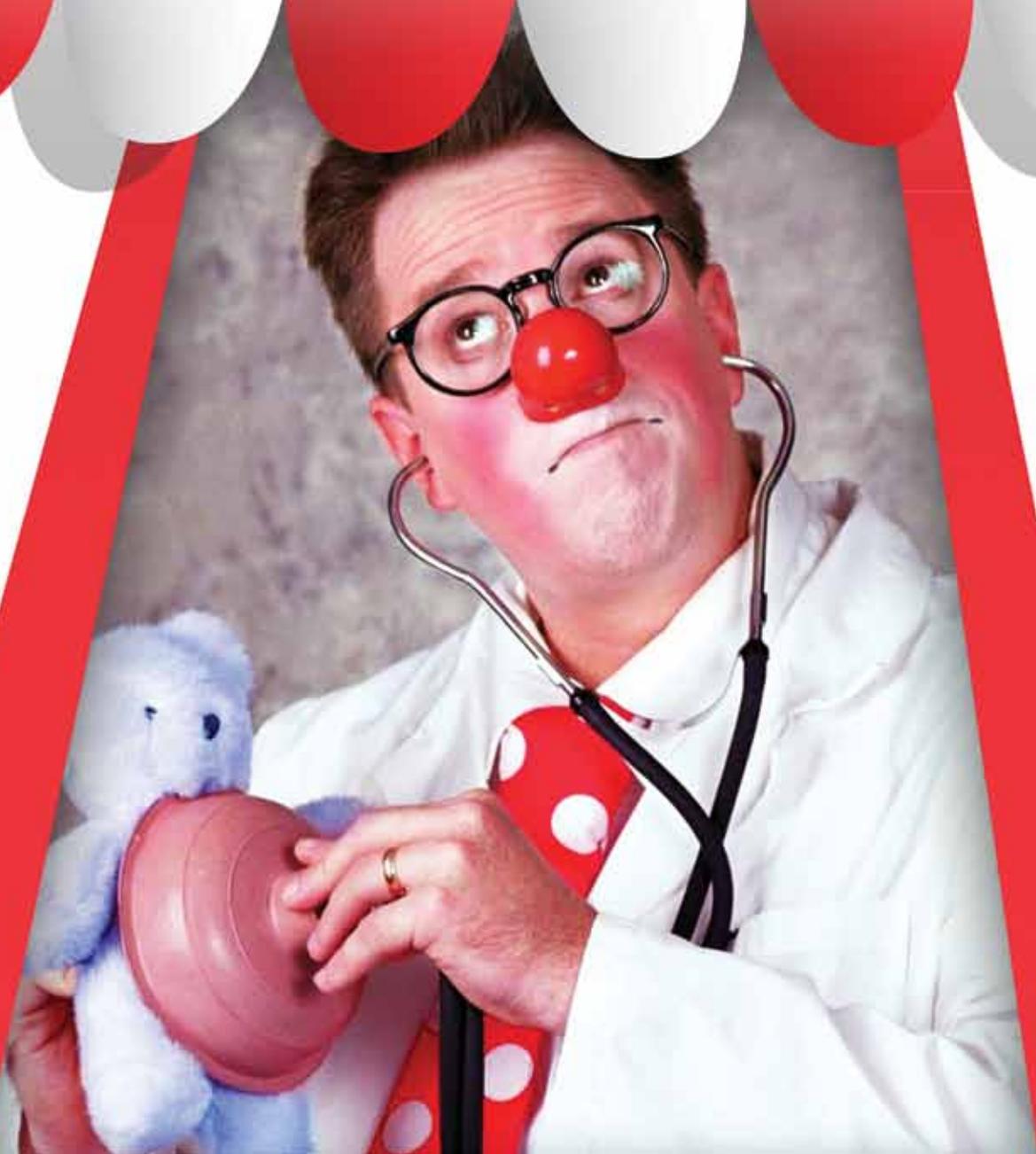


# CLASS CLOWN

**Alumnus Pat Cashin entertains thousands...And then does standup in the hospital for one child on Christmas Eve. See page 8.**



*Photo by Joey Klein*

# CAMPUS NEWS

## Edison Chamber of Commerce Honors 2 from MCC

The Edison Chamber of Commerce honored 13 individuals at its annual achievement awards and membership meeting in June, including two from Middlesex County College. Regina Riccioni, MCC's director of corporate education and training, was named Chamber Member of the Year, and MCC student Matthew Jansen received the Annamae Baerenbach Scholarship.

Ms. Riccioni is a member of the Chamber Board of Trustees, and has served on the Golf Committee and the Executive Committee. She was the chair of the search committee that selected the Edison Chamber's president.

Mr. Jansen is pursuing a Liberal Arts/Business major at Middlesex, and plans to graduate and transfer to a four-year university. He is very active in the community, earning an Eagle Scout badge; he has participated in community service projects since he began in scouting in the first grade. These have included assisting in community clean-up projects, collecting for food banks, visiting nursing homes and teaching skills to younger scouts. He is also an usher at Saint Matthew the Apostle Church in Edison.

Other honorees included: JFK Health Care Adult Medical Day Care, represented by Mary Buglio; Taxi and Limousine One, represented by James Vivelo; Farmers Insurance - Amogh Agency, represented by Seema Jagtiani; Leonard Sendelsky of LenGuy Construction;

Stephen Deak of the Edison Fire Department; Charles Backman of Cypress Brewery; Marc Krauss of TAP Into Edison; Connor Shah of Sole Purpose NJ; Patricia Diolia-Laird of JP Stevens High School; John Fischer of Woodrow Wilson Middle School; and Roseanne Vallely of Martin Luther King Elementary School.



From left: Regina Riccioni, Matthew Jansen and College President Joann La Perla-Morales.



### Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders

Ronald G. Rios, <i>Freeholder Director</i>	Kenneth Armwood Charles Kenny
Carol B. Bellante, <i>Deputy Director</i>	H. James Polos Charles E. Tomaro Blanquita Valenti

### Middlesex County College Board of Trustees

Dorothy K. Power, <i>Chairman</i>	Laura Morana
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From left, Stacy R. Horowitz '14 and student Amanda Athey with Rush Holt, President Joann La Perla-Morales, and Laurie Herrick '15. They are recipients of the Congressman Rush Holt and Dr. Margaret Lancefield Annual Scholarship, which was established at MCC in 2000. The scholarship assists part-time students who work and have family obligations and reside in New Jersey's 12th Congressional District.



