Veisz Fraytak, P.C., Honeywell, Lambertville Antique Market, Pellettieri, Rabstein & Altman, Mercer County Improvement Authority, Building Maintenance Systems, Howard Johnson Inn, Ireland Contractors, Contract Flooring Systems, Trenton Joe, Horizon Health Care Dental Services, Sports Paradise and Mercer

Ready to tee off (l. to r.): MCCC Vice President Tom Wilfrid, Retired Dean of Students Harrison Morson, County Freeholder Tony Mack, and County Executive Robert Prunetti.

Top corporate sponsor of this year's tournament was First Union Bank. Len Sullivan (left), Vice President of N.J. Government Banking, is pictured with guest Pete



"Nontraditional" Student Excels in Classroom and On the Court

In community college circles, the term "nontraditional" applies to students beyond customary college age who return to school. In the case of Barbara Pleva, nontraditional applies in two categories: student and athlete. After all, how many 50-year-old mothers of three can say they've just finished playing two years for the top junior college women's tennis team in the country?

Pleva's decision to attend Mercer in 1997 was prompted by her third child going off to college. "I was the only one in the family with no college credits. I figured it was time for me to go too." At the time she was office manager for her husband's environmental business, Terra Nova Tech in Allentown.

Originally intending to "just take a few business courses," Pleva found that college life agreed with her. "My professors have gone out of their way to make me feel like I belong here," she said. "They are really encouraging. It makes you want to keep taking classes. This is what a community college is for." She is currently nearing completion of her degree in Office Systems Technology.

Academic success, however, has not been Pleva's only motivation for continuing at Mercer. Her first semester coincided with the reinstatement of the women's tennis program after an 11-year break. A strong doubles players, Pleva offered to help out at practices. The team came in second in the nationals that year.

In 1998, she was asked to join the team. "I didn't want to take the spot of a younger player, but they felt I could help them win," she said. "And we

"My professors have gone out of their way to make me feel like I belong here. They are really encouraging. It makes you want to keep taking classes. This is what a community college is for." — Barbara Pleva



Assistant Coach Barbara Pleva, center, with tennis players, Ashley Clarke, left, and Meredith Azarchi, as they prepare for a return trip to the nationals in Tucson, Arizona.

did dominate that fall season. We were the team to beat. Then in the spring we went to the nationals and won. It was fantastic." And as if once wasn't fantastic enough, the team repeated its national triumph in 2000.

"Tennis is definitely part of what's kept me at Mercer. It's been a real motivator for staying in school," said Pleva. To play a sport at Mercer, athletes are required to maintain a minimum of six

credits during the semester they play. For members of the women's tennis team, that has meant two semesters: the regular season in the fall and, in what is becoming a Mercer tradition, a rigorous practice schedule and a trip to the nationals in the spring.

That she won two national championships in any sport is improbable, observes Pleva. "I didn't have much opportunity to play sports as a child," she

said. "I didn't even start playing tennis until my mid-30s. I never dreamt of doing anything like this. It's unusual at any level of a sport to win a national championship."

Pleva places much of the credit for the team's success with Head Coach Marc Vecchiolla. "He is just incredible. He doesn't pressure but tries to give the players the tools to win. He believes in them and knows they're giving 100 percent. His attitude is to have fun, work hard, never give up, and the winning comes. He says that in the game of tennis, there are two things you must always use: your head and your feet."

Pleva believes that attitude made the difference during both trips to the nationals. "We didn't look like the most talented team out there. But we had a great attitude. Women on other teams would lose a point or two, and mentally they'd be out of the game. That didn't happen to us."

Pleva's playing days at Mercer are over – community college athletes are limited to two years – but Pleva is just as involved this year as a volunteer coach. "Marc asked me to be an assistant coach. I was ecstatic. I had only one question: What do you want me to do?"

Pleva finds coaching as rewarding as playing. "The players are so appreciative. They love to learn and they want to get better. They encourage each other and they're proud of each other. There's never any negative feeling. These women are such team players and you need everyone to win."

They've also been very supportive in return, says Pleva. "They really want to see me get my degree."

For results on this year's national tournament, see page 11.

Mercer Aviation Couple (continued from page 1)



"I think what separates Mercer from other larger flight schools is the commitment of the instructors." — Jennifer

Johnson '91

pleted his B.S. at The College of New Jersey. His next stop was Executive Jet Aviation in Columbus, Ohio, where he served as a captain for four years on a Citation X and a Hawker 1000. Currently, he is first officer on a 757 with American Trans Air out of Chicago.

