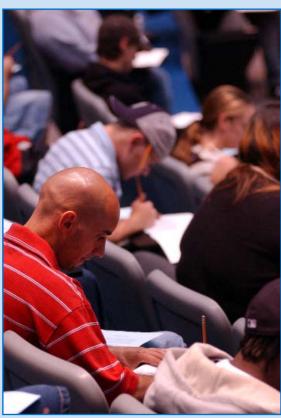
# Communitas





Placement Testing: Making Sure Students Are Prepared for the Courses They Choose - and More Likely to Succeed

Like snowflakes, no two matriculated MVCC students are exactly alike. But they do all have one thing in common --- the MVCC Placement Test.

#### **Not an Admissions Test**

Placement testing does not determine acceptance to the College. Rather, the purpose of placement testing is simply to make sure students are prepared for the classes they choose and to maximize their chances for success. There is no charge for the test, and students may retest if they are not happy with the score they receive the first time.

#### Thousands of Individual Tests Each Year

Each year, the Placement Testing Office administers and scores 3,000-4,000 placement tests, required for all students matriculating in an MVCC degree or certificate program since 1985. In addition, many individual MVCC courses have prerequisites which include minimum placement test scores.

Working with the Office for Services to Students with Disabilities, Placement Testing can accommodate students who have special needs. continued on page 2

### **MVCC**Faces



Distance Education Steering Committee

Keith Lynip, Director of Distance Learning

Keith works closely with department heads, IT, and others, to provide leadership in the vision for distance learning programs. He develops methodology for the evaluation of distance learning and online programs to ensure consistent quality across all DL offerings, and supports faculty in online courseware development and students in effective techniques for learning online. He also formulates plans to promote online courses both to faculty and new and existing students, and identifies development and training needs with respect to distance learning

He joined MVCC in August.

He will be living in Rome, once he can close on the house.

Keith holds a BA in History/Literature from Houghton College, Houghton, NY, and an MA in History/Post-Secondary Education (Community College Concentration) from Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.

He currently participates in the Forum for Instructional Technology and

Keith enjoys almost anything outdoors: sailing, camping, dual-purpose motorcycling, golfing, scuba-diving, landscaping, etc. He also likes to travel internationally and spends time with house projects: necessary given his older home. His family consists of wife Amaris and two daughters, Catherine and Johanna.

#### Placement Testing, cont.

Testing is done throughout the year, although the weeks leading up to the fall and spring semester are especially busy - bringing as many as 150 calls a day to schedule individual test appointments.

Coordinator of Placement Testing Kathy Bernstein, right, schedules, administers or coordinates test administration, oversees scoring and reporting results to students and faculty, and maintains testing records, while also coordinating the ESL and Developmental Studies programs, and teaching courses in English as a Second Language, developmental reading and study skills, and occasionally other subjects. She has been overseeing the placement testing process as coordinator for the past 20

years, assisted by two part-time clerical employees, Ellen Krol and Karen Brisson, shared with the Learning Center. Eight part-time employees are involved in administering exams.

#### **Testing on Campus - and Elsewhere**

In addition to testing on the Utica and Rome Campuses, testing sometimes takes place at remote locations such as area high schools, or area sites where the Center for Community & Economic Development provides employee training. Sometimes, it is even more remote - tests have been administered by qualified individuals for MVCC as far away as Hawaii, Texas, Maine and Canada.



#### A Test with Three Parts - or More in Some Cases

According to Bernstein, the MVCC test has three parts: the Nelson-Denny reading test, which measures reading comprehension, the College's mathematics placement test, and a writing sample. For students whose first language is not English, there can also be an ESL placement test. Currently the Michigan Test of English Language is used.

Approximately 150 students without high school diplomas apply to the College each year. To qualify for Federal financial aid, these students must also take an ASSET test to determine their "ability to benefit." Results are reported through an intermediary firm to the Federal government.

Students enrolled in the Verizon "Next Step" program are also required to take the ASSET test.