## Rush Holt Receives L'Hommedieu Award, Highest College Honor

Rush Holt, the chief executive officer of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and a former Congressman from New Jersey's 12<sup>th</sup> District, was presented the Paige D. L'Hommedieu Award, the highest citation given by Middlesex County College. The award, named for the founding chairperson of the College's Board of Trustees, was presented at the Fall Convocation on August 31.

"Over his distinguished career, Dr. Holt has been a teacher, a scientist, an administrator and a policymaker," said MCC President Joann La Perla-Morales. "Dr. Holt has been committed to education, public service and the betterment of the community throughout his career both as a faculty member at Swarthmore College where he taught physics, public policy and religion courses, and as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for New Jersey's 12<sup>th</sup> Congressional district from 1999 to 2015. Middlesex County and Middlesex County College were fortunate to have been represented by Congressman Holt for those 16 years. As a member of the committee on Education and Workforce and on the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training, the Honorable Rush Holt represented and fought to keep higher education accessible for all of our citizens."

Dr. Holt was assistant director of the Princeton Plasma

New Jersey has many fine private colleges and universities. "But that's not where the center of gravity is," Rush Holt said. "The center of gravity is here."

Physics Laboratory, a Department of Energy national lab, which is the largest research facility of Princeton University and one of the largest alternative energy research facilities in the country. He also served on the faculty of Swarthmore College, where he taught courses in physics and public policy. In 1982, he took leave from Swarthmore to serve as an AAAS/American Physical

Society Science and Technology Policy Fellow on Capitol Hill. The program places outstanding scientists and engineers in executive, legislative and Congressional branch assignments. He calls his fellowship "life changing," and served as a springboard to his role in Congress, where he served for 16 years. He established a long track record of advocacy for federal investment in research and development, science education and innovation.

He served on the National Commission on the Teaching of Mathematics and Science, founded the Congressional Research and Development Caucus, and served as a co-chair of the Biomedical Research Caucus. Dr. Holt served eight years on the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and, from 2007 to 2010, chaired the Select Intelligence Oversight Panel, which worked to strengthen legislative oversight of the intelligence community.

*Continued on page 4*

# L’Hommedieu Accolade to Former Congressman Holt

*Continued from page 3*

Dr. Holt and his wife established the Congressman Rush Holt /Dr. Margaret Lancefield Annual Scholarship for Middlesex County College students and several recipients of the scholarship were in the audience.

“This L’Hommedieu award means a great deal to me,” Dr. Holt said as he accepted it. “This place and other community colleges around the country are what we are depending on for the economic and cultural growth of our country.”

He said that New Jersey has many fine private colleges and universities.

“But that’s not where the center of gravity is,” he said. “The center of gravity is here.”

Dr. Holt said that in both his role as a Congressman and as chief of the AAAS, he has worked to integrate science into all aspects of education.

“It’s through science that we learn to ask questions so they can be answered empirically, with evidence,” he said. “Evidenced-based thinking, I’m sorry to say, seems to be eroding.”

In his new role with the AAAS, he said he will continue

to advocate for community colleges, and for an emphasis on education for all.

“Especially in the sciences,” he said. “And in the sciences for all students, not just those who in the future will be working in technical fields.”



From left, Ronald Rios, Middlesex County freeholder director; MCC President Joann La Perla-Morales; Rush Holt; and Thomas Tighe, vice chairman of the MCC Board of Trustees.

# Poponne Sisters Share Love of Biology

They are a year-and-a-half apart, but could pass for twins. Lisa Marie and Orchid Poponne both love biology, took the same class, BIO 121, and will be together in a research class next spring.

“I love biology,” Lisa-Marie says. I want to figure out how the human body works – the chemical processes that go on in a living organism.”

Orchid shares her sister’s love of the subject.

“I want to know why, when I run, my heart rate increases and how various body functions work,” she said.

Orchid originally wanted to go into pediatric oncology, but is now planning earn a Ph.D. and become a research scientist. She wants to research cancer, particularly that of children.

“It’s really sad to watch someone who hasn’t started life develop this disease,” she said. “You want to find some way to help.”

Their professor, Virender Kanwal, says the current research is heading in the direction of “smart bombs” that can target only cancerous cells instead of chemotherapy that damages healthy and non-healthy cells alike.

“That’s the future,” she says.

Lisa-Marie’s sister shares a love of biology, but wants to focus more on genetics, working in recombinant gene technology.

The two are originally from the Caribbean, but now live in Edison.

“I love it here at Middlesex,” Lisa-Marie said “It’s affordable and the teachers are excellent. They make sure you get the material and they want you to do well.”



From left: Professor Virender Kanwal, Lisa-Marie and Orchid Poponne.

# Building a House; Creating a Home



During the summer visit by the MCC Alumni Association, from left, Skyler Bai '15, Kayleigh Maklary '10, Helen Trippe '76, Dorothy Bitetto '69 and Jessica Cortese '08.



Students, faculty, staff and alumni have spent four sweat-filled days assisting Habitat for Humanity build a home for a family in Perth Amboy. Last fall, they attached the frame to the foundation and in the early spring they worked on the frame. This summer, an alumni group worked on the siding, and another student and faculty group leveled and graded the backyard, added siding, and cut and installed wood pieces to the frame. Above, Malorie Queen '15 is working on the miter saw, while student Emily Koester looks on. Groups from MCC's Democracy House, Veterans and Servicemembers Association, and the Earth Science Club have contributed.



# Keeping a Corner of Princeton University Going

Matthew Parker had to connect a politician from the United Kingdom and the class he was about to speak to in New Jersey with an audience in South America through the magic of technology.

"The video, the audio, the computer, the webinar platform – I was setting up," Mr. Parker said. "The room was booked until five minutes before this guy was supposed to start. I literally had five minutes to throw this up and mike him."

You won't find *Staying Cool During Crisis Webinar Programming 101* in any college catalog. Luckily, Mr. Parker gleaned a lot from the professors he studied under at Middlesex County College.

In particular, Professor Michael Greenhouse in the History and Social Sciences Department planted the seeds of independent thinking, critical analysis, the importance of being prepared for life's unforeseen crises – skills that serve him well in his job as technical support analyst/manager at Princeton University.

At Princeton, Mr. Parker offers information technology support to some 60 faculty members, 30 staff members and about 150 undergraduate and graduate students. To be the go-to guy for tech glitches in the 500 desktops, laptops, tablets and iPhones in the Bendheim Center for Finance, he often harkens to the life lessons learned in Professor Greenhouse's class.

