

September 30, 2008

the Bulletin

MESA COMMUNITY COLLEGE'S EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

MCC Awarded NSF Grant

Mesa Community College is the recipient of the largest portion of a grant from the National Science Foundation for a rock art conservation project. The project will be under the direction of MCC's geography faculty member, Niccole Cerveny, in collaboration with Ronald Dorn at Arizona State University and Casey Allen at the University of Colorado Denver.

MCC's portion of the grant is \$119,469, ASU's portion is \$64,804 and UC Denver's portion is \$15,666, bringing the total grant to \$199,939.

The project, "Collaborative Research: Using the Rock Art Stability Index to engage community college students in field-based interdisciplinary research," will expand undergraduate research opportunities at the community college level and bring enhanced meaning about science to under-represented groups.

Cerveny, who is the author of a Ph.D. thesis and several papers on rock art conservation, said she was extremely pleased to be part of bringing community colleges into the NSF funding area.

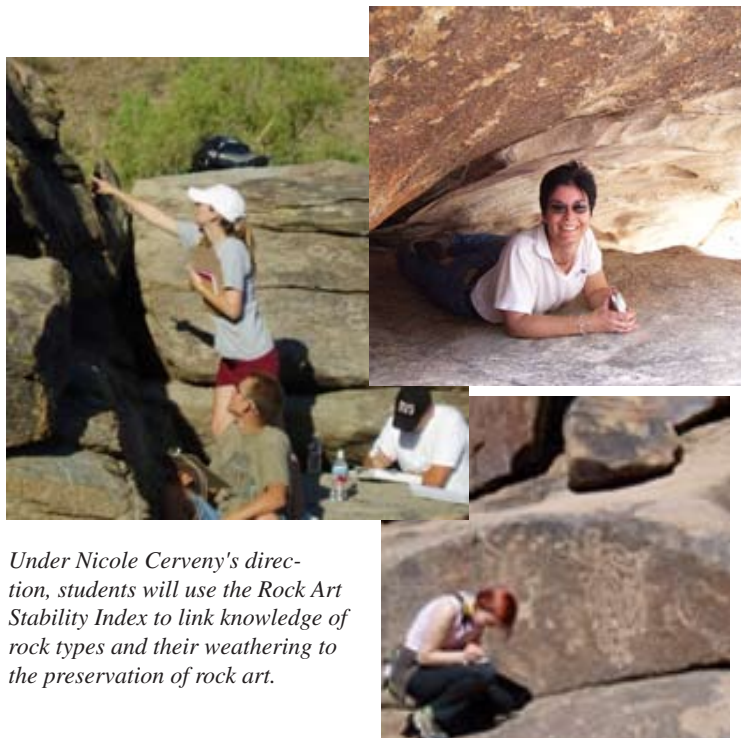
"Normally NSF funding is awarded at the university level, but there's been recent interest in community college funding," Cerveny said. "An NSF grant is what all scientists try to get and it's incredible to get it at the community college level."

The grant will allow Cerveny to work with students as they use the Rock Art Stability Index (a tool that allows for rapid assessment of rock art vulnerability) to link knowledge of rock types and their weathering to the preservation of rock art. They can then integrate results for individual sites into a geographic information system (GIS) database.

Cerveny and her students have been invited to do field work at South Mountain Park in Phoenix and the Petrified Forest National Park in northern Arizona, where students will record the cultural resources of the park, assess the stability of the rock art and make observations of normal rock weathering as well as human impact.

The project will expand into other academic departments as well and allow students to explore common themes across academic disciplines. The grant will also prepare students for transfer to higher education.

"This gives students experience with research and working with the university at the same time, so transfer isn't so scary," Cerveny said. "It lets universities and our own students see us do quality work."



Under Nicole Cerveny's direction, students will use the Rock Art Stability Index to link knowledge of rock types and their weathering to the preservation of rock art.

