

MVCC to honor, reward 'Hawks Who Soar'

MVCC's most talented and dedicated full-time staff and faculty will soon be honored by a new recognition program, "Hawks Who Soar." Launching this fall, Hawks Who Soar will recognize outstanding work performance, celebrate MVCC's success, and promote the College's mission.

Two components of Hawks Who Soar are already underway following their announcement at Tuesday's Administrators Meeting. "Heart of the Hawk" honors will be bestowed every three months during the academic year to the full-time faculty member who stands out for her or his commitment to values such as learning, accessibility, collaboration, excellence, diversity, affordability, and integrity. "Pride of the Hawk" will honor the full-time nonteaching employee who best exemplifies the same values.

Nominations for both awards are online now at www.mvcc.edu/administration/hr/ recognition.cfm, in the MVCC Libraries in Utica and Rome, or by request via e-mail to jbullis@mvcc.edu. All members of the MVCC community -- students, faculty, and staff, as well as community partners and neighbors -- are invited and encouraged to submit nominations. The first round of nominations is due Oct. 16 to John Bullis, PH307 or jbullis@mvcc.edu. Nominations will be reviewed by the College Senate Awards Committee and the President's Cabinet; award winners will be announced at the Nov. 3 meeting of the Senate. At academic year-end, one winner each from the ranks of Heart of the Hawk and Pride of the Hawk honorees will receive a \$1,000 recognition, awarded by the Board of Trustees.

Other Hawks Who Soar program elements include "Wings of the Hawk," an award for service leadership and collaboration that will

be granted each semester to the division, department, office, center, or other College unit. The initial winner will be selected by Cabinet. Each semester thereafter, the winning group will "pay forward" its respect by passing the award onto the next unit that

has best supported the College's mission. Winning groups will be honored with pizza luncheons.

The "Aeries Award" will recognize individuals or groups who best exemplify the College's spirit of community service each year. Similar to the Heart and Pride awards, the nomination process will be open to all; the College's foundation board will select winners, who will receive a \$1,000 grant to be donated to a charity of their choice.

All these honorees will be celebrated at the Fall and Spring Celebrations of Success, which will become regular events to recognize the College's evolving commitments to excellence and student service. These initiatives will supplement existing recognition programs such as the SUNY Chancellor's Awards.

Also on the horizon is a new approach to recognizing longevity of service. Starting next month, President VanWagoner and members of his cabinet will be visiting faculty and staff who have

reached a landmark anniversary with the College- 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, or 40+ years of service. This new initiative is a chance for the President and supervisors to thank each individual for their many years of supporting the College and its students. Look forward for more coverage of these programs and their honorees in Communitas, MVCC Today and the College's other news outlets. For more information or to suggest nominees or program ideas, contact John Bullis, Executive Director of Organizational Development, at 792-5307 or jbullis@mvcc.edu.



GETTING ADVICE - Justine Serrano listens to Associate Professor David Katz during the CSTEP (Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program) Networking Mixer. This was an opportunity for the students to make connections with faculty and staff at the college and for MVCC's employees to learn about the students and hear what they had to say.

Information sessions on the flu

Sept. 30, 9:30 a.m., IT Theater Sept. 30, 2:15 p.m., IT Theater Oct. 2, 1 p.m., IT Theater Oct. 5, 11 a.m., Rome Auditorium

Protect your health! Wash hands often, get vaccinated, and check up.

MVCC's partnership with Vietnamese college gets national attention

MVCC's international education efforts have kicked into high gear with a new exchange agreement between MVCC and Kien Giang Community College in Vietnam. It was signed in June by MVCC President Randall VanWagoner and KGCC Rector Do Quoc Trung. The agreement represents progress in MVCC's ongoing activities with Vietnamese community colleges. This comes on the heels of mention in a USA Today article of MVCC's work with Kien Giang Community College's Information Technology program.