"You're there and you're like, 'Hey, I don't just want to show up to this class and be told that today we're going to read chapter one.' I can read chapter one by myself," Mr. Parker said. "I want to show up to the class and actually interact with the class and the subject. The people who weren't prepared to do that, who didn't think that's how school worked, were the ones who failed his class.

"I completely got that and I respected that. If you were late, you were going to have a problem with (Professor Greenhouse). If you showed up not having done what he asked you to do, like if he said, 'You have to read chapters one and two and come and talk about it,' and you didn't read chapters one and two, he'd call you out."

The journey from the well-manicured Quad lawn at MCC to the ivy-covered walls at Princeton started in the wilds of Alaska. It was there that he stumbled upon the Job Corps, a federal program created to train young men and women for careers. So he took several computer-related courses after high school. To get more advanced

training, however, he would have to relocate to Edison.

Not only did he earn a bunch of industry-recognized information technology certifications and a paid internship with AT&T after moving here, but the Job Corps paid his tuition as he started taking business administration classes at MCC in 2001.

He had every intention of heading back to Alaska, but he fell in love with a Jersey girl. In fact, Laurie called him as the events of Sept. 11, 2001 began to unfold. She offered to come pick him up at MCC, where he was watching the news in library.

Not only did their romance begin to blossom, but so did Mr. Parker's career. After a couple of semesters at MCC, he took an IT job in the Perth Amboy school district. About 18 months later, he was hired at Princeton.

Within five years, Mr. Parker had made the quantum leap from high school student to a job at an Ivy League school. He and Laurie got married and now have two children.

Mr. Parker, who went on to finish his bachelor's degree, thrives on the fact that no two days on the job are the same. Setting up webinars and meeting with a committee to discuss cyber security one day, cleaning up after a flood in a computer lab and remotely wiping information from a misplaced iPad the next – he keeps his corner of the university going.

But no matter the task, he wants to challenge the impatient, know-it-all stereotype of IT workers – the one spoofed on that "Saturday Night Live" skit from a few years ago. Jimmy Fallon arrives to help an office full of workers, but in short order, he begins to mock their lack of computer knowledge. To work on their computers, he doesn't simply ask them to step away from their keyboards, but rather barks at them, "MOVE!"

Mr. Parker says he tries to share his knowledge with his peers rather than "making them feel like idiots."

"That's another thing a lot of technicians do – they won't share how they fix the problem because they feel that somehow takes away from their position, like if I teach them to fix all their problems, then they won't need me," he said. "I've just thrown that out the window. ... If I think it's simple enough to show people how to do it, I'm going to show them how to do it because that saves me time and it makes them happier because they get to fix their own problems."





Seated, from left: Mark McCormick, MCC's vice president for academic and student affairs; Joann La Perla-Morales, MCC's president, and Barbara-Jayne Lewthwaite, Centenary College president. Standing, from left: MCC's Patrick Madama, vice president for Institutional Advancement; Jeffrey Herron, dean of Professional Studies; and David Edwards, dean of Arts and Sciences; and from Centenary, Joseph Linskey, dean for the School of International Programs; Deirdre Letson, dean of the School of Professional Studies and director of Graduate Studies; Cheryl Veronda, associate professor of Business and chair of the Business Department; and Frank Longo, assistant professor, School of Professional Studies.

## Transfer Agreement Links Students With Centenary College

Officials from Centenary College and Middlesex County College signed an articulation agreement for transfer students during a special ceremony in July. This agreement will facilitate a seamless transfer of MCC students into Centenary College's B.S. in Accounting and B.A. in Criminal Justice programs.

"Our institutions have a history of collaboration that provides access to high quality academic opportunities for students in the local area," said Deirdre Letson, dean for the School of Professional Studies and director of Graduate Studies at Centenary College. "This opportunity has an added advantage because students local to Middlesex County can take our classes at our learning center right in Iselin. In addition, I am grateful for this agreement as it illustrates how both institutions have collaborated to place students at the center, allowing them to advance their education and careers."

Professor Cheryl Veronda, chair of Centenary College's Business Department, said, "Through this agreement MCC students who earn their Associate's Degree will be provided an academic pathway to complete a 150-credit B.S. Degree in Accounting, which will allow them to sit for the CPA examination."

The Criminal Justice agreement was an expected progression as it allows students to continue their education in Middlesex County while allowing Centenary's professors to work collaboratively with other professionals in the state, according to Joseph Linskey, professor of criminal justice and dean for the School of International Programs.

Mark McCormick, MCC's vice president for academic and student affairs, said the agreement offered distinct advantages for Middlesex graduates.

"Middlesex County College is proud to partner with Centenary College on these seamless pathways to a Bachelor's Degree for MCC students," he said. "MCC students may transfer up to 72 credits to Centenary under the terms of the articulation agreements, helping to ease the cost of earning a Bachelor's Degree."

## Notables

Professor **Santi Buscemi** of the English Department delivered a paper on the Sicilian author Luigi Capuana at an academic conference commemorating the 100th anniversary of the author's death in Mineo, Sicily. The title of the paper was "Why I Translate Luigi Capuana"; it was delivered in Italian. At the end of the proceedings, the Mineo City Council awarded Professor Buscemi an honorary citizenship for the city, presenting him with a plaque in gratitude for his attempts to make Capuana better known outside of Italy. His wife, MCC Professor Emerita Elaine Buscemi, was also named an honorary citizen. Later that day, Professor Santi Buscemi was asked to address a group of graduating middle school students.

He also delivered two slide lectures on the architecture and literature of Sicily ("Sicilian Treasures") at the Circolo Italiano of Doylestown, PA and at the Italian-American Museum in New York City.

This summer, he wrote an article on U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia in "Primo" magazine. The article covered Justice Scalia's background growing up in Brooklyn and Queens, graduating from Georgetown University, where he was the valedictorian, and then on to Harvard Law. Professor Buscemi talks about the justice's legal philosophy and also when the two met in 2013.

# THE WACKY, WILD, WONDERFUL LIFE OF PAT CASHIN

By Chuck O'Donnell'91

**T**

he crowd that had been crammed together on the bleachers was in no mood to laugh, but Pat Cashin and his fellow clowns were going to juggle, joke around and generate some comedic relief under the sweltering July sun.

Afterward, a father stepped out of the crowd. It was the performance, and not the 90 degree heat, that had melted his heart. He just had to approach Mr. Cashin, shake his hand and thank him.

