Rose Files Lawsuit Against Board

Claims lack of due process, seeks to be reinstated

by Matt Witkowski
Managing Editor

Fired Mercer County Community College President Robert Rose filed a lawsuit early Monday against the college’s board of trustees, saying he and his attorney hope will get him reinstated.

The lawsuit, which includes an order to show cause for Rose’s firing, alleges that Rose did not receive due process in the events that led up to his Oct. 25 termination by the board. The lawsuit also claims that Rose suffered irreparable harm as a result of the board’s actions.

Kevin Hart, Rose’s attorney, said Monday that they hoped the order to show cause would “force that he be reinstated” – at least to Rose’s previous status of being suspended with pay – until a plenary hearing could be held to determine the fate of Rose’s employment.

“We are seeking interim relief until a trial can be held,” Hart said.

The complaint was filed in Mercer County Superior Court and sent to Rocky Peterson, the board’s attorney. Hart said. No court date has been set.

The board voted 9-1 to terminate Rose with cause at a special Oct. 25 board meeting. The vote came after nearly four hours of closed-door negotiations between trustees and Rose failed to reach a buyout of the president’s contract.

Following the board’s decision to fire Rose and a heated exchange between Hart and Peterson, Hart promised a lawsuit and said trustees failed to give Rose due process.

Soon after, many faculty members walked out in protest as trustee Rev. William Coleman explained the board’s decision.

Con’t ROSE, P3

MCCC Officials Shut Down Club Offices

by Michelle Travers
Editor-In-Chief

On most afternoons the second floor of the Student Center at Mercer County Community College buzzes with activity.

Broadcasts from WMCC, the campus radio station, normally resound through the hallway beside the West Windsor campus bookstore, while students from several clubs come and go through a half-dozen other offices, including that of The College Voice.

But for several days last week all office doors in the hallway were locked, with lights out and virtually no students to be found. So what caused the confusion?

Security officers received a report early last week that someone was using marijuana in SC214, one of the hallway’s unlocked offices across from the radio station. By the time officials entered the room, it had been vacated.

“The only information that we received from the security office was that a burned hemp smell was coming from SC214,” said John Simone, director of student services.

“Campus officials denied that drug use spurred either the temporary lockdown or the change in all office locks. Some offices reopened this week after 10 days, and it needed to be done.”

“The idea to change the locks had been considered for some time,” Simone said. “This incident put us in a position to move this process along a little quicker.”

Garruba noted that the door to SC214, known as the Drumbeat room, is currently inactive and was unable to be locked. Both she and Simone declined to blame the incident on any person or club since anyone could have gained access to the room due to the faulty lock.

Professor Mitch Canter, faculty advisor to the radio club, said that the temporary lockdown shut down the radio station and confused club members, he supported it.

“The last time they made Con’t CLUBS, P2

Halloween Carnival Frightens Cheaters

by Jillian Donchak
Staff Writer

Angels and devils brandishing hammers and axes, a court jester, a donkey and actors humorously depicting deaths of the immoral filled Mercer County Community College’s Student Center on Oct. 25.

These peculiar sightings belonged to the Carnival of Horrors, a Halloween-themed event organized by the Student Government Association and several faculty members of staff.

Seeing this carnival from typical Halloween events was its underlying message: academic integrity and the horrors of cheating.

While one student stood extolling the virtues of integrity to passersby on “confessor’s rose,” others watched as cheating students met horrific deaths in acts preformed by Professor Kathryn Paluscio’s Oral Interpretation class.

One skit depicted a proud cheating student. Matters later, he was dragged from the stage amid screams from behind the curtain. Brandishing axes, the flamboyant show hosts then explained to the audience that cheaters “must be punished.”

In addition to entertainment, the event, open to all MCCC faculty, staff and students, offered free baked goods, drinks and prizes, as well as games.

Organized by Paluscio, assistant professor of communications, and Danielle Garruba, director of student activities, the carnival was staffed, decorated and planned by nearly 50 student volunteers, in addition to student activities staff, the SGA and several clubs.

Student Jillian Williams, dressed as an angel, said she had fun whacking devils with the “hammer of justice” each time they would encourage cheating.

