



## MVCC feeds the hungry by joining Food Recovery Network

With more than 35 million tons of food being sent to landfills annually in the United States, there is a movement among university and college students to recover much of that waste in order to feed the less fortunate in our communities. Mohawk Valley Community College's iServe Mohawk Valley program and Sodexo Food Service are collaborating as the newest member of the Food Recovery Network in order to supply local soup kitchens with much needed food.

"MVCC's students are making a difference to the people within the community by not letting this food go to waste," said Kelly Fleming, program coordinator for iServe Mohawk Valley, a grant funded program hosted on MVCC's Rome Campus. "There are so many of our neighbors who go to bed hungry and this program is crucial to preventing that from happening. iServe Mohawk Valley has become a vital network of collaborations which is expanding and growing."

The Food Recovery Network is the largest student movement against food waste and hunger in the United States. Its roots began at the University of Maryland in 2011 when a group of students noticed good dining hall food ending up in the trash at the end of the night. By the end of the school year, the Food Recovery Network at UMD had recovered 30,000 meals and delivered to District of Columbia-area partner agencies.

With the help of the Sodexo staff, MVCC student volunteers gather and package leftover meals from the campus dining halls every Wednesday and Friday. This food is then picked up by the local soup kitchens offering hot meals to individuals and families who would otherwise go hungry.

Since launching this student-driven campaign in September, MVCC students have collected and distributed more than 1,100 pounds of food to the Salvation Army Soup Kitchen and Mother Marianne's Westside Kitchen, located at St. Joseph and St. Patrick Church on Columbia Street in Utica.

MVCC is the only community college in New York State to be a member of the Food Recovery Network. Along with feeding the hungry, students are also campaigning to highlight the need for such services provided by other colleges in the region throughout the year.

Only three percent of wasted food is donated or composted with the remaining 97 percent ending up in landfills or incinerators. The wasted food costs Americans more than \$165 billion every year and accounts for almost 25 percent of U.S. methane emissions. By recovering just 15 percent of wasted food, 25 million people can be fed.

The Food Recovery Network is based on the principle that the food already exists to solve hunger – we only have to recover and donate it. Sodexo has been a partner with the Food Recov-



**FEEDING OUR COMMUNITY** - Miranda Smithling and Galina Runkevich, both second year students from Frankfort, package leftover food from the Residence Dining Hall while volunteering as part of MVCC's Food Recovery Network. This food would have been thrown into the trash if the students hadn't volunteered to package it and send it to local soup kitchens.

ery Network since May 2013, when the Sodexo Foundation provided the Network with funding to hire a full-time staff and transition into a professional non-profit. In the years since, the Network has swept the nation and made higher education the first sector where food recovery is the norm and not the exception.

# AIDS Memorial Quilt on display in Payne Hall

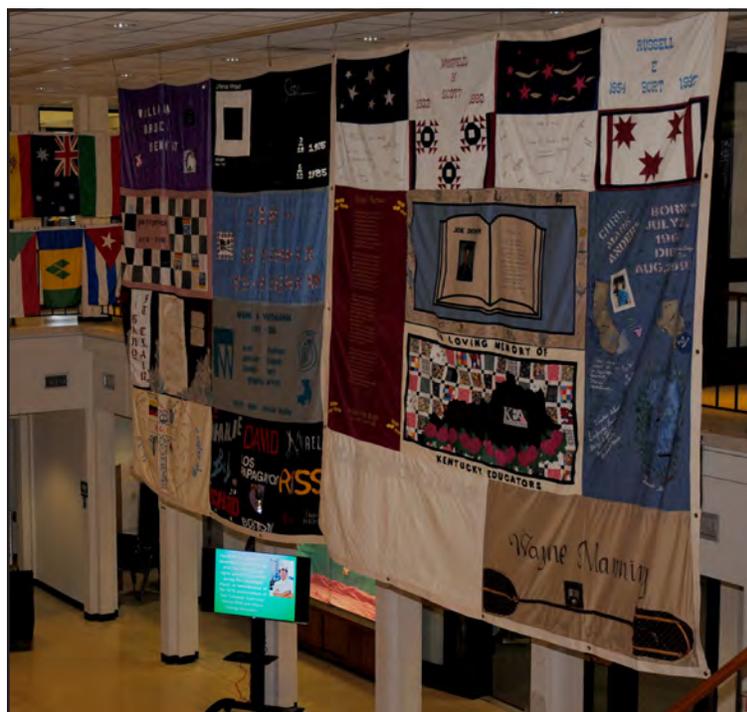
Sections of the internationally celebrated AIDS Memorial Quilt – the 54-ton, handmade tapestry that stands as a memorial to more than 94,000 individuals lost to AIDS – has been on display in the lobby of Payne Hall this week in recognition of World AIDS Day.