The mathematics and reading comprehension tests, and the ASSET test, are machine scored, with assistance from Debbie Otis and A.J. Stepanick in Information Technology.

The writing samples are read and scored by two members of the Humanities Department faculty, most recently Associate Professor Paul Cruskie and Associate Professor Satya Tandon. Former Professor Steve Mocko took part in the scoring for many years as well. In special cases, Bernstein may also score the writing samples.



### The Occasional Unusual Situations

As with any process involving students, unusual wrinkles can develop. Occasionally, some individuals are unfamiliar with "bubble sheets." Others with a non-English language background may have difficulty with test instructions. There are the occasional cell phone interruptions, late arrivals, power outages, and even illness during the exam.

### Possible Changes and Challenges Ahead

Changes in instructional approaches can mean changes in placement testing. A move toward more on-line instruction means there will likely be more placement testing at remote locations, or eventually on-line. As the College looks at rolling registration, available throughout the year, placement test-

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### Placement Testing, cont.

ing may have to adjust to accommodate that. In a world that increasingly expects immediate results, there is a related growing interest in having test results available the same day the test is administered. Federal ability-to-benefit requirements are changing. These all represent challenges for MVCC's placement testing approach and may bring change in the future.

### The Basic Value of Placement Testing

Whether changes occur or not, the basic value of placement testing will remain constant. Placement testing, and compliance with the results of that testing, are beneficial for both students and the College. Students who follow the advice inherent in the test scores will have a better chance of success. Placement testing helps students and the College both make better use of precious time and resources.



Carmella Speciale, a Class of 1987, Office Technologies grad, is now Senior Corporate Services Support Supervisor at the Utica National Insurance Group. She also holds B.S. and M.S. degrees from SUNY Oswego.

### Faculty and Staff In the News

**Dr. George J. Searles** (Professor, Humanities) attended the Southampton Writers Conference July 20-31, studying under the noted poet Susan Kinsolving.

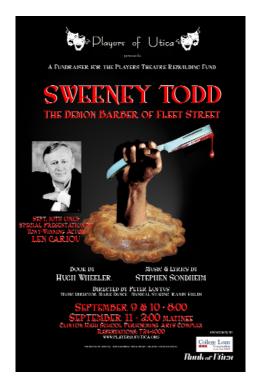
Sandra Engel, Head,
Humanities, attended the Association
Liaison Office for the United States
Agency for International
Development conference in
Washington in late July. While there,
Mr. Do Quoc Trung and other representatives of the Kien Giang
Community College Partnership met
with Representatives Ben Chandler
of Kentucky and Sherwood Boehlert
of New York.

However, most notable during the conference was the first place award for the "Moving Images" film competition. "Bridges," a twenty-minute video documenting The Vietnam Project was filmed and edited by Bill McGowan of the Business and Information Technology Department and written by Jerry Whitus of Richland College in Dallas.

### MVCC's Mission Statement

Mohawk Valley Community College offers choice, opportunity, and hope by providing accessible and affordable higher education, training, and services that emphasize academic excellence, diversity and a global view.

The College is committed to excellence in career and transfer preparation, business, economic and community development, and personal and cultural enrichment



### Players Production Full of MVCC Talent

The upcoming Players of Utica production of Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street is full of MVCC talent- David Kolb (Mathematics) and Jav Salsberg (Print Shop) both landed feature roles in the Stephen Sondheim musical, which also features Jackie Osterman and Paul Mastrangelo, both occasional adjuncts in the Humanities department, Produced as a fundraiser for the Players Theatre Rebuilding fund, Sweeney Todd will be staged at the Clinton High School Performing Arts Complex, September 9 & 10 at 8:00pm, and September 11th at 2:00pm. Tony-winning stage and screen actor Len Cariou, who originated the role of Sweeney Todd on Broadway in 1979, will introduce the performance on the 10th after appearing at a special fundraising dinner to benefit the Players Theatre. Reservations for the dinner or the performances may be made through the Stanley Theatre box office at 724-4000.

