



Financial Aid staff, let to right, Rose Patterson, Joshua Hall, Annette Broski, Theresa Lisi, Mary Ellen Hart, and Alma King.

Financial Aid at MVCC - Putting College Within Reach for Thousands Every Year

Approximately 85% of students enrolled in credit courses at MVCC - more than 4,000 individuals enrolled either full-time or part-time in both Utica and Rome, and on-line - receive some form of State or Federal financial aid, either grants or loans. Each student receives the personal attention of professionals in the MVCC Financial Aid Office, and a share of \$15 million in aid awarded each year.

On the Utica Campus, Financial Aid is located on the first floor of Payne Hall, near the Student Service Center. In Rome, Tom Salva in the Student Services Office, L37, Plumley

Complex, is available to assist students with applications, questions and so on, which eliminates the need for them to travel to the Utica Office.

The amount of aid each student receives is determined completely by formulas developed by the U.S. Department of Education, and by New York State. At the Federal level, the formula, and the amount of aid to be available nationwide, is determined each year by Congress. When students and their families submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), the information they provide determines the amount of aid for which they are eligible. The FAFSA gathers information of family assets and income, household size and the number of college students in the family, State rates of taxation, and so on. This information determines an expected family contribution. This in turn is compared to the cost of attendance and determines financial aid eligibility.

According to Financial Aid Director **Annette Broski**, who's been in the position for just under 10 years, one of the great misconceptions on the part of students is that financial aid administrators have a significant level of control over the amount of aid awarded. In reality, she says, aid amounts are determined by the formulas established by the U.S. and New York State governments. Financial aid advisors have very limited discretion, although they can sometimes take extraordinary extenuating circumstances into consideration.

Annette, who will observe her 10th anniversary with MVCC in November, worked in banking for 19 years before coming to the College.

Other members of MVCC's Financial Aid Office include Assistant Director **Rose Patterson**, who has been at the

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MVEEC Donates Award to Engineering Technologies and the Trades Department

The Mohawk Valley Engineers Executive Council, MVEEC recently presented the College with \$1000 for use to foster the enhancements to the civil technology soils lab. The E.Q. Carr Award was presented to Alice Romanych, P.E. for engineering excellence and significant contributions in the field of engineering in Mohawk Valley/Central New York area. Ms. Romanych in turn, donated the funds to the College to purchase a digital scale for the lab.

Ms. Romanych is the Assistant to the Regional Director for the Utica Regional Office of the New York State Department of Transportation.

The award is sponsored by Start Carr, Ph.D., VP Critical Technologies Inc., Critical Technologies Inc., and MVEEC.

Pictured in photo from left are, President Michael Schafer, William M. Denale, Chairperson, MVEEC (1987 Electrical Engineering grad and past adjunct faculty member for the department) and Alice Romanych, P.E.



Financial Aid Office, cont.

College since 1987. Among her responsibilities is computer operations related to financial aid, including the financial aid module within BANNER.

Annette and Rose are both members of the New York State Financial Aid Administrators Association and the SUNY Financial Aid Professionals Association, which not only help them keep updated on financial aid policy but also provide a forum for sharing new ideas with financial aid administrators at other institutions. Annette is also a member of the Eastern Association of Financial Aid Administrators.

The financial aid advisors, who work with specific students on the basis of an alphabetical distribution, are **Alma King** - with 20 years at MVCC - **Mary Ellen Hart** - a veteran of over 15 years - and **Joshua Hall** - part of the Office for about five years. Each student works with the same advisor throughout their studies at the College. This helps each Advisor to be more familiar with the needs of the students they serve, and adds to the confidentiality of student information. Alma oversees all file review processes, Mary Ellen is responsible for monitoring student academic progress against different standards set by both the Federal and State Government, and Joshua coordinates the aid of students who take courses at other campuses. The job is made easier by computer technology - a theme which runs through much of what Financial Aid does these days....more about that later.

Jackie Womack and **Theresa Lisi** are both financial aid assistants. Jackie, who began in Financial Aid as a work-study student, has been part of the Office for 10 years. Much of her work is involved with the direct loan program.



Theresa is one of the newest members of the staff, and works at the Office's front desk. She is one of the first people most students meet when they come in to discuss financial aid.

Occasionally, students are not pleased with decisions about their financial aid - especially when aid is lost due to problems with academic performance. Annette frequently meets with these students to explain the situation, and also helps them understand what they need to do to regain eligibility. She also works with a Financial Aid Appeals Committee which reviews student requests for a reconsideration of their financial aid status.

The period of peak activity annually for the Financial Aid Office is from early July through the first week of October. That's when lines of students are more likely, and when the number of phone calls goes up dramatically. Each contact requires extensive detailed academic and financial information, and a high level of confidentiality. Because of this, if an advisor is working with a student when another one calls, they do not stop working with the student in their office, and discuss the caller's status in front of another student. There is a policy, however, of returning all such calls by the end of the day.