"This guy and his family just had a great time at something they didn't expect to enjoy," Mr. Cashin said. "It was an unexpected pocket of bliss that they didn't know they were going to have that day. You hope that people take a little bit of that with them."

Underneath the white grease face paint and crazy wig, beyond the gaudy get-up and requisite red nose, Mr. Cashin is a man who has spread bliss and received it back for years in circus rings, stages and personal appearances around the world. He graduated from the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Clown College in 1997 and later toured with the Greatest Show on Earth. He has also performed with Hansen's Spectacular Circus Thrill Show, Circus Spectacular, Circus Royale, the Hamid Circus and the Clyde

Beatty-Cole Bros Circus, to name a few.

He says that outside of the guy who plays Mickey Mouse at Disney World or some mall Santas, nobody except a clown gets the opportunity – privilege, really – of connecting with people so quickly, so deeply.

"The really odd thing is people will open up to you and you have to deal with them honestly and comedically to make them laugh," he said. "You have to be this unguarded version of yourself in order to allow those moments to happen, but they're also coming at you much more honestly than they would anyone else. They say things they probably wouldn't tell anyone under any circumstances and it seems okay and appropriate because you're a clown."

Mr. Cashin's life was at a crossroads when he enrolled at Middlesex County College in the late 1980s after graduating from Cedar Ridge High School in Old Bridge.

He knew he wanted to spend his life performing, but he didn't know if that meant being a clown, an actor, a standup comedian or something else. He turned to the theater department at MCC for help in sorting it all out.

He found playing Hamm in the production of Samuel Beckett's one-act play, "Endgame," to be stifling. He enjoyed playing the role of Orin Scrivello, DDS in "Little Shop of Horrors" but was disappointed that his ideas



of playing the dentist as a Nazi or a disaffected artist such as The Cure's Robert Smith were shot down. (He ended up doing it sort of like Dennis Leary would).

"It was clear that my ideas were more silly than the people I was working with," Mr. Cashin said. "It taught me that it wouldn't work in that environment, that I had to seek out sillier people."

Everything pointed to him being a clown, and that's the path he has walked down happily with cartoonishly oversized red shoes. It's taken him from Madison Square Garden (where he was actually married before a show) to the Rose Garden (where he got President Obama to crack a smile) to a place in the International Clown Hall of Fame in Wisconsin.

He saves his best performances, however, for his frequent visits to the K. Hovnanian Children's Hospital, located at Jersey Shore University Medical Center in Monmouth County. He goes room to room, spreading a little happiness in a place where it's in short supply.

Mr. Cashin says that while the hospital is equipped with all kinds of great toys and video games, some of the kids don't have many visitors. Both parents have to work and



the grandparents just can't get there. So, they're waiting for someone – even a guy with a mock stethoscope and a lab coat – to listen to them as they recall the peanut butter and jelly sandwich they enjoyed for lunch.

For other kids, the scars are still painful and they may not be in the mood to yuck it up. For Mr. Cashin, the trick is to quickly assess the atmosphere in each room and tune himself to it, like a radio dial. Some are like country and western stations, some are like rock 'n' roll stations, some are like NPR, but almost all of them enjoy his visit.

Even the one kid who was spending Christmas Eve in the hospital after being beaten by an abusive father.

"Whatever was wrong with him, whatever had happened, it hurt to have the lights on in the room," Mr. Cashin said. "He and his mother were sitting in the dark on Christmas Eve. You want to say, 'So sorry for this crap situation you're in,' but you just go in. What they wanted was to think about something else. So I just ran through every clean standup routine I could think of.

"So I was the clown doing standup in a dark hospital room until about 8:30 on Christmas Eve. They loved it. They just wanted to think of something else. Part of the thing is if you make someone feel better for a little while, it's very clichéd but it's true – it really means something to people."

Photo on opposite page by Joey Klein. Photos on this page by Paul Gutheil.

# Congratulations Class of 2015!



Valedictorian Nicole Risoli delivered the welcome from the Class of 2015, as graduates celebrated their success. For more photos and video, visit [middlesexcc.edu/commencement](http://middlesexcc.edu/commencement)



*“Embrace Opportunity”*

## Class of 2015 Celebrates Achievements

A total of 1,571 degrees and certificates were awarded to 1,521 students Tuesday, May 19 at the 48th annual Commencement exercises witnessed by approximately 3500 guests. This final event of a year-long celebration of the College’s 50th anniversary was held in the Expo Center in the Raritan Center.

Valedictorian Nicole Risoli delivered the class welcome, sharing her experiences and aspirations. Mrs. Risoli is a graduate of the Paralegal Studies Program.

“Your hard work has paid off and I commend you for your successes big or small,” she told the class. “The most frequently asked question of the day seems to be, so what are your plans? What’s next? For some of us we will go on to other colleges or perhaps enter the workplace if we aren’t there already. But for some of us, like myself, we shrug because we still don’t know what we want to be when we grow up. And that’s okay too. Because the truth is there is no direct path from the seat you sit in today to where you are going. There are no definitive answers. Success is what you make of it and only comes when you embrace opportunity when you find it. If you keep your eyes open, I assure you that opportunity will find you. I hope you find happiness, love, strength and courage along the way.”

Approximately 675 members of the Class of 2015 marched, representing the 355 graduates of August 2014, 420 of January 2015 and 746 of May 2015. Participants included several students who fulfilled the requirements for more than one degree or certificate.

Mark McCormick, vice president for academic and student affairs, presided. Greetings were delivered by Joann La Perla-Morales, College president; Dorothy K. Power, chairman of the Board of Trustees; and Ronald G. Rios, Freeholder director.

Frederick Montana, professor of Natural Sciences, led the academic processional as grand marshal.

Dr. La Perla-Morales, sixth president of the College, conferred degrees and certificates to the graduates, who were introduced by Dean Jeffrey Herron and Dean David Edwards. Dr. McCormick presented the candidates for graduation.

Earlier in May, the College held an honors convocation for students with the highest academic achievement in each program. MCC also presented the Chambers Awards to graduates with a 4.0 grade point average, and the five individuals were recognized during Commencement. They include Ms. Risoli, the salutatorian, Matthew R. Spare, and John A. Addeo, Yulia Forte and Henry B. Vargas.