### Division II Scholarships for Four Members of MVCC's Women's Basketball Team

Four seniors on last season's women's intercollegiate basketball team at Mohawk Valley Community College have won Division II scholarships at four-year colleges.

Hawks' Forward Clarissa Newton, of Albany, has joined former MVCC Hawks Diedra Bumbrey and Eniola Bakara at the University of the District of Columbia. At the end of the 2004-2005 season, Newton was selected for the NJCAA All-Region III Third Team and All-Mountain Valley Conference Second Team.

Guard/forward Nicole Day of Ilion transferred to Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, NY, to play both basketball and softball. Day was selected for the All-Mountain Valley Conference Second Team for her play last season for the Hawks. She was also named First Team All-Region and First Team All-Conference in softball.

Guards Latoya Coley and Natasha Box, both from Carnarsie High School in Brooklyn, are continuing their collegiate careers at Post University in Waterbury, Connecticut.

Following her senior year at MVCC, Coley was named an Honorable Mention All-American, and was named to the NJCAA Division III Region III First Team and All-Mountain Valley Conference First Team. Box was named to the NJCAA Division III All-Region III First Team and The Mountain Valley Conference First Team.

The MVCC Hawks, led by third-year coach Bob Allison, finished their 2004-2005 season with a 34-2 record (school record). They were the Mountain Valley Conference Champions, NJCAA Division III, Region III Champions, and won both the Erie CC and Corning CC tournaments. The team enjoyed the longest winning streak in Division III history winning 33 consecutive games. They were ranked in the top five nationally the entire season. Bob Allison was selected Mountain Valley Conference and District A Coach of the Year. Allison's record after three seasons at the helm is 93-9.









Newton Day

Falling Leaves Golf Scramble

### Coaching Changes

Gary Broadhurst, athletic director and Physical Education Department Head, will take over coaching duties for the men's basketball team during the 2005-2006 season, succeeding Phil Gaffney who has resigned. Coach Broadhurst previously coached the men's team for 12 years, after coaching the women's team for four.

Succeeding Coach Gaffney as coach for the women's tennis team will be Zvn Jackiw, veteran's coordinator in the Registrar's Office.

Taking over for Coach Broadhurst with the men's and women's bowling teams will be Paul Andrews, of the Admissions Office.

Coach Gaffney's seven-year cumulative record as men's basketball coach was 161-52. His teams were nationally ranked each season, winning three Mountain Valley Conference Championships. He was Conference Coach of the Year four times and Region III Coach of the Year three times. His 1999-2000 team set a school record for most wins in a season (27) and most consecutive wins (19). The program produced five All-Americans under Coach Gaffney's leadership: J.R. Redding, Ray Bryant, LaShae Anthony, Mike Smith and Todel Svkes.

The Annual Falling Leaves Golf Scramble has been scheduled for Saturday, September 24, at Valley View Country Club. Registration will be at 8:30 a.m. with tee times beginning at 9 a.m. (earlier if no members are in the starting queue). A continental breakfast will be donated by the Foundation, as will prizes for low scores and special events (closest to the pin, long drive, etc.). A Dutch Treat lunch and prize ceremony will follow the golf which will be played in a captain and crew format. Hank Furgol at Valley View has agreed to hold the price for golf and a cart at \$25/person. Payment can be made at the door. A truly great deal.

Please contact Debbie Geer (X5555, dgeer@mvcc.edu) if you are interested in playing. If you do not have a foursome, we will be happy to find one or two or three other fun and engaging people with whom you can play. Let's see if we can break our recent record of nine foursomes. (Please contact Debbie or Denise Flihan if you have any questions.)

As no one from the Office of Institutional Advancement will be able to participate on September 24, we will need a volunteer or volunteers to: 1) pick up and deliver the continental breakfast, 2) pick up and deliver the prizes and 3) emcee the awards ceremony.