Stacia Quackenbush, another student performer, said Con’t CARNIVAL, P3

Recent Rose Timeline

May 2005
Mercer County Executive Brian Hughes announces that Robert Farkas, his inspector general, will investigate allegations of financial misdealings at MCCC involving Rose.

June 2005
MCCC Trustees launch their own investigation of Rose by hiring a forensic accountant. They suspend Rose with pay.

Oct. 18, 2005
Cimino releases reports of Farkas and the forensic accountant. Farkas alleges that Rose forced the college by improperly billing for lavish parties, as well as overseeing tax financial accounting and other possible violations. Farkas sends his report to county prosecutors for possible criminal sanctions.

Oct. 25, 2005
Citing the Farks report, trustees fire Rose for cause, with six months’ severance pay.

Oct. 31, 2005
Rose files a lawsuit against the board, claiming lack of due process and seeking reinstatement until a hearing can be held.

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Sports

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Passion Drives MCCC Prof to Write Football History

By Diana Mickolas The College Voice

Beginning with his love of the Green Bay Packers while he was growing up in Wisconsin, sports history has inspired Craig Coenen from an early age.

Coenen, a Mercer County Community College history professor, has now released a book which turns his football passion into words.

“My love for the Green Bay Packers allowed me to write this book about the evolution of pro football,” Coenen said. “My biggest problem in the process was tempering my enthusiasm.”

Coenen’s book, From Sandlots to the Superbowl, chronicles the history of the National Football League from the early 1920s through 1967. It recounts the history of the league and how it has achieved its identity, from its humble beginnings on sandlots where small-scale games were played on sandlots to the exciting, enigmatic spectacles of today’s Super Bowl.

Coenen said that he sought to convey the challenges brought to the NFL by the government and other rival leagues, and to illustrate how new technologies have proved highly profitable to the league. He also emphasized how its survival has depended on franchises, from early NFL teams like the Packers, to the league. He also emphasized how technologies have proved highly profitable by the government and other rival leagues.

Coenen’s book, From Sandlots to the Superbowl, is due to be published in 2003. In addition to his current book, Coenen plans to publish more on the history of professional football.

Passion Drives MCCC Prof to Write Football History

Dean Explores Concept of Student Jury

by Cristal M. Bethea The College Voice

Mercer County Community College is embarking on a quest to involve students in the decision-making process concerning campus punishment. While MCCC has a judicial system in place comprised of faculty and administrators, Dr. Dianne Campbell, dean of enrollment and student services, said that she would prefer students to handle some rule violations, including cheating, parking problems and disputes between peers.

“Playing a role in justice for all is an important value to understand,” Campbell said, adding that she believes participating students will gain valuable leadership skills.

Other universities and colleges have similar systems, Campbell said, though she furnished no details.

Students interested in being involved in the judicial process would be required to meet certain standards. They would have to demonstrate a record of good citizenship at MCCC, as well as show that they are serious students with a record of academic accomplishment.

According to Campbell, 10 MCCC students have shown interest in becoming part of the judicial process. “By being a part of the student judicial process, I feel that it will allow me to have a greater respect for the school system,” said MCCC student Maryam Abd Al-Qudus.

“I’ve been giving blood for years,” said MCCC Professor Donna Munde, as Phlebotomist Anna Rivera attends to Munde at a blood drive held on Oct. 25 in MCCC’s Student Center.

“Tasting his audience that he might become emotional, as he himself was an Air Force combat veteran suffering from PTSD. Veterans routinely have a difficult time relating to life at home after fighting in a war, he said. Often, when veterans come home, their minds are still at war. "When I first returned home in 2004, it was a couple of months to power down," Johnson said. "Some of us never get out of that mode of execution." PTSD often occurs after a person has experienced a traumatic event, such as war. The effects can range from mild to debilitating, and can even be deadly if not treated, as with Capt. Pelkey.

"Eventually, I hope this book will inspire teachers to not only teach students sports history, but urban history," Coenen said.

Hi s manuscript, origi nal written as his doctorate dissertation at Lehigh University, was rejected first by one publisher. Later, Coenen was unexpectedly contacted by University of Tennessee Press, who gave him a contract in spring 2003. After two years and several revisions, the book was finally published by the University of Texas Press this month.