Financial Aid works closely with a number of other departments on campus, especially the Business Office, Bookstore, the Dormitory Corporation

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MVCC Plans 2nd Annual Tractor Trailer "Road-eo" Saturday, June 12th - Competition, Job & Training Information

Professional drivers from three trucking companies will compete for prizes on Saturday, June 12th, in the 2nd Annual Tractor Trailer "Road-eo," at Mohawk Valley Community College's Utica Campus. The event is scheduled for 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in a parking lot next to the College's Academic Building. The drivers will represent Swift Transportation, Covenant Transport and Trans-AM as they guide their 18-wheeler big rigs through a challenging course.

The free event includes a job fair featuring trucking company recruiters, and information on the MVCC-Sage Technical Services 150-hour training program for new truck drivers. The training program, based at the College's Rome Campus, has assisted many new drivers in beginning their over-the-road careers. For information on the "Road-eo," or on the MVCC-Sage truck driving instructional program, interested individuals should call Joseph Fontana at 334-7793.

Relay for Life Owen's Outback Quilt Raffle



Tickets are 1 for \$1, 3 for \$2 and 10 for \$5.

They can be purchased from Maria Salamida, PH347; Jeff Kimball, AB 160; Ann Smallen, PH 372; and Stephanie Verostek, PC 113 on the Rome Campus.

Submissions for the last Communitas of the semester will be accepted until Wednesday, May 19th. Email info to szohne@mvcc.edu



The Band "Chulrua" Performed Traditional Irish Music in the Theater last Tuesday.

Adjunct Instructor Recruitment Fair

MVCC is seeking qualified people for consideration as part-time faculty and non-credit instructors in a variety of discipline areas.

Interested individuals meet with Department Heads:
Tuesday, May 25th & Wednesday, May 26th,
4:00-6:00PM

Utica Campus, 1101 Sherman Drive
IT Building - 2nd Level Lobby

* In most cases, a graduate degree appropriate to the particular field or discipline is required.

* Non-credit areas include the entire range of professional and workforce development, community education, and leisure activities courses.

* Preference to teach day or evening courses at the Utica or Rome campus.

Attendees should bring a copy of their resume.

MVCC is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer. Women, minorities, veterans and people with disabilities are

Upcoming Events

Tuesday, 5/18

Foundation Scholarship Luncheon, Noon, MV Commons.
NYS Office for Technology Public Hearing, 7:00pm, IT Theater.

Thursday, 5/20

Strategic Planning Summer Institute Forum, 11:00am, IT 225.

Friday, 5/21

Nursing Convocation Ceremony, Noon, IT Theater.
Commencement, 4:00pm, Utica Aud.

Tuesday, 5/25

Adjunct Instructor Recruitment Fair, 4:00pm-6:00pm, IT Lobby, second floor.

Wednesday, 5/26

Adjunct Instructor Recruitment Fair, 4:00pm-6:00pm, IT Lobby, second floor.

Financial Aid Office, cont.

- with whom they share computer information to selected student records. To an extent, they also interact with Counseling, Admissions, Institutional Advancement, with all Instructors, and of course with Institutional Technology. They do outreach work, participating in a financial aid forms workshop for students and families every year, with colleagues from other local institutions, speaking at financial aid nights in various high schools, and taking part in New York Financial Aid Awareness Week every January.

There are some things they don't do, including student billing and collecting money. They also don't handle private scholarships -- those are administered by the Office of Institutional Advancement, using funds donated to the MVCC Foundation.

As with so many other parts of the College, the work of the professionals in the Financial Aid Office has been transformed over recent years by advances in computer technology. Computer systems make it easier for students to apply - filing the FAFSA on-line for example - and to quickly get a response, and conveniently check their status the same way. They aid greatly in monitoring student progress, accessing and maintaining their records, interacting with other departments at the College, managing aid funds, and communicating with Federal and State agencies. Student interactions with the College's offices are simplified and streamlined with improved computer technology.

Rather than depersonalize the process, however, Annette feels that the increased use of technology has actually improved personal service for students, making it possible to provide students with better quality information more quickly, and eliminating or streamlining hundreds or thousands of transactions or information updates. It is this technology foundation which actually makes it possible to spend more time with students, especially with those who have difficult financial aid situations.

The role of the Financial Aid Office, she says, is very straightforward - to assist students in meeting the cost of their college education through State and Federal aid programs, to the greatest extent possible, while staying within relevant requirements. And while there have been increases in the cost of education, financial aid programs have also increased. As a result, she says, for the student who qualifies for full aid there is more than enough assistance available through the TAP and Pell Grant programs to complete college studies - especially in a comparatively affordable institution such as MVCC.

Residence Hall Ground Breaking



As College and local officials look on, three MVCC students broke ground for the new 6 million dollar Residence Hall expansion project last Tuesday.

When completed, the three story 41,000-square foot building will house an additional 155 students. No Oneida County or New York State funds will be used for the construction.