The MVCC/KGCC agreement calls for the two colleges to "promote understanding and goodwill; strengthen cultural ties; broaden student, faculty, and administrative horizons; and promote research and development." Specifically, it makes possible faculty exchange between the two colleges; opens the door to possible student exchange; and calls for enhanced technology linkages between the U.S. college and its Vietnam counterpart.

The most visible manifestation of the agreement to date was the June 5 signing by Van Wagoner and Trung. The agreement is the result of the visit by Nguyen Duy Khang, head of the English department at KGCC, to MVCC in spring 2009. It is expected that KGCC will send another member of its English faculty to MVCC as early as spring 2010 to serve as a teacher/ambassador, much as Khang did, to introduce the MVCC community to KGCC and the Mekong Delta. If all goes according to plan, members of the MVCC community will introduce the KGCC representative to the Mohawk Valley, including new experiences such as visiting Cooperstown, tasting maple syrup, seeing snow, and meeting students who do not stand up when the instructor enters the room. And, much as Khang did during his visit, the next KGCC teacher/ambassador will present activities such as talking about the Vietnam War with a Peace Studies class, singing at International Day, and visiting local businesses and industries.

As the partnership develops further, MVCC will focus its efforts on education in English language and business management, while providing greater international exposure and learning opportunities for MVCC faculty and students. The colleges will also seek connections with local and international businesses to support economic development and student learning in both countries. Student exchanges may likely begin with online, distance education efforts, and plans call for the eventual implementation of in-person exchange programs.

"This is a tremendous next step in MVCC's tradition of international linkages and effective exchange programs," says Sandra Engel Ph.D., MVCC's director of international education. "It expands our educational presence in Southeast Asia and provides exciting opportunities for our faculty and students."



HELPING FOREIGN COLLEGE - Dr. Sandy Engel, left, MVCC's director of international education, reviews an educational agreement with KGCC Rector Do Quoc Trung during her most recent visit to Vietnam.

The MVCC/KGCC agreement is the first such agreement involving KGCC and a U.S. community college. For MVCC it is the second such agreement; the first was established several years ago with Tokyo's Human International University focused on Japanese students coming to MVCC.

Engel has been among the chief architects of this internationalization effort. Engel has visited Vietnam many times, including a semester at KGCC as a Fulbright fellow in 2003. She was the first faculty member from a U.S. community college to visit a Vietnamese community college in such a role.

The USA Today article which includes mention of MVCC's involvement with Vietnamese community colleges is available online at www.usatoday.com.

Faculty, staff and students who are interested in participating in future linkages, as well as local and international businesses who wish to become partners, should contact Engel for information about how to participate. She can be reached at 792.5450 or at sengel@mvcc.edu.

Stay in touch as 'Hawk Beat' tracks MVCC News

Starting next week, the College community will have a new tool to track news about MVCC. Hawk Beat, a service from the Office of Marketing and Communications, will be featured in each e-mail edition of MVCC Today with weekly highlights in Communitas.

The service will list links to timely news stories about MVCC students, faculty, staff, and programs. It will help readers stay informed of the latest views of the College as our community sees us, and it will celebrate the good works and reputation of our outstanding students, faculty, and staff.

Our students receive high honors for their excellence in the classroom and on the athletic fields and they regularly contribute to the well being of the community by volunteering for local organizations. Our faculty and staff are leaders in their academic and professional disciplines. And MVCC is in a community that faces significant challenges—which sometimes affect our college.

These and many other MVCC news items have appeared in the media recently. Next

Monday's inaugural edition of Hawk Beat will lead off with news from USA Today about our college's partnerships in Vietnam. We also have news of a nursing alumna who has just been named nurse manager of the surgery and recovery room at the Faxton-St. Luke's Hospital, somber coverage of a past MVCC student who perished in the tragic James Street fire, and more.

After launching Monday with a standalone e-mail, look for Hawk Beat to be included in each day's MVCC Today. Marketing and Communications staff will select representative stories from a variety of local news outlets and clipping services, and we welcome news items forwarded by our readers. If you see MVCC covered in a media outlet and want to share, please forward a Web link to the news item to mvcctoday@mvcc.edu or a hard copy to 346 Payne Hall.