## Upcoming Events

Tuesday, 9/6

~ Women's Tennis vs. Onondaga CC, 4:00pm.

Wednesday, 9/7

~ MOVIE: "A Very Long Engagement" (Jean-Pierre Jeunet, 2004),134 minutes, Rated R, 7:00pm, IT Theater.

Friday, 9/9

~ MUSIC: "John Brown's Body," 8:00pm, \$7 public, \$3 w/ college ID, IT Theater.

Saturday, 9/10

- ~ Women's Tennis vs. Monroe CC, 1:00pm.
- ~ Women's Soccer vs. SUNY Canton, 2:00pm.
- ~ Volleyball Hawk Invite, 9:00am. Tuesday, 9/13
- ~ Volleyball vs. SUNY Canton, 6:00pm, gym.

Wednesday, 9/14

- ~ Hospitality Programs Luncheon, theme: "Great Food from the Greatest Chefs of the Food Network: From Emeril to Bobby Flay to Ming Tsai," 11:45am, on the Rome campus. Price is \$10.50, call 334-7702 for reservations.
- ~ Men's Soccer vs. Tompkins-Cortland CC, 4:00pm. Thursday, 9/15
- ~ "The Have Nots" Comedy Improv Group, Noon, ACC Commons.
- ~ Volleyball vs. Morrisville, 6:00pm, gym.
- ~ Open Mic Night, 7:00pm-9:00pm, ACC 116.

### Procedures for Addressing the Board of Trustees

Individuals wishing to address the College's Board of Trustees during one of its regularly scheduled meetings may do so. The following excerpt from the Board Policy Manual spells out the procedure, established in 1986. Toni Carbone, as Secretary to the Board, is the contact person. Her phone number is Ext. 5333.

#### 1.5.3.1 Procedures, Open Forum

In the interest of improved communications and access to the Board of Trustees, the Board wishes to provide an opportunity for citizens to address the Board at their regular meetings. As of August 1, 1986, the Board will provide such opportunity, under the following guidelines.

- A. Persons wishing to speak to the Board should notify the Secretary to the Board not later than the close of the business day prior to the Board of Trustees meeting, with a written statement of the topic they wish to address. The Secretary to the Board of Trustees is presently located in Room 305, Payne Hall.
- B. Each individual will be permitted a maximum of 10 minutes for their presentation. The aggregate amount of time for the presentation of viewpoints at any one Board meeting will not exceed 30 minutes. The Chair of the Board will call upon those who wish to speak immediately following the Correspondence section of the Board meeting.
- C. Because of the maximum and aggregate time limits, only three individuals can be accommodated at any specific Board meeting. The Secretary to the Board will accept all requests to speak and maintain a continuing list of petitioners for subsequent Board meetings. If a petitioner wishes to withdraw a request, he/she must notify the Secretary to the Board.
- D. While the Trustees may take up the issue raised under New Business, dialogue with the Trustees is not part of the Open Forum.
- E. The format of the Open Forum is subject to change if it proves detrimental to the conduct of the Board's business.

### MVCC Hawk Women's Volleyball Invitational Scheduled September 10th

MVCC will host the Hawk Women's Volleyball Invitational on Saturday, September 10th, featuring teams from MVCC, Adirondack Community College, SUNY Cobleskill, SUNY Delhi, Fulton-Montgomery Community College, Herkimer County Community College, Hudson Valley Community College and SUNY Morrisville.

Pool play will begin at 9:00 a.m. in the MVCC Gym. Semifinals are scheduled for 3:00 p.m., with the championship match at 4:00 p.m.

MVCC is defending Region III champion, completing the 2004 season with a record of 39-2 under sixth year coach Marcia Laidlaw. MVCC won the Mountain Valley Conference for the third consecutive year going undefeated during the regular season. As Region III champs, MVCC advanced to last year's NJCAA national championships in Rochester, Minnesota where they won one out of their three matches in pool play, finishing fifth.