Meanwhile Jen followed in Roy's footsteps at Robbinsville Airport, teaching primary and advanced flight training,

Professor and Aviation Program Coordinator Joseph Blasenstein stands by one of Mercer's ten aircraft at the Trenton Mercer airport. and then at Trenton-Wercer Airport as an instructor for Ronson. Unable to resist the challenge, she also began flying cargo planes as a first officer. She recalled the schedule as very demanding. "I was working full days and then flying at night on charter trips, but the experience was invaluable."

Her next assignment was with Kalitta Flying Service, a company in Michigan, where she got to fly her first Lear jet. From there, she landed a job with Executive Jet Aviation, reuniting with Roy in Ohio, who was by then her fiance. She took her next career step flying commercial aircraft for Airborne Express for four years, and recently began to work for American Airlines, looking forward to international passenger flights.

"Being a two-pilot family can be hard," said Roy. "There are times when our schedules are not matched and we will only see each other a total of a week out of the month. On the other hand, being in the same business gives us an opportunity to understand what is going on in each other's lives. We can share our experiences with understanding and enthusiasm."

Patrick Pittore '69 has been recognized for community service by the New Jersey Department of Labor, where he is chief of occupational health. Pittore, a lifelong Lambertville resident, joined the Lambertville-New Hope Ambulance and Rescue Squad at age 15 and has continued his volunteer service for 35 years. He also co-founded the Palisades Search and Rescue Dog Association in 1995, which trains and uses dogs to find missing persons. Pittore received his B.A. from Rider College in 1978.

Abdul-Malik Ali '72 has served as the "imam" (leader and teacher) at the Masjidut-Taqwa, an Islamic religious facility in Trenton, since 1979. He was recently honored by his followers for his many years of service. Ali has also served as president of the Trenton School Board and is actively involved in Islamic affairs in the state and nation. He earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Trenton State College and has a master's degree in Islamic education and an honorary doctorate from the Virginia Theological University.

Betty Brown '73 recently retired from Grant Elementary School in Trenton after 36 years of teaching. Brown spent much of her life at Grant, first as a student and then as a mother of four children who attended the school. She served 12 years as PTA president before returning to college at Mercer and becoming a teacher. Upon her retirement she was recognized at a special ceremony, receiving a certificate from the mayor and a plaque from the school for her many years of dedicated service.

Sylvia Hadad '75 retired in January from

Capital Health Systems after more than 40 years' affiliation. Most recently, she was the radiology administrative director at the Mercer and Fuld campuses.

Ralph Terracciano '79 is a 20-year veteran of the Princeton Borough Police Force, where he is a detective sergeant. He received his bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Thomas Edison State College in 1996. He recently addressed a meeting of Business and Professional Women on personal safety.

Jane Lawrence '81 earned the "Purchase



Award," the top honor from the Mercer County Cultural and Heritage Commission, for her painting "Pop Pie" in the "Mercer County Artists" exhibit at MCCC's Gallery this spring. The exhibit featured the works of 67 artists selected from more than 175 submissions. Lawrence, who received her A.A. in Visual Arts, has taken numerous additional art classes at Mercer.

John Harmon '81 is the president of the

Metropolitan Trenton African American Chamber of Commerce, founded in 1997 to promote opportunities for minorityowned businesses in the wake of Trenton's current redevelopment effort. Harmon previously worked as a real estate loan officer for Chemical Bank. He owns a Trenton-based refrigerated trucking company. Harmon earned his bachelor's degree in business management from Fairleigh Dickinson University.

Tracy Destribats '84 is a community relations officer at Yardville National Bank. She received her bachelor's degree from Rider University. She is the chairperson of Prevention Education Inc.'s Resource Development Committee, which serves the needs of abused children. She is also a board member of the American Cancer Society.

Daniel Contento '86 is a police officer who is also a self-taught webmaster. Along with a partner, he has developed hotclubs. net, a website that provides entertainment and night life information for the under-30 crowd in the Greater Trenton region and beyond.

Trina Sargeant '90 received her B.S. in Criminal Justice from The College of New



Jersey. She has carried out administrative duties for civil and criminal judges, as well as assisted in the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office.

James Edward Miller '91 recently completed basic training at Fort Jackson, S.C., with the 161st Infantry Battalion 1st Platoon Rangers and is continuing advanced individual training as a petroleum supply specialist.