Hawk Beat items that appear on the Web will be available for as long as their host news organizations maintain them. For the Rome Daily Sentinel and Utica Observer-Dispatch,

hard copies will be available in MVCC Libraries. These are just a few of the Libraries' wide selection of hard-copy and electronic news sources and periodicals, including free, online access to the New York Times, a database of New York State newspapers, and several e-journals and other news sources. Visit www. mvcc.edu/academics/library/database.cfm to learn more.

For suggestions or questions about Hawk Beat, contact Matt Snyder, director of marketing and communications, at msnyder2@mvcc. edu or 792-5330.

To submit information for Communitas, e-mail Rich Haubert @ rhaubert@mvcc.edu

Respiratory Care Program receives high praise during re-accreditation site visit

All the hard work by the faculty of the Respiratory Care Program was rewarded when the site visitors from the Committee on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC) announced on Friday, September 25 that MVCC will receive a full 10 year re-accreditation without any stipulations.

The re-accreditation process is a major undertaking for the program as they had to perform an extensive Self-Study which was then verified during the site visit by the CoARC representatives. The site visitors were Barb Larsson, Med., RRT, from Kennedec Valley Community College in Fairfield, Maine, and Stephen Mikles, EdS., RRT, from St. Petersburg College in Florida.

"The support for this program is tremendous," said Larsson, "From students, to graduates, to Advisory Committee members, to administrators, to community representatives - it was impressive. This is the most support for a program I've seen in the 15 years I have been doing site visits."

There are five key national standards a respiratory program must to meet during the site visit. MVCC's Respiratory Care Program met all five and exceeded them in nine areas.

- Strong commitment by the program director and faculty
 - Active and committed medical directors
 - · Active and committed advisory committee
 - Very supportive administration
- Superb record keeping and documentaon
- Excellent financial resources
- Wide array of clinic resources which reflect community needs
 - Well equipped laboratories
 - · Strong cadre of adjunct instructors and lab



RESPIRATORY CARE RE-ACCREDITATION VISIT - Barb Larsson, Med., RRT, and Stephen Mikles, EdS., RRT., left, were on the Utica Campus on Thursday and Friday a part of the Committee on Accreditation for Respiratory Care site visit. MVCC's program received praise in five key national standards. Looking on are Professor Lorie Phillips, Program Coordinator for Respiratory Care, and Assistant Professor Debra Waterman.

assistants

"This is wonderful," said Professor Lorie Phillips, Program Coordinator for Respiratory Care. "We couldn't have asked for a more positive outcome. The support from everyone at the college was great and the recognition of the program strengths by the site visitors was excellent."

The other two faculty members of the Respiratory Care Program are Assistant Professor Debra Waterman and Professor Chuck Svoboda.



BUSINESS TOUR - The Administrative Assistant students took a trip to Blue Cross/Blue Shield in the Utica Business Park on September 16. Richard Pratt from Human Resources spoke to the students about administrative assistants, customer service, sales representative, information technology, nursing, and medical positions at the company. He also instructed the students if they are interested applying for a job to go to their website at www.excellusbcbs.com. The group was also given a tour of the building and then to lunch at Symeon's. Pratt also handed out folders with job descriptions for administrative assistant positions which has three levels.



IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY SERVICE - To conclude an educational week, Welders Among Communities members, Shane Ramnarine, president, along with welding students Todd Baron and Bobby Giannone, were joined by Assistant Dean Maggie Reilly and Assistant Professor Mike Sorrentino in planting flowers for Utica Police Officer Thomas Lindsey's memorial.

Vroman named 2008-09 NJCAA Region III Female Athlete of the Year

MVCC's athletes continue to be recognized for their accomplishments in connection for winning two National Junior College Athletic

Association (NJCAA) cham-

pionships.