Coenen plans to publish more books in the future, including at least one that would tie together two of his prior books. "My big dream is to write a book that will allow me to have a greater respect for the school system," said MCCC student Maryam Abd Al-Qudus.

"I’ve been giving blood for years," said MCCC Professor Donna Munde, as Phlebotomist Anna Rivera attends to Munde at a blood drive held on Oct. 25 in MCCC’s Student Center.
Moses Santizo is forming the Latino Reform Youth Council not just to inform the general Mercer County Community College population about Hispanic heritage. He also wants to educate and inspire Latinos themselves.

Santizo, 29, a pastor at his local church, first wants the new organization to teach MCC and other local Hispanics about their own roots and history before they set out to accomplish specific goals.

“I want to make a change, but without identity you can’t do that,” Santizo said. He described the council as “a place for Latinos to go with their issues. The main focus for this is cultural identity.”

The new organization held its second meeting last month and has distributed informational flyers around the West Windsor campus.

Santizo was born in Los Angeles as the son of Guatemalan immigrants. As a young boy, Santizo and his family traveled from California to Guatemala, where they lived for six months before moving back to the United States and settling in Princeton. Santizo’s parents were in fact Mestizo, a mix of Spanish colonial and indigenous Central American heritages.

There Santizo became an active member of his church, eventually becoming a pastor. His sister also began taking him to local dance clubs, primarily salsa.

“I began to feel a vibe like I had to get to know more of this,” Santizo said. He began to study the Latin American history, culture and politics that helped to create the dance he loved.

After talking with friends, Santizo became inspired to put into practice the knowledge he gained in his research. Together, he and three friends decided that the best place to start a Latino group would be a local college, which is why he is organizing at MCCC.

“In Latin American countries the biggest activists are the students,” he said. “Here you don’t see that too much.”

“Most definitely learned a lot from just one hour of listening to Moses talk,” said Paola Cuanatzi, 18, an MCCF freshman from Trenton who attended a start-up meeting.

Santizo said that promoting the study of Hispanic culture to local Latino youth, while helping them gain a sense of responsibility for the culture and history, and becoming a channel for student or community activism for Latino or other social justice causes are among the group’s purposes.

Still recruiting members, Santizo hopes more students will show interest in this movement and in people of other cultures. Membership is open to students and non-students of all races who desire to fight for the Latino cause.

“Hopefully later on we’ll start working with colleges within inner cities, and we can maybe open up rehab and shelter or places like that,” Santizo said. “This group is done by the youth for the youth.”

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Distinguished Professor Surveys French Paintings

by Paloma Aleixo

The College Voice

Professor Mel Leipzig used words and slides last week to impress a lecture hall of students with a survey of the masters of French painting.

Leipzig, a Mercer County Community College art and art history teacher, spent more than an hour on Oct. 25 examining works of art from masters including Poussin, Caravaggio, Watteau, Delacroix, Millet, Gouret, Manet, Monet, Pissarro, Cezanne, Gauguin and Matisse.

To demonstrate how important France has always been to the history of art, Leipzig showed that the oldest paintings were produced on French soil some 15,000 years before Christ. The prehistoric and protohistoric art from sites such as the Lascaux caves in southwestem France.

Leipzig analyzed a series of remarkable productions made by French artists between 1650 and 1850, beginning with Caravaggio’s influence over the entire art school of painting in western Europe in the 1700s.

Leipzig performed the survey informally and even expressed a good sense of humor about some characters in the paintings, such as the “ridiculous” Louix XV, as the professor described the king of France.

Students showed high interest when slides with productions by the impressionists and art nouveau painters were presented.

“His masters what he’s saying,” one attendee said. “It seems he has intimacy with the painters.”

Leipzig, who teaches art, teaching painting, and art history, was the first teacher at the college to be an airsh MCCC’s Distinguished Teaching Award. His works are part of the permanent collections of the Gallery at Mercer, The New Jersey State Museum, The Cooper-Hewitt Museum, the White House and most recently the Whitney Museum in New York City.

The lecture, which took place in a Communications Building lecture hall and telecentered to the James Kerney Campus, is part of MCC’s Distinguished Lecture Series.