Red Mountain Campus Looks to the Future

Mesa Community College’s Red Mountain campus is about to grow a bit bigger. Mesa Community College’s Red Mountain campus in northeast Mesa will soon begin construction on a new 42,000 square foot Learning Center, a multifunctional building designed to support both the sciences and performing arts. The building will allow the campus to expand its steadily-growing music program and encourage undergraduate research.



Completion of the building is slated for July 2009, with careful consideration to maintain the campus history of environmental sensitivity. The original campus plan from seven years ago focused on being environmentally responsible to the 100 acres of Sonoran Desert on which it was built.

Red Mountain’s Dean of Instruction, Jo Wilson, said the new building follows the same philosophy.

“We want the building to blend into the environment and connect the inside with the outside,” Wilson said. “When you come here, you know what we’re all about.” One of the more unique aspects of the building will be a series of bat roosts at the building’s exterior, designed to educate students and visitors about their habits. Pop-out viewing areas will provide a close-up look at the creatures.

The success of several recent research projects at Red Mountain has spurred more efforts for undergraduate research projects, offering unique opportunities for community college students. With that in mind, the building will have undergraduate research space as well as life science classrooms and terrarium habitats for indigenous desert creatures.

“Our faculty do many outside activities, so a lot of money and energy went into the life science areas and informal outside teaching areas,” Wilson said. The second component of this multifunctional facility is the performing arts area. With plans to expand Red Mountain’s music program, the performing arts component contains practice rooms and a multi-purpose classroom as well as performance space for music, theater and dance students. The facility will enhance cultural opportunities in the East Valley and support one of the original campus goals of being responsive to the needs of the surrounding community.

“It will be a very versatile place,” said Glenn Bennett, music faculty at the Red Mountain campus. “The new building will enable our music program to have a home and space enough to house anything from small chamber productions to symphony orchestra productions.”

Money from the 2004 bond initiative funds construction of the facility, which will accommodate a steadily-growing student population. With the recent completion of the Red Mountain Freeway in the area, student enrollment is expected to increase even more. Campus plans emphasize efforts to balance growth with maintaining the peaceful and environmentally-conscious atmosphere that so many employees and students treasure.

Red Mountain employee and Queen Creek resident Tim Sterk said he enjoys the remote feeling of the campus.

“Peace, quiet and serenity describes it,” Sterk said. “It’s lower key with not so much hustle and bustle.” MCC student Kayum Garcia appreciates the care taken to preserve the desert surroundings.

“I like the campus a lot,” Garcia said. “It’s cool that they use native plants and put up signs identifying them. It’s fun to see the gophers running around everywhere.”



Death and Voting

Prepare for the November election through events that range from satirical humor to engaged discussion on voter issues.

How do you turn the grim reaper into a desirable presidential candidate? That’s the task Joe Martinez faces as he directs Mesa Community College’s production of the political satire, *Death in a Landslide*.

It’s the perfect play for the electoral season that tackles the political establishment and process. Written in 1996 by Jay Martel, an Emmy-nominated writer and close associate of political activist Michael Moore, the production is the first time the play has been presented in the Phoenix area.

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“It’s a dark comedy, all about making candidates look good,” Martinez said. “There’s a lot of truth in it, finding out the good and bad side of political nominees and how the process tries to sell candidates.”

The play features a political consultant who has a fatal heart attack during the election season. He is faced with Death, who is faced with his own public image problems. The consultant becomes a spin doctor when he sees an opportunity to help Death by turning a negative image into a positive experience: Death for President.

What: Death in a Landslide

When: 7:30 p.m. Oct. 9-11; 2 p.m. Oct. 12.

Where: Theatre Outback at MCC’s Southern and Dobson campus, 1833 W. Southern Ave. in Mesa.

Other Voter Events:

What: Where Have All the Voters Gone?

When: October 3, 10 a.m.-noon

Where: Library Building, room LB145 at Mesa Community College’s Southern and Dobson Campus, 1833 W. Southern Ave., Mesa.

More: Please call to register at 480-461-6252 or email mlo@mccmail.maricopa.edu.