On Tuesday, Heather Vroman, a Utica native and Proctor High graduate, was named the 2008-09 NJCAA Region III Female Athlete of the Year. While not alone in leading the Hawks to winning national championships in women's cross country and women's track



and field, Vroman was the driving force with top finishes in several races while posting the best time in Region III for the 2008 season.

She led MVCC to an NJCAA National Championship by winning the race and setting a course record with 19 minutes, 11 seconds. MVCC scored 51 points as a team. While a member of MVCC's cross country team, Vroman won the Mountain Valley Confer-

ence, the Region III and national champion races. Vroman was selected as the NJCAA's Region III Athlete of the Week after winning the regional Cross Country Championships with a time of 20 minutes, 15 seconds - over a minute faster than the second place finisher.

During the indoor track season, Vroman qualified to compete at the national championships in the mile,

1000 meters and was on Region III's distance medley relay team which placed eighth at the Indoor Nationals at Texas Tech University.

During the spring outdoor track and field

season, Vroman set a school record in the steeplechase as well as being crowned the Region III champion in the 1500-meter run

and being a member of the 3200-meter relay team as MVCC won the team

championship.

At nationals, she won the steeplechase, 1500-meter run and a member of the 3200-meter relay team. Vroman was selected by the coaches as top If the meet of the meet national title.

After MVCC, Vroman won a scholarship to compete for Canisius College.

The NJCAA is an association of intercollegiate athletics for community and junior colleges throughout the United States. There are 527 participating institutions.

NVCC Faces: Donna Skibitski

In these hard economic times, many in the Mohawk Valley have been turning to the Center for Corporate and Community Education in order to hone current skills or learn new ones. One of the people at the college who has been playing a large role is Donna J. Skibitski.

As the college's Workforce Development Coordinator, she works closely with community organizations, business and industry to identify and prioritize educational needs.

"I develop and manage projects, including seminars, conferences and other events sponsored by CCED," said Skibitski. "I work very closely with employment organizations to ascertain training needs and assist unemployed and underemployed individuals to determine the best course of training."

She has been in this role for just under a year with a focus on increasing enrollment of women and minorities into non-traditional professions.

"In addition to becoming more familiar with MVCC's programs and offerings, one of my main goals is to work cooperatively with local economic development organizations, county officials and trades associations in an effort to increase enrollment in our trades and aviation programs," added Skibitski.

Skibitski holds a Bachelor's degree from Utica College in Business Administration after earning an Associate of Science from MVCC in banking and insurance. She is also a graduate of Leadership Mohawk Valley and holds certificates in Strategic Planning, Compliance, and Economic Development.

Along with being a members of the MVCC Senate, she is on the Board of Directors of the Rome Area Chamber of Commerce and Griffiss Local Development Corporation. She is also an Honor America Days committee member.

Quilting club to meet each month on Rome Campus The Pieceful Gals Quilting Club, a division

of the Mohawk Valley Quilters Guild, will hold its monthly meeting the first Wednesday of every month from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. in Room 209 of the Plumley Complex on the Rome Campus.

For more information, contact Elizabeth Swistak at 271-7144.





Skibitski's job related awards include the Follow the Leader Award from Leadership Mohawk Valley in 2006 and she was chairman of the Rome Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors in 2006 plus received the Rome Chamber Leadership Award in 2007.

Skibitski is Rome native who resides in Ava with her husband Dennis. Her son PJ is married to Lori, and she had a nine-month old granddaughter, Carolyn. She enjoys writing, reading, vacationing, playing with her granddaughter as well as great-nieces and great-nephews in her spare time.

Welding student makes artwork sing

Keith Pierson took his love of music to a new level. This artist, musician and welding student built a three-dimensional IBANEZ RG guitar as a class project.

He designed and welded all the parts.

This art project was integrated in the MT170 welding course. His next project will be to make a Gibson Les Paul.

Pierson plays in a band and owns his own recording studio in Constantia, N.Y.