Ronald Dancer Jr. '92 has joined the police force in Washington Township after working for the Seaside Park Police Department for three years. He is a graduate of the Ocean County Police Academy.

Jeffrey Callahan '97 is a licensed funeral director. He currently works in the MCCC Office of Academic Affairs and The Virtual Campus and is an associate with the Chiacchio Southview Funeral Home in Trenton. He is a member of the Mercer County and N.J. State Funeral Directors Associations.

May Humbard '00 is the founder of Noel Fundraiser, which provides teddy bears for hospitalized children. Starting with a delivery of 300 bears to Children's Hospital in Philadelphia, she plans to donate to every children's hospital in the United States. She has received contributions from corporations, small businesses and individuals.

Todd Legenza '00 has been named director of Wood Funeral Home in Tuckerton. He received his funeral directors license after passing the state exam in October. Wood Funeral Home was founded in 1926 and has been owned by the Legenza family for 15 years.



Advertising Students Design for Nonprofit

The student team of Eric Steinberg, Maya Matasova and Joseph Penelli was one of two groups chosen as winners of an end-of-semester advertising design competition. Ad design professionals came to campus to judge the campaigns, which were developed for HiTOPS, a nonprofit organization that promotes adolescent health and well-being. Students designed posters, flyers, brochures, newsletters, billboards, radio spots, and even websites.

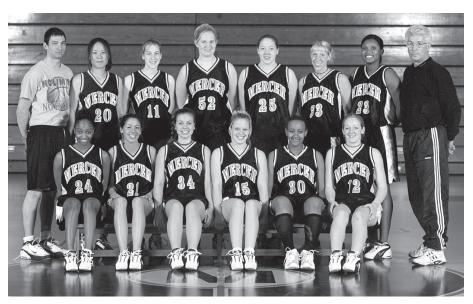
From: Public Information Office, AD 250, P.O. Box B, Trenton, NJ 08690 Re:Mercer's Alumni Fund and News from You

The Mercer Alumni Affairs Office would like to know your whereabouts, accomplishments and endeavors. Please fill in the form below and mail it to us, or email saveria@mccc.edu. We would also appreciate a recent photo. Your response enables us to share your news with other alumni through The Viking. Would you also consider a donation to Mercer's Annual Fund? Your employer or your spouse's employer may have a Matching Gift program. (Please ask the personnel director for the appropriate form and enclose it with your contribution.)

Please accept my gift for the Annual Fund campaign in the amount of \$_

Make checks payable to: Mercer County Community College Foundation

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		State	Zip	
	Maiden Name			
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Seated, l. to r.: Katrina Smith, Michelle Valentino, Vicki Fairbanks, Erin Kopec, Kim Webber and Christie Ingling; standing, l. to r.: Assistant Coach Steve Rothstein, Bo Young Jeon, Kristie Roche, Jen Elliot, Amber Maurer, Tara Brunker, Jenny St. Fleur and Head Coach Mike Tenaglia.

The Lady Vikings chalked up another Region 19 championship this year, keeping the streak alive for the fourth consecutive year. Anticipating a rematch with Lackawanna, one of the only teams to beat Mercer this year, the

women instead faced Essex, a relatively easy opponent whom they crushed 90-50 on March 3.

Known for their solid work ethic and tremendous camaraderie, the Lady Vikings finished the season 26-4. They

were the top defensive team in the region and enjoyed a 19-game win streak. Bo Yeong Jeon led in scoring with 17.8 points per game, followed by Maya Jackson with 15.9 ppg. Jenny St. Fleur was the top rebounder, averaging 9.8 ppg.

The team's post-season run ended on March 10 as the Vikings fell to Monroe Junior College, of Brighton, NY, 74-56, in the Northeast District Championship. Despite an early 11-4 Vikings lead, the Monroe team kept coming – with speed, and solid defensive and offensive play. The Mercer players were realistic in the face of the loss, citing the Vikings' fatigue and Monroe's deep bench as the major obstacles to victory. Monroe returned to the NJCAA National Championship after losing in the final last year.

Head Coach Mike Tenaglia acknowledged that the outcome was "obviously not what we would have liked." But he gives his team high marks for their accomplishments this year. Tenaglia completes his 11th season as head coach with 154 wins to his credit. He had help from Assistant Coach Tameka Turner and Volunteer

Assistants Tonya Grant and Steve Rothstein

The district championship was the last game for seven sophomores who have been the anchor of this Viking team: Vicki Fairbanks, Christie Ingling, Jackson, Jeon, Kristie Roche, St. Fleur, and Michelle Valentino. Jeon and Jackson have been nominated for All-American honors. They were also selected to the All-Region 19 and All-Garden State Athletic Conference first teams.