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Rose

Com’t from P1

The firing, unprecedented in the college’s 39-year history, followed the board’s Oct. 18 release of a report by Mercer County Inspector General Robert Farkas. The report alleges Rose cheated the college by improperly billeting guests or lavishly entertaining at the expense of college funds.

Farkas sent his report to county prosecutors to investigate possible criminal violations.

A poll is being circulated to faculty “so that they can weigh in,” Pugh said.

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Carnival

Com’t from P1

that while the theme of the event was stressed, students couldn’t be forced into taking the advice of the carnival.

“You can only give advice,” she said. “You can lead a horse to water, but you can’t make him drink it.”

Palusco said that while she intended the event to be fun, she hoped that the underlying message didn’t get lost.

“We developed the carnival as a fun event that nevertheless carried a serious message about the horrors of cheating,” she said. “Each participating group stressed this theme. I didn’t want anybody to forget why we were there.”

Asked if she believed that students understood the purpose of the carnival, Palusco said that the effects of the carni-

val weren’t intended to be immediate nor sweeping.

“The students we were going after are the ones who have not cheated yet — they just give them one more reason to consider their actions,” Palusco said. The SGA has set academic integrity to be the theme of its events held throughout this year.

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Join the Voice!

Submit or Write to The College Voice! The College Voice accepts comments and classifications from the students, faculty, staff, and alumni of MCC for printing in the Voice. Please keep submissions around 400 words for commentaries, 25 words or less for classifications, and submit them in electronic format, if possible, along with your name, and status at MCC (major and year, or alumnus). All materials submitted become the property of The Voice, which reserves the right to reject or edit any material based on length, taste or clarify. All readers encouraged to write to the editors of the Voice, as well as join the staff as an editor or writer. E-mail: mcevoice@gmail.com, Telephone: (609) 386-4800 ext. 3405

MCCC, Room SC218, 1200 Old Trenton Rd., West Windsor, NJ, 08550
Vikings Kick Foes For Fifth Regional Title

by Kelly M. Capers
Sports Editor

Mercer County Community College (MCCC) men’s soccer team, rated first in the nation, dominated regional tournament play for the fifth straight year, defeating Essex 3-1 Saturday to capture the Region XIX title and advance to this weekend’s Northeast District finals.

The Vikings wrapped up their 2005 regular season with a successful 15-0-1 record, capped by a 1-0 touting of Delaware Tech in the regional semifinal and the title win over Essex.

Top-seeded Mercer took control over second-seeded Essex in the first 20 minutes, capped off when Axel Mohammed scored the game’s first goal. First-year Antimony Moy, the tournament’s most valuable offensive player, then sent the team into halftime with a 2-0 lead as he scored with just two seconds left in the half.

“I think offensively, the first 20 minutes were really dangerous and we could have scored three times,” Coach Charlie Inverso said. “After that, for the rest of the half until Antimony’s [Moy] goal, I didn’t think we were as sharp as we normally are.”

Moy’s Tom Fink scored the Vikings’ third goal 10 minutes into the second half. That was the final goal of the game as the backline led by James, Felix Martey and Yacob Rahav in front of stellar goalkeeping by Tom DeStefano.

Those guys have done a great job for us all year,” Inverso said after the game. “I think we could have played better the night before, but having said that, a win is a win, so we are still happy to have the title.”

Moy’s win advances them to the four-team Northeast District championship tournament, which it will host Saturday and Sunday at the Mercer soccer stadium. The district title winner will head to the National Junior College Athletic Association national tournament in Tyler, Texas, on Nov. 17-20, where eight teams from around the country will battle for the national title.

Tournament play is noth- ing new for the Vikings, having played in three straight national championship games, including last year’s title win. Heading into the Northeast District tournament ranked first nationally, the Vikings refuse to let winning go to their heads and acknowledge that they still have work cut out for them.

“It’s going to be hard as the defending champions,” said James, a sophomore. “All the teams that will be coming against us, no matter how weak they are, they’ll give us a good game. We just have to prepare mentally, physically, train hard and that’s it.”

Moy’s only blemish this year came Oct. 20 in a 1-1 home tie against Princeton University’s junior varsity squad. Mohammed led Region XIX scores with 15 goals, while DeStefano led goalkeepers by giving Mercer a second vital shutout.