Description: Presented by the Center for Civic Participation

What: Making Sense of the 2008 Election Ballot Measures

When and Where: Oct. 13, 9:30-11 a.m., Red Mountain Multi-Generational Center, 7500 E. Adobe, Mesa, and Oct. 16, 9:30-11 a.m., Mesa Senior Center, 247 N. Macdonald, Mesa,

Description: Presented by The Center for Civic Participation

Contact: 480-461-6252 or email mlo@mccmail.maricopa.edu

What: Making Sense of the 2008 Election Ballot Measures

When: 9-11 a.m. Oct. 17

Where: Mesa Life Options, 165 N. Centennial Way, Suite 101, Mesa

More: Presented by Center for Civic Participation

Contact: 480-461-6252 or email mlo@mccmail.maricopa.edu



Panicky Intern Abel Troutman (Brock Palmer), polster Vivian Finn (April Walterscheid) and spin doctor Cuff Riley (Cody Davis) are observed by Death (Aaron Blanco) during his campaign for the US Presidency.



Health Care Seminar

Mesa Community College nursing students joined together with hospital employees from Banner Baywood at a recent Healthcare Seminar at MCC. The goal of the seminar was to foster interdisciplinary collaboration between nurses, new graduates and hospital-based healthcare team members.

The nursing students, who are weeks away from completing their degrees, participated in roundtable discussions with experienced healthcare workers who provided the students with tips and suggestions based on real-world experience.

MCC nursing faculty member Debbie Bitter said the opportunity for students to receive information from a varied group of healthcare professionals is extremely valuable.

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“This seminar is all about enhancing health-care and patient safety,”

they feel they can do the right thing.”

MCC nursing student Lauren McElroy said she found it interesting to listen as working nurses and doctors shared insights into the profession.

“Everything that we talked about is something we can learn from,” McElroy said. “It was nice for someone with

a busy schedule to come and help us learn.”

Bitter said. “The students take away that patient safety is their individual responsibility as well as any healthcare professional.”

Professionals encouraged students to listen closely to their patients and be advocates for them when needed. health care



Banner employees told students they were more than happy to share their experiences with them.

“This discussion is most important,” said Banner employee Ellen O’Conner. “We can state ideal situations, but we also need to point out that students should feel empowered and responsible for their patients in (all types of situations) so

“You don’t hatch a nurse, you grow a nurse,” a Banner employee told the group. “We were all students at one time.”



Recognitions

This summer Kara Thomson (Theatre Faculty) returned to serve as designer in residence for the Nebraska Repertory Theatre. Kara brought with her two MCC theatre students: Mercedes O’Bannion and Angel Moreno. These theatre students had the unique opportunity of working with Theodore Swetz, founding member of the Tony-nominated American Players Theatre from the University of Missouri, Kansas City; Judith K. Hart, (About Schmidt) from Angels Theatre Company; and Diane Dorsey (Steppenwolf’s Tony-winner) August: Osage County, Shaw Chicago Company.

This opportunity laid the foundation for a transfer opportunity for MCC students to attend the University of Nebraska at Lincoln to complete their undergraduate degree. This would not have been possible without the talent of our MCC students and the support that everyone here at Mesa has invested in our students. UNL looks very favorably on our ability to produce high quality students. Thank you all for helping students achieve their goals.

Almost 1,700 students donated a combined total of 199,750 hours of community service through service-learning and AmeriCorps programs (a 30% increase from 06-07). The volunteer time is valued at \$3,825,212 million. MCC was also named for the second time to the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, the highest federal recognition a school can achieve for its commitment to service-learning and civic engagement.

MCC’s geography faculty member Niccole Cerveny is one of only three National Association for Search and Rescue (NASAR) instructors in Arizona. She teaches a non-credit Fundamentals of Search and Rescue class at MCC’s Red Mountain campus. Niccole, along with her dog, is a volunteer with the Pinal County Sheriff’s Department and spends nine evenings per semester training others to obtain certification in search and rescue.

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Newsbytes

Guest Lecturer Robert Zubrin to