This free display of The AIDS Memorial Quilt is being hosted by MVCC's LGBTQ Committee and is sponsored by MVCC Student Congress. The two panels are in memory of local individuals who have died of AIDS. Committee members and the Gay Straight Alliance student club sold red AIDS awareness ribbons as a fundraiser for the AIDS Hike for Life along with hosting a 50/50 raffle.

Established in 1987, The NAMES Project Foundation is the international organization that is the custodian of The AIDS Memorial Quilt. The Quilt began with a single 3 x 6 foot panel created in San Francisco in 1987. Today, The Quilt is composed of more than 48,000 individual 3 x 6 foot panels, each one commemorating the life of someone who has died of AIDS. These panels come from every state in the nation, every corner of the globe, and have been sewn by hundreds of thousands of friends, lovers, and family members into this epic memorial, the largest piece of ongoing community art in the world.

In a war against a disease that has no cure, The Quilt has evolved as our most potent tool in the effort to educate against the lethal threat of AIDS. By revealing the humanity behind the statistics, The Quilt helps teach compassion, triumphs over taboo, stigma and phobia; and inspires individuals to take direct responsibility for their own well-being and that of their family, friends and community.

"These handmade blocks, created by friends and family, tell the stories of individuals who have lost their lives to AIDS," says Julie Rhoad, president and CEO of The NAMES Project



Foundation. "We bring you their stories in the hope of inspiring compassion, healing, and personal responsibility. We thank MVCC for hosting this event, and we invite you all out to see what wonderful art we have created together as a nation."

For more information on the display at MVCC in Utica, please call 315.792.5330. For more information on The NAMES Project and The AIDS Memorial Quilt, please visit [aidsquilt.org](http://aidsquilt.org).

## Rome Student Activities Planning Committee holiday party

The Rome Student Activities Planning Committee hosted a holiday party for all students to celebrate the end of the semester in the atrium on Wednesday.

The event kicked off at 11 a.m. with food provided by Rome's local business, Taco Del Mar. The Taco Bar was filled with hard and soft shell tacos, burrito bowls, and a variety of toppings.

Each Thursday, the Rome Student Activities Planning Committee offered a meal to students to keep them satisfied in between classes this semester. Join the Rome Student Activities Planning Committee this spring on Wednesdays at 1 p.m. in the Student Congress room PC107.

All are welcome and we value your input on activities we can bring to the Rome Campus.



## Welders club gets active within the community

Members of the Welder Among Community student club volunteered to take part in the Intergenerational Fall Clean-Up last month by raking leaves for the elderly. This was the club's eighth year participating in this program. Students lending a hand to help Ms. Parker were (in photo) WAC Vice President Rob Piatt, WAC President Ben Crary, Drew Whaley,

Josh Weller, and Collin Dundon.

The following day, members of WAC held a fundraiser by offering chances to win a 32-inch flat screen TV. MVCC student Joe Passo won the TV. Beginning on Nov. 18, members of the club vowed to wash and wax 68 vehicles for Utica Police Department with a deadline of March 1, 2017.

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