MCC<sup>4</sup>, otherwise known as the Middlesex County College Crafters' Club, knitted 219 caps to be donated to the victims of the earthquake in Nepal. The club, consisting of MCC students, faculty and staff, gather weekly during their lunch hour to create items to donate to various causes. Seated, from left: Maureen Silas, a student; Helga Herrera, student; Izabela Jedruchniewicz, senior lab coordinator in the Engineering Technology Department. Standing: Nancy Cornell, adjunct professor in the English Department; Savitri Yanamandra, physics lab coordinator; Roseann Latsko; Laura Norek, project assistant in School Relations. Not pictured: Evelyn Kelton, Advising; Brenda Cooney, Student Activities; and Komal Sadarangani, Information Technology.

# Strategic Plan to Guide College

The MCC Board of Trustees recently approved a plan to guide Middlesex County College over the next three years. The College's Mission Statement was changed slightly and the Vision Statement was replaced by a Shared Values Statement.

"This document will help us plan for the future," said College President Joann La Perla-Morales. "Our purpose is to focus on student success."

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## In Memoriam

The College mourns the passing of four members of the College community.

**Jay Edelson**, associate professor of Civil/Construction Engineering Technology, passed away June 5. He taught at MCC for 45 years, from 1970 to 2014.

**Josephine Zifchak**, a former assistant manager of the MCC Bookstore and the wife of Robert Zifchak, former chair of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, and the Athletic Director, passed away June 11.

**Mary Patricia "Pat" Flannery** passed away on June 13. She worked in Continuing Education and in Accounting, Business and Legal Studies for a number of years. She was also the recording secretary for the MCC AFSCME unit for many years.

**Patrick Donohue**, former political science professor at MCC and a founder of MCC's Democracy House, the College's service learning program, passed away July 8. Most recently, he was assistant provost at The College of New Jersey.

The document can be viewed on the College website, [middlesexcc.edu](http://middlesexcc.edu), in the "About Us" link.

The new Mission Statement is: "The mission of Middlesex County College is to provide access to a quality, affordable education for a diverse population, to support student success for lifelong learning, and to strengthen the economic, social and cultural life of the community."

The College's Shared Values are excellence, integrity, diversity, collaboration, transparency and civility.

The Strategic Plan is divided into three Strategic Directions and six Initiatives.

The first is All Pathways Lead to High Quality Learning Experiences. These include streamlining the curriculum approval process; developing or revising academic programs; developing honors courses; and developing alternatives to current class schedules.

The second area is Improving the Learning Environment. The initiatives include enhancing labs, clinics and classrooms; developing a teaching and learning technology master plan; and developing an administrative services technology master plan.

The third area is To Create New, and Enhance Current Internal and External Partnerships. This includes strengthening existing program advisory boards; enhancing the communication and outreach plan; developing and implementing ongoing professional development opportunities; and developing and implementing a comprehensive new employee orientation and mentoring program.

"The entire College community participated in developing this Strategic Plan," Dr. La Perla-Morales said. "We took a look at where we are now and where we need to be to continue to help students succeed. It is a great plan, and we're going to work diligently to implement it."

# FOUNDATION REPORT



Professor Gail Becker (front row fourth from left) and Professor Diane Trainor (fifth left) with Process Technology and Fire Science students on a field trip to the Lyondellbasell facility in Edison. The company is a loyal supporter of the Process Technology program.

**Tehmina Anjum**, Middlesex County College Foundation, has renewed her support of the Mehar Nigar Anjum Annual Scholarship, honoring her mother's many achievements and contributions to her family and community. Preference is given to a full-time, female student who is raising children while attending MCC.

Trustees of the **Margaret and Peter Chang Foundation** renewed their support with a gift of \$12,000 for The Margaret Chang Scholarship, providing three awards of full tuition and fees to students who are graduates of New Brunswick High School.

The **Edison Chamber of Commerce** donated \$1,500 for the Annamae Baerenbach Annual Scholarship. Through revenues raised from its "Taste of Middlesex" event, the Chamber assists an Edison resident majoring in Business, Computer Science or Engineering Technology.

**GMB North America**, Inc. has renewed its annual scholarship with a donation of \$1,500 to assist students majoring in Engineering Technologies to help them fulfill their educational goals.

**Christine Harrington**, History and Social Sciences, is generously continuing her support of the "Student Success 101 Research Poster Contest." The Fall 2015 contest will offer prizes of \$1,000, \$700 and \$300.

**Highland Park Masonic Lodge** provided \$2,000 to renew the J. Craig Putnal Memorial Masonic Scholarship. This annual scholarship provides assistance for a student who has entered MCC directly from high school and has financial need.

Generous support of \$250,000 has been received from **Johnson & Johnson Family of Companies** Contribution Fund for the Johnson & Johnson Health Technologies Scholarships and the Summer Bridge/New Brunswick Program. Johnson & Johnson Health Programs Scholarships significantly enhance opportunities for Nursing and Dental Hygiene students to achieve their career goals and become part of the regional workforce or pursue a Bachelor's Degree or higher. J&J's support for the Summer Bridge/New Brunswick Program provided student assistance, guidance programs, and developmental coursework during this summer's program for recent New Brunswick high school graduates.

The Julia B. Krisza Memorial Scholarship has been established by **Denise Krisza** of the Department of Radiography, together with her husband, **Michael Krisza**. The scholarship honors the memory of Julia Krisza who passed away in June 2015. Mrs. Krisza was a proud mother and, with her husband, Charles, owner of Krisza Hardware store in Edison. The scholarship will be awarded to second year students majoring in Radiography, with financial need.

**Metuchen Savings Bank** has renewed its scholarship with a generous gift of \$3,500 to lighten the financial burden of a Metuchen or Edison resident. This annual scholarship makes a substantial impact in the lives of deserving MCC students that, in turn, benefits the communities in which they live and work.

**MCC Retail Services** has renewed support with a gift of \$5,000 for the MCC Retail Services/Blue Colt Bookstore Annual Scholarship for the 2015-2016 academic year. This scholarship supports an MCC student who has completed 12 credit hours and has financial need.

Loyal donors **Keith and Karen Mullane** have generously provided an additional \$20,000 to support The Mary Braun Endowed Scholarship and The Mary Braun Annual Scholarship, established in memory of Keith's grandmother. Mary Braun was a hard-working Hungarian immigrant who made her home in South Amboy. She was devoted to her family and proud of their academic accomplishments. The scholarships assist students who endeavor to improve their lives through education and who are among the first generation in their family to attempt higher education.