Mercer's Athletics Department thanks the many people who supported the Vikings this season, especially local businesses: Auntie Anne's, Bagel Street, Barbero Bakery, Brother's Pizza, Butter-Me-Bagels, Digital Island, Downtown Deluxe Restaurant, John Hancock Mutual Life, Kitchen Kapers, KDD America, Kiddie Academy, Kramer's Bagels, Liberty Impressions, Main Electric Supply Co., Palmer Hill, Park's Tae Kwon Do Academy, RJR Services, Rock Dreams, Tilghman's Used Auto Parts, Trent Jewelers, Tri-State Metal Finishing, Inc., Wawa Food Markets, and World's Finest, Inc.

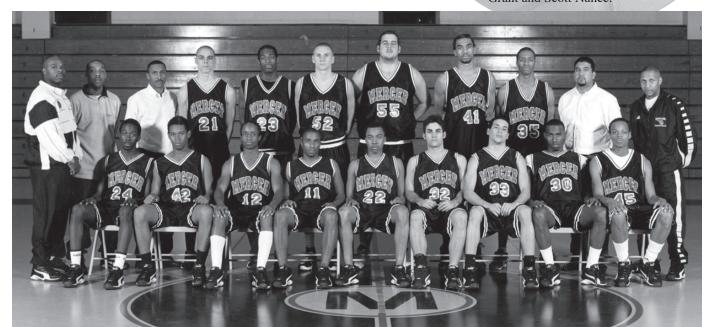
Kelly Williams, second-year head coach of the men's basketball team, has at least three reasons to be satisfied with the season just completed. The Vikings made it to the Region 19 championship game against Lackawanna. The team gained national attention, ranking 14th at the end of January, and as high as 8th at the beginning of December. And the four freshmen who started for the Vikings were eligible both semesters, which means they were doing their work in the classroom as well as on the court. The team's final record was 17-12.

Mercer closed out its regular season with a win over Lackawanna 91-90 on February 24. Mercer next faced Del Tech in the semi-final of the regional tournament, cruising to victory, 91-66. Then it was time to face Lackawanna again, this time for the championship. Despite a close game that was tied with just over a minute to play, Lackawanna came out the winner, 61-56. The game was played without the contributions of starting guard Joel D'Antignac, who sprained his ankle in the semi-final game.

Williams credits forward Zolton Walker, the Vikings' leading scorer, as being a "catalyst for the team who really stepped up throughout the season." He also notes the support of sophomore Jamaal Rowe, who was top scorer in the Vikings' last game. "Jamaal really performed down the stretch," said Williams. Walker was selected for the men's All-Region 19 first team, while

D'Antignac and Walker made the All-Garden State Athletic Conference first team.

"I'm a little disappointed we didn't win the Region 19 championship," said Williams. "That was my goal and the team's goal, but we started four freshmen and only one sophomore. These players now know the type of coach I am and the type of program we have. I've still got my eye on the next step: a championship." Williams received coaching assistance this season from Gary Williams, Tony Aviles, Greg Grant and Scott Nance.



Seated, l. to r.: Ray Lee, Mike Codallo, Alton Payton, Joel D'Antignac, Jarrett Hawthorne, Arnaldo Vega, Carlos Rivera, Zolton Walker, and Marshawn Ferguson; standing, l. to r.: Head Coach Kelly Williams, Asst. Coaches Gary Williams and Scott Nance, Kevin Haggerty, Gabriel Marshall, Dave Bonnani, Matan Simon-Tov, Devin Suddoth, Jamaal Rowe, Asst. Coaches Tony Aviles and Greg Grant.

Keep in touch with Mercer sports at www.mccc.edu



Seated, l. to r.: Katy Stefanidou, Jamie Fusco, Jessica Kanka, Christie Ingling, Mandy Pierrera, Katie Banas, Adrienne Smith; standing, l. to r.: Coach Joanne Harrison, Kristina Clampffer, Rita Scarlata, Davia Boyarksy, Lisa Boothby, Danielle King, Jessica Fisher and Assistant Coach Julie Ross.

Second-year Head Coach Joanne Harrison feels good about her team's 26-10 season and its first place finish in the Garden State Athletic Conference among Division II schools. "We worked hard and played hard," she said. Assisting Harrison was former player Julie Ross.

With only two returning players – Rita Scarlata and Christie Ingling – the women's practice schedule started in January as the team began the process of learning to play together. Practice

paid off, with the Vikings recording win after win. Harrison recalls two big victories against Brookdale and a split with Gloucester, another top team. At mid-season, the women enjoyed an 11game winning streak.

Entering into the double-elimination regional tournament as the No. 3 seed, the battle was on. The women lost their first game to Del Tech-Owens, then turned around and beat Del Tech-Stanton. They needed a win against Del Tech-Owens in their second match-up,

The men's regular season ended on a strong note with an 8-2 record and a second place finish in the Garden State Athletic Conference. The team standing in their way for the regional championship was Brookdale Community College, who finished the season unde-

feated in first. Hosted by Mercer on May 4–5, the tournament results were a repeat of the season: Brookdale finished in first with 22, while Mercer came in second with 15. "We had a good team," said Head Coach Stan Dlugosz, "but Brookdale was better." (Brookdale went on to the national championship, where it finished third.) Winning their tournament matches were No. 3 singles James Brennan and No. 2 doubles Brennan and Kyle Zola. Other members of the Mercer squad were: Ed Rodenas, Vadim Krasnopolsky, Al Pacheco, and Josue Rodenas.

Assisting Dlugosz this season were Ralph Bencivengo and Marc Vecchio-

but that was not to be. Ultimately, it was Lackawanna that moved on, a team the Vikings had lost to twice during the season. "They were the team to beat this year," said Harrison.

A number of players made key contributions. No. 1 pitcher Katie Banas was 5-0 when she was sidelined by an injury with three weeks left in the season. No. 2 pitcher Lisa Boothby stepped up and did well. Catcher Jamie Fusco came on strong, as did Danielle King, one of the best second basemen in the county, according to Harrison. Veteran Rita Scarlata was versatile at both second and third base, but was injured by season's end. Katy Stefanidou was "an unsung hero," a utility player who earned the highest batting average and excelled in every position she played.

Harrison sums up the season as "a very positive experience." She recalls "Field Appreciation Day" before the season started, when team members came out and painted the dugout. "They put real pride into it," said Harrison. "We're there to teach these girls about softball, but we're also molding lives. Sports is partly about succeeding in the face of adversity. You can use these same principles to be successful

According to Head Coach Marc Vecchiolla, the women's tennis team had a wonderful time at the NJCAA National Tournament in Tucson, AZ, May 6 - 11. They also came within 1-1/2 points of winning their third consecutive championship, edged out in the end by Montgomery College (Rockville, MD). Despite some potentially problematic injuries going into the nationals, all seven team members played - and played well. "They gave it their all," said Vecchiolla. "They left everything they had right on the court."

Vecchiolla notes that, as two-time national champs, the women had their sights set on a "three-peat." But they were content with their second place finish. "Last year we were underdogs and won by one point. This year I thought we had the stronger team. It all evens out. I'm satisfied, as long as we learn and have fun," he said.

Sophomore co-captain Ashley Clarke is credited with the longest day of tournament play. In temperatures topping 100 degrees, she played for seven hours – a three-hour, 45-minute singles match against the tournament's eventual champion, followed by a consolation match, followed by a No. 2 doubles match with partner Sarah Bucon, which they won in a close battle. Also extraordinary were the efforts of Jill Matasovsky and Heather Breining, who won in No. 5 and 6 singles flights for the Vikings and also teamed up to take No. 3 doubles. Bucon was also a finalist in No. 4 singles. Meredith Azarchi won a consolation match in No. 1 singles, while Barbara Pal won the No. 2 singles consolation tournament. Janine Hicks and Azarchi were victorious in the No. 1 doubles consolation finals. Matavosky, Breining, Bucon and Clarke have been named All-Americans by the NJCAA.

After four tournaments in Tucson, Vecchiolla says he will really miss it, now that the venue changes to College Station, TX, next year. Does that mean he's already thinking about the nationals in 2002? "From the moment the last match is over, you start thinking about it," he said. Special thanks to assistants

Bencivengo Barb Ple "Without their help, the program could not ma standard," sa chiola.

The men's baseball team ended the season with a 27-12 record, finishing 9-3

in Region 19. The regional tournament, held May 4 to 6 at Brookdale, was tough going for the Vikings. In the first game they were victorious against Brookdale for the fourth time in four consecutive match-ups. In game two, the Vikings were beaten by a strong Del Tech squad. (Earlier in the season, the Vikings handed Del Tech its only loss in the region in a 10-4 win that included nine runs in the fifth inning.) All that remained for the Vikings to move on to the district championship was to beat Brookdale again. Unfortunately Brookdale finally pulled one out against the Vikings on the worst possible day, as Mercer suffered a 12-1 defeat.

Despite a disappointing tournament, Head Coach Dave Gallagher reports that Mercer had both depth and talent, and plenty of notable achievements this season. The men finished the season with a .340 batting average. Sophomore Phil Holly led the team with 40 RBIs. Freshman shortstop Joe Hernandez finished the season with a .404 batting average. Sophomore outfielder Jamie Riese led the team in virtually every offensive category, including home runs and runs scored. Freshman Shaun Parker and sophomore Bryan Kelly tied for pitching victories with eight each, and Parker led the team in strike-outs and innings pitched. Freshman reliever Scott Marsh posted an incredible strikeouts-to-walks ratio of more than 5:1.

Against teams that were ranked in the Division II NJCAA poll, the Vikings posted a solid 7-3 record. One of the highlights was a doubleheader sweep of UConn-Avery Point. Pitcher Shaun Parker was selected to the All-Region 19 team. Parker, Kelly, Hernandez, Phil Holly, Pat Zegarski, and Keith Guthrie were chosen for the All-Garden State Athletic Conference team.

Gallagher completes his second season as Vikings head coach. He was assisted by Randy Voorhees, Gary Shunk, and Kip Harrison.



SPRING 2001

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Mercer Arts Calendar

The Magic and Mystery of Kelsey Theatre Fall 2001 Schedule

Beauty and The Beast Ballet, Saturday, Sept. 22 at 1 & 4 pm

Robin Hood, Friday, Oct. 5 at 7 pm; Sat. & Sun., Oct. 6 & 7 at 2 & 4 pm

The Music Man, Fridays, Oct. 12 & 19 at 8 pm; Saturdays, Oct. 13 & 20 at 1 & 8 pm; Sundays, Oct. 14 & 21 at 3 pm

Complete Works of Shakespeare (Abridged), Fridays, Oct. 26 & Nov. 2 at 8 pm; Saturdays, Oct. 27 & Nov. 3 at 8 pm; Sundays, Oct. 28 & Nov. 4 at 3 pm

Alphonso The Dragon's Lazer Vaudeville, Saturday, Nov. 3 at 2 & 4 pm

The Tamburitzans Saturday, Nov.

For Kelsey tickets, times and information call 584-9444 or visit www.mccc.edu.

pm

Song of Mulan, Saturday, Nov. 17 at 2 & 4 pm

You Can't Take It With You, Fridays, Nov. 16 & 23 at 8 pm; Saturdays, Nov. 17 & 24 at 1 & 8 pm; Sundays, Nov. 18 & 25 at 3 pm

The Nutcracker Ballet, Saturday & Sunday, Dec. 1 & 2 at 1 & 4 pm

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever, Friday, Dec. 7 at 7 pm; Saturday & Sunday, Dec. 8 & 9 at 2 & 4 pm

'Twas The Night Before Christmas, Friday, Dec.14 at 7 pm; Saturday & Sunday, Dec. 15 & 16 at 2 & 4 pm

The Gallery

Student work from the 2001 "Visual Arts Student Exhibition"





A listing of Fall 2001 exhibitions at The Gallery will be posted at www.mccc.

Visit our website: www.mccc.edu

Mercer's website provides all you need to know about degree programs in credit and noncredit divisions, course schedules, admissions, financial aid, transfer opportunities, business services, news, directions, cultural events, sports, fitness center and summer camps. Students can register for classes online and explore "The Virtual Campus."

Academic Calendar

AUGUST

- 21 Last day of registration for fall semester (late fees in effect Aug. 22-25)
- 27 First day of classes for fall semester

THE VIKING, a publication for alumni and other friends of Mercer County Community College, is published by IMPACT (Information, Marketing, Publications, Art Gallery, and College Relations Team). Editorial offices are located in room 250 of the Administration building on the West Windsor Campus. THE VIKING welcomes suggestions for feature stories and articles. Correspondence should be sent to Public Information, MCCC, PO Box B, Trenton, NJ, 08690.