

Dear Dean Ehresman,

My name is Tyann Sells, and I am a MCCC alumni. I graduated in December of 2010. Before I move on to Montclair State University, I wanted to write to you and let you know the amazing influence some of the Arts and Communications Faculty have had on my life. There are so many great professors at MCCC that I had the pleasure of being a student of. However, the following are those who I feel have been the supreme influence on my career, my life, and my experience at MCCC.

Professor Barry Levy

Professor Levy helped me in so many ways at MCCC. His patience with me inspired me to do my best, and challenged me to even better aspirations. He vocalized with me (as he does with other students) the vision he had of what my film work could be, and it inspired me to create my own vision, armed with that confidence he offered. His honesty, always given with understanding toward the emotions and mindset of his students; his continuous encouragement, especially in a field that can be so demanding; his respect for the classroom as a whole and his respect for the individual student...all of these elements of his teaching gave me an amazing experience at MCCC. I hear his voice even doing my own freelance videography work – and it's a voice I think I will be heeding all my days in this career. And the lessons he taught me and others do not only apply to film, but the heart and the understanding that are the center of our craft. An understanding of people and a visible confidence in every person's ability to better themselves - I believe make Professor Levy an elite member of MCCC faculty.

Professor Steven Voorhees

Professor Voorhees taught only one of my classes, but I had extended experience with him at MCCC because of my work with the TV department on MCN Live and Women Who Dare. He is thoroughly a professional, and his extensive knowledge of the TV field he readily imparts to students. From the first moments of his class, there was a sense of clarity to everything he did: he KNEW his business. And he KNEW how to teach it. What makes his professionalism so strong, is not just his knowledge of the business but his knowledge of people. He always encourages students to accept opportunities, to enjoy their work. Whenever I got hung up on my own mistakes, he would tell me to keep moving. Dwelling on them would weaken a production...and it would weaken me as a person. That statement has helped me numerous times. He has a realistic standard for his students – which can be a hard one: do your best, be a team player. He sets you striving for it. In weak moments, he was a great consolation in that he sensed it and gently urged me to keep trying or affirmed I was doing fine. And in my stronger moments he gave me the freedom to explore my craft and challenge myself.

Ms. Valarie Daniels

I worked for Ms. Daniels for a year and a half at MCCC, and knew her for all of my 2 and a half years there. I think it is sometimes easy to forget the effort and the skill she brings to TV/Film department, simply because she does not demand recognition for it. She is always ready to help students and provide them with opportunities to learn more and experience more. For me, she

was a great source of inspiration: she assisted me with so many facets of my studies...developing Women Who Dare, Producing MCN Live, film projects and real life experience. Her door is always open...literally. In working for her I saw just how many students knocked on her door every day, not just for assistance with equipment or software, but to say hello and have a friendly conversation with her. I find her determination and confidence inspiring – not to mention the hands on skills she helped me learn and hone. She is someone I count as a mentor. I will always be grateful to her and her diligence to me as a student. I know there are many others who feel the same.

Professor Jody Person

Professor Person has always been a pillar for me. Since I met him, even when I was not in any of his classes, he built me up in my craft and encouraged me. His excitement is tangible – when he senses talent, he uses everything in his power to bring it out of you. He cares for his students on every level of their being. He can take a simple lesson in theater history that leads to a class discussion that leads to creative bursts across the stage that leads to him guiding students back to the main principles of Theatre. He knows how to be a teacher and he knows how to be a friend. He inspired me to apply myself in everything, to find happiness in what I do and who I am. His love for the arts is contagious – you cannot help but be as exuberant as he is about what you learn in his classes, or the arts he encourages you to explore. For me, he encouraged me to try new things in my filmmaking that have allowed so many artistic possibilities...and I am always thankful for that. His respect for his students and their opinions is equally enthusiastic. His eyes light up at a class discussion, or an artistic piece that rings true of the individual who created it...and that proves the heart of an artist and a teacher.

Professor Mitch Canter

I was always surprised at how intriguing his classes were, considering I wasn't a Radio major. But the concepts he taught and the application of them was fascinating. He was a great influence in my time at MCCC: I learned so much from him regarding the craft. He was always calm, even when I wasn't, and that in itself was reassuring. He seemed to believe I could grasp the concept, even though I was fully convinced I couldn't. But his slow prodding to keep trying worked, and once I did understand, it was rewarding. His students are encouraged to learn the rules...and then have fun with them. I had a radio show for two semesters, and the experience is something I will never forget. It was made possible by the confidence Professor Canter encouraged in my peers and I. Every time I see Professor Canter we have a conversation, during which I feel I always learn something. He's a diligent professional, constantly learning himself...and he wants to impart everything that he learns to his students. Last time we talked, he spoke of the many things he's doing in his life, with that same enthusiasm that he inspired in his classroom. I admire him for his achievements, and the achievements he believes I am capable of.

All of these professors I have mentioned, I count not only as great professors and individuals, but as friends. No one can take such care of a student's desire to learn, and not have the bond

of friendship. I may no longer sit in their classrooms, but I hear all their words in my mind. Their encouragement and standards keep me reaching.

And with all this said, please know that you have an amazing group of people amongst the faculty. They are great people and amazing teachers and any student is lucky to have them.

Thank you,

Tyann Sells