**The Robert Sydney Needham Foundation** has generously provided increased support of \$20,000 to help alleviate financial burdens for two students in 2015-2016 and to allow the recipients to focus on their studies. The Robert Sydney Needham Foundation is managed by Wells Fargo Wealth Management.

**Southpole Foundation Inc.** has continued its long commitment to MCC students with a gift of \$14,000 to renew the Southpole Foundation Annual Scholarships in 2015-2016.

Last year, **The Marion and Norman Tanzman Charitable Foundation** generously provided \$100,000 to establish the Marion and Norman Tanzman Memorial Scholarship fund at the MCC Foundation. The Trustees of the Tanzman Foundation recently pledged to add \$150,000 to the scholarship over the next two years. This endowed scholarship fund is a tribute to the memory of Norman Tanzman and his wife, Marion, and provides a lasting memorial in recognition of their compassion and dedication, and will contribute to the financial needs of MCC students in perpetuity.

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## Correction

The Summer 2015 issue of "Middlesex Now" inaccurately reported gifts made "In memory of Martin Pearlman" rather than "In honor of Martin Pearlman." We apologize to Mr. Pearlman, and to donors Elizabeth A. Jurewicz and Jack L. Waintraub, for this error.



Ida Gonzalez, center, presents a donation to Veronica Clinton, executive director, MCC Foundation, establishing The SPC Michael L. Gonzalez Memorial Scholarship. The scholarship honors the memory and service of Michael L. Gonzalez, a former MCC student, who died August 28, 2008 in Baghdad, Iraq, while serving during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Mrs. Gonzalez is joined by Michael's father, Pedro, second left; Kayleigh Maklary '10, veteran and administrative assistant in the Foundation office; and Richard Feldman, coordinator, Center for Veterans Services. Funding for the scholarship was provided by the Butterfly Circle of Friends, established by Ida and Pedro Gonzalez, based in Spotswood. The scholarship will be awarded to U.S. military veterans or current armed forces members, with preference given to current members of the Army Reserve forces. Special preference will be given to those who have served in a war zone.

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**Women's Rehabilitation Group of New Jersey** provided a donation of \$5,000 to support the Women's Rehabilitation Group of New Jersey Annual Scholarships in 2015-2016. The scholarship supports female students of Asian-Indian origin with financial need.

**The Rotary Club of New Brunswick** has established an annual scholarship to be awarded to U.S. military veterans who have been discharged under honorable conditions, active service members or current members of the National Guard or Reserves. Recipients must be residents of Middlesex County with preference given to students living in New Brunswick, North Brunswick or Highland Park. The Rotary Club of New Brunswick encourages awardees to become involved with their club.

## MCC Foundation Mission Partners

Foundation Mission Partners enhance MCC Foundation's resources and help meet the challenge of providing financial opportunities for students to fulfill their educational and career goals.

**Corporate Mission Partners** (\$10,000): Johnson & Johnson, Investors Bank.

**Mission Partner** (\$5,000): The Provident Bank Foundation, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital.

**Associate Mission Partner** (\$2,500): Stewart Business Systems.

## Foundation Elects New Board Member

Rick Gelmetti, executive vice president of Lee & Associates, a commercial real estate firm based in Edison, has joined the MCC Foundation Board. After many years in the real estate business with Helmsley-Spear and Weichert Commercial, in addition to a professional career in engineering, Mr. Gelmetti formed International Realty Group specializing in office and flex-space leasing and sales in New Jersey. He earned a Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Connecticut, and a Master's Degree in Finance from the Rutgers Graduate School of Management. His business career spans 35 years and he is a top producer in the commercial real estate brokerage profession.



A member of the Class of 1972, Linda Donato Kennedy, and her husband, Edward Kennedy, have established The Alfredo and Antoinette Donato Endowed Scholarship with a contribution of \$25,000 made in honor of Linda's parents. Alfredo and Antoinette Donato made their home in Edison and, for many years, Alfredo's route as a mail carrier included the Edison campus. Upon Linda's graduation from high school, he encouraged his daughter to enroll at the newly-established college. Accepting the contribution from Linda (center) are President Joann La Perla Morales (left) and Veronica Clinton, executive director, MCC Foundation.

## Help Us Help Our Students!

Your donation to the Annual Fund helps the Foundation fulfill its mission of providing scholarships for students and raising funds for College programs. All gifts make a difference! Please make your gift online at [www.mcc-foundation.org](http://www.mcc-foundation.org) or call 732-906-2564. Thank you!

Join Profs Donna-Marie Gardner'00, Tracy Young and others at this event!

WIN PRIZES



5th Annual

# Casino Night

EDUCATION WINS!

SUPPORT MCC STUDENTS

A Wonderful Evening of Make-Believe Gambling!

Friday, February 26, 2016 5:30 p.m.

\$75 ticket – starts you with \$50 in chips (Must be 21 years of age)

FOR MORE INFORMATION Visit us at [mcc-foundation.org](http://mcc-foundation.org) or call 732.906.2564



BUFFET,  
BEER & WINE

# ALUMNI ACTIVITIES

## AlumNotes

Mayor **Fred Henry '70** of South Amboy recently retired after 41 years as an educator. Fred earned a bachelor's degree from Trenton State College (now The College of New Jersey), beginning his teaching career at St. Mary's Elementary School. He taught several subjects, including history, English and American literature and political science to middle and high school students in the South Amboy school district. He also coached baseball, softball and cross country and served as athletic director for 12 years. Fred and his wife, Linda, have three children, Kristen, Erin and Fred. "At Middlesex it was Professor (Elliot) Pasternack who made me think on a different level and get very involved with researching data," said Fred in a recent article in "The South Amboy/Sayreville Times."

**William Grieco '75** earned a B.S. from Fairleigh Dickinson University in 1977. William retired in 2014 after 35 years with the Department of Defense in its Accounting Office.

**Carol Patterson '75**, an associate professor of nursing at Raritan Valley Community College, is a winner of this year's "Divas and Dons Award" from the Institute for Nursing. The award honors a New Jersey nurse who makes an extraordinary impact on the nursing profession and the health community, and who has demonstrated outstanding achievement and been a positive influence on others. A former president of the New Jersey League for Nursing, Carol has taught at RVCC for nearly 25 years and was one of 20 nurses honored during the annual benefit gala. Carol received her AAS/RN from MCC, a B.S. in Nursing from New Jersey City University, an M.S. in Nursing from Seton Hall University, and a post-graduate certificate in nursing education from Rutgers University.

**Mary Trickel '77** has earned a Doctorate in Education, with a specialization in Higher Education Organizational Leadership, from Grand Canyon University.

**David T. Gockel '78** is president and chief executive officer of Langan Engineering and Environmental Services in Elmwood Park, NJ. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering from the New Jersey Institute of Technology and a Master's Degree in Civil Engineering from the University of California at Berkeley.

**Mark Parkhurst '00** earned a B.A. in History from New Jersey City University. He worked in corporate security, leaving to be a classroom aide in the Perth Amboy School District. Mark served in the US Marine Corps from 1988-1992.

**Lanora Melillo '02** has many good things to say about MCC. After graduating from high school in 2000, her confidence was low but MCC brought her out of her shell. She met many people with whom she is still friends today. Lanora earned a Bachelor's Degree in English

and Education from William Paterson University and a Master's Degree from Drexel University. She enjoys a successful career as a librarian and recently accepted the position of head of children's services at Scotch Plains Public Library which she loves.

**Danny Virasawmi '04** earned degrees in Photography and Advertising Graphic Design at MCC, and graduated in 2008 from the Graphic Design program at Kean University. He is now a lead web developer at Verizon Wireless headquarters in Basking Ridge.

**Melanie Meyer '07** earned a degree in Marketing and now owns an appliance store with her husband.

**Kevin V. Nedza '07** works as Senior Policy Advisor for New Jersey General Assembly.



Kim Silva-Martinez '14 was presented the Recent Alumna of the Year Award at the Alumni Association dinner meeting in June. The award is given annually to a graduate of the past 10 years. Ms. Silva-Martinez has maintained her allegiance to Middlesex, assisting with several Alumni Association projects. In addition, she wrote a book to celebrate Middlesex County College's 50th anniversary. The work, called "endless possibilities: Middlesex County College 1964-2014," chronicles the life of the College over its history. In addition, she created a display of photos and artifacts for the College's fundraising gala and community celebration this spring. From left: Dorothy Bitetto '69, president of the MCC Alumni Association; Ms. Silva-Martinez; and College President Joann La Perla-Morales.

After earning a Liberal Arts degree from MCC, Kevin went on to Rutgers University earning a Bachelor's Degree in History. He enjoys travel in his leisure time and has been to 18 countries.



Namema  
Amendi

**Namema Amendi '07**, Jack Kent Cooke Scholar, is a legal fellow at Microsoft Corporation, and research assistant at The Ansar Law Firm. He works with a diverse team of professionals including lobbyists, subject matter experts, and attorneys who apply their expertise in international trade, project finance, intellectual property rights protection, antitrust, compliance, telecommunication, internet safety, cybersecurity, immigration reform, and education policy. He conducts a wide range of research, analysis, and presentation in these areas for internal and external use.

**Joseph Anthony '08** earned a Bachelor's Degree in Mathematical Sciences at Kean University in 2012 and a Master's in Teaching from Montclair State University. He has completed his first year as a high school algebra teacher.

**Thom Bradley '09** earned an Associate degree in Education and took time off from school so he could work and gain some experience. Now, Thom is going into his last semester at Kean University, majoring in Sociology. He plans to attend Rutgers to work on a Master's/Ph.D. Program in Psychiatric Rehabilitation.

**Thomas Schmid '10** earned a bachelor's degree in Economics, with a minor in Statistics, from Rutgers University. Thomas is now a business analyst for Amazon in Avenel.

**Zizhou Zhao '10**, valedictorian and Jack Kent Cooke Scholar, is a co-founder of Xuantenghuaxing Technology Ltd., Shenzhen, Guangdong, China. He earned a Bachelor's Degree from University of California at Berkeley, co-founded Shepherd Educational Consulting Inc., and was employed as an independent researcher at the Center of Integrated Nanomechanical Systems.

**Les Shider Acosta '11** continued her studies at the New Jersey Institute of Technology, graduating and earning a Bachelor's Degree in Chemistry last summer, Summa Cum Laude. Les was a recipient of the ExxonMobil Scholarship for female chemistry students from 2012 to 2014. She currently seeks employment in a chemistry lab as a quality control tech, lab tech, or chemist. "My college education helped me to be a better person. More importantly, it gave me the experience to work in any chemistry lab."

**Angel Pack-Hall '11** met some really great people at MCC, some of whom turned into good friends. Angel is currently employed at a hospital in New Jersey and is excited about graduating with a BSN next year from Thomas Edison State College.

**Richard Riano '11** earned a degree in Graphic Design and, in 2014, graduated from Kean University with a bachelor's degree in Fine Arts.

**Pritpal Singh '11** is now pursuing a BA in Finance at Thomas Edison State College with an anticipated completion date of March 2016. He works full-time as a senior financial analyst. "My future goals are to continue my education and pursue my MBA in the fall of 2016 and climb the career ladder and hope one day to start a scholarship for students at MCC."

**Heather Smith '11** graduated with an Associate in Liberal Arts Degree. "My husband and I moved to Tennessee to help care for his parents. I am currently a specialist with Apple and I love my job!"

**Joseph Auriemma '12** earned a Bachelor's Degree in Communications from Rutgers in 2014 and is working as a sales representative.

**Annette Kabia '13** earned a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Virginia's College at

Wise and is currently attending Florida A&M University's College of Law.

**Juliana Pettitt '13** graduated from The College of New Jersey last December. She now works at Munich RE America in Princeton and conducts research for Johnson & Johnson.

**Shazim M. Siddiqui '13** earned a Bachelor's Degree from Montclair State University in Finance & Real Estate in 2014. He is currently working at Merrill Lynch Wealth Management. "Shout out to Claire Condie, best professor ever!"

**Gil Sousa '13** graduated with an Associate Degree in Civil Engineering, an Associate Degree in Land Survey Engineering, and a Certificate in AutoCad Drafting. He continued his education at New Jersey Institute of Technology, graduating this past May with a Bachelor's Degree in Construction Engineering Technology and a minor in Business. Gil started his own home improvement business and hopes to pursue a career in an engineering firm while continuing to work for himself. He also hopes to pursue a Master's Degree from NJIT.

**Ryan Spero '13** graduated from Rider University with a degree in Secondary Education and Social Studies and is currently job hunting. He Loved MCC and says it prepared him "for just about everything."

**Angela Patricia Alarcon '14** transferred to Rutgers Business School last September, majoring in Supply Chain Management. "This semester I will start my logistics internship at one of the best freight forwarding companies in the world. I love supply chain and nothing will ever make me change my mind. Thanks MCC for the wonderful school experience!"

**Frankie Bell '14** won the New Nurse of the Year Award at Bayshore Community Hospital in Holmdel, NJ.

**Michael Lisboa '14** is enrolled in Rutgers University Supply Chain Management program. "MCC prepared me for the Rutgers School of Business."

**Vellissa Tam '14** is working as an X-Ray technologist at Urgent Care of NJ. She has traveled a lot since graduating from MCC.

**Greg Vitanzo '14** plans to graduate from NJIT in the summer of 2016. He will then be looking for employment in New York City, preferably with Cisco.

**Omar Alam '15** is studying at Columbia University and is employed at the Davidovich Bakery in NYC.

**Skyler Bai '15** is majoring in Biology at Arcadia University and plans to enter the Physical Therapy program.

**Michael J. Heitzenroeder '15** has a granddaughter and grandson, and his hobbies include landscape photography and men's

league ice hockey. His youngest daughter currently serves in the National Guard.

**Malorie Queen '15** is continuing her education at Rutgers University.

**Charles C. Backmann** enjoyed his time at MCC and is a co-founder of Cypress Brewing Company producing high quality beers. The brewery is located in Edison.

**Tanvir Mohsin** attended MCC in 2008. "In 2011 I earned a B.S. in ECE and then I pursued an M.S. in ECE from Ohio State University. I won the National Science Foundation graduate research fellowship in 2013. Currently I am working

as a semiconductor process engineer at Texas Instruments. I really enjoyed my time at MCC."

**Karolina Vengeance** earned a Bachelor's Degree in Mathematics with a K-12 Certification from Montclair State University in 2013 and has started her third year teaching in Newark Public Schools.

## In Memoriam

Mary Hnat '70

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# Donna-Marie Gardner '00 Named Alumna of the Year

Donna Marie Gardner of the Natural Sciences Department received the 2015 Alumna of the Year Award for Contributions to the College, its Alumni Association or Foundation. The award was presented during Celebration Day in May, an annual event that also honors College employees reaching milestone service anniversaries and two Outstanding Service to the College award winners.

Professor Gardner, a member of the MCC class of 2000, is a superb teacher who motivates and inspires her students. She is an innovative educator who brings many

different learning and teaching styles to her classroom. She is respected, admired and liked by her students, both science and non-science majors. In 2014, she was awarded the MCC Excellence in Teaching Award.

Professor Gardner graduated from MCC with an Associate Degree with highest honors and transferred to Columbia University, where she earned both her Bachelor's Degree and her Master's Degree. She is pursuing a doctorate in post-secondary and adult education.

Along with Professor Mat Spano, Professor Gardner

is co-director of the College's Honors Program and the advisor to several clubs on campus.

She also volunteers in the community, participating with Habitat for Humanity, Elijah's Promise Soup Kitchen, and with her church.

She generously offers her time with Alumni Association projects, as well as Foundation events and activities.

"I'm honored, flattered and privileged to be recognized," Professor Gardner said. "This is an important award for me because of how I feel about Middlesex. The College is my home; it transformed my life."

At the Celebration Day ceremony, Damian Gonzalez, graphic services coordinator, received the award for Outstanding Service to the College for Staff and Mark Thompson, director of the Library, for Administrators.



From left: Dorothy Bitetto '69, president of the Alumni Association; Donna-Marie Gardner '00; and College President Joann La Perla-Morales.

# SPORTS UPDATE

Below, the cross country squad during a practice. From left: Ryan McCue, Andrew Katz, Ben Harder, Kim Campbell, Zach Tinawi, Renee Osma.

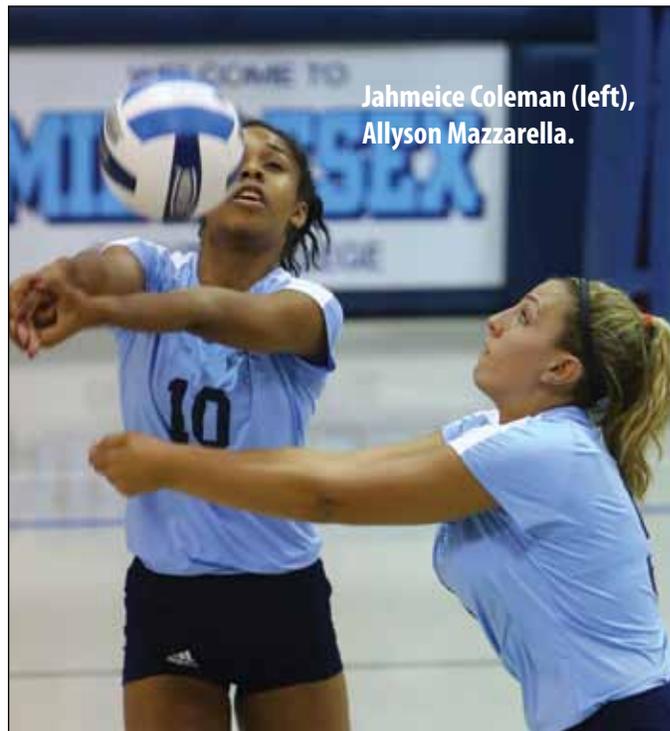
At right, Katia Olsen heads the ball.



Caroline Juba makes a save.



Lena Buccigrossi spikes the ball.



Jahmeice Coleman (left), Allyson Mazzarella.

The **Men's Soccer** season is in full swing, with a record of 3-9-1. They have a lot of young talent and are making a push for the playoffs.

The **Cross Country** team is getting ready for Region XIX championships. Renee Osma has placed in the top 10 in the last two meets.

The **Women's Soccer** team is 6-5 overall and 6-2 in Region XIX play. They turn their focus to the Region XIX tournament which houses two bids to the national tournament.

With a very young squad, **Volleyball** is improving. Christian Williams is the new coach and the team has won the last 2 out of 4 matches.



Josue Cevallos (# 11)



Goalie Benjamin Rosas prevents a score.

# MIDDLESEX

C O U N T Y C O L L E G E

## INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT

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Change Service Requested



Forty-six county residents became United States citizens in a touching ceremony at MCC in October. Originally from 15 different countries, the group took their oath of citizenship in the Performing Arts Center. The Middlesex Gospel Choir Performed the National Anthem and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Dennis Penny '13, the assistant in the Veterans Services Office.