The Lady Vikings dominated the Region XIX tournament at Gloucester County College on Oct. 21 and 22, with four of their top six singles players winning and doubles teams sweeping the top three places. That put Mercer for the ninth straight year atop its National Junior College Athletic Association region, which includes 25 schools from New Jersey, eastern Pennsylvania and Delaware.

Mercer’s singles winners included its top-ranked player, Natalia Dabrowska, along with Krystle Duay (4), Siobhan Cahill (5) and Sherry Lin (6). Dabrowska and Jane Senor (7) took first place in doubles, followed by Caitlin Bagdonas (2) and Cahill and Duay and Rachel Hendrickson (3). Mercer’s biggest test of the season will take place next spring at the NJCAA National Championships. The tournament will be held May 6-12 in Tucson, Arizona.

“I believe we are huge fa- vorites to win it all,” Coach Marc Vecchiolla said. “This is one of the best teams we’ve had.”

The team completed its 2005 season with a record of 7-0, conquering most opponents with ease. That included three 9-0 shutouts, two against Brookdale Community College and one against County College of Morris. Only rain slowed the Lady Vikings, as weather can- cellled four matches.

With its depth of talent and experience, the team looks ready for any challenge that lies ahead.

Two Named Tourney MVPs

by Kelly M. Capers
Sports Editor

At the conclusion of the Region 19 Men’s soccer final at Mercer’s Soccer stadium, the Viking’s central defender Jason James (4) and forward Anthony Moy (11) received MVP honors for their outstanding contributions during the title game whose result in a 3-1 win as Mercer captured the Region 19 championship.

“I just feel so happy to be selected. You know we go out there and we play hard and I’m just so happy,” said James. This is the second year in a row that James received honors as the most valuable defensive player in a Region 19 title game.

As a freshman in 2004 he was also honored as defensive MVP on Oct. 30 when the Vikings beat Essex in a 7-0 game. While James dominated defensively, Moy helped the team pick up the pace as he kicked the ball deep into the net giving Mercer a second vital goal with only 2 seconds left in the first half.

Surprised by his pick as offensive MVP, Moy said, “I didn’t expect it at all because Axel [Mohammed] has a lot of goals and he played well today but he just happened to give me a nice pass there and I beat the defender and shot it. It’s just something nice to happen to me.”

“It’s something special to come in as a first year player and beat this team, since we’ve had a history with them. And it was a good win,” said Moy.

Women’s Soccer Falls Short Of Title

by Kelly M. Capers
Sports Editor

Newton, N.J. — The 2005 women’s soccer season came to an abrupt end last week as the second-seeded Vikings fell to sec- ond-seeded Sussex in a semi- final shootout in the Region XIX tournament.

The loss meant Mercer was unable to defend last year’s re- gional title. Sussex advanced to the regional final.

The Oct. 24 game was tense throughout, and the end of regu- lation play left the teams tied 1-1. Neither team was able to score in two overtimes, and Sussex fi- nally won the ensuing shootout, 3-1. Mercer’s lone goal was scored by freshman Kristina Connors.

The squads went into the game equally matched. The regular season battle between Sussex and Mercer on Oct. 1 pro- duced no winner, as the teams finished in a 3-3 tie after double overtime.

“We pass very well on the field, but we’re just not fin-ishing as well as we should be,” said team captain Krystal Schnarr. “When we play we look really good, but we’re just not finishing.”

Mercer’s 2005 season seemed overshadowed by in- jury as the team constantly had to change its lineup to adjust to injured starters. The Oct. 1 Sus- sex game alone left the women without two starters for their next game against Ocean County College, which they lost 3-1. But make no mistake, the Lady Vi- king fought hard as a team to overcome many obstacles.

The women concluded their regular season with the same record as last year, 10-5-3. The team produced six shutouts, most notably a crushing 8-0 de- feat over Middlesex on Sept. 27 followed by a 2-0 Oct. 12 win over Burlington County College.

Such dominant wins proved that the team could be dominant when clicking on all cylinders. But the failure to pro- duce key scores left the Lady Vi- kins short of their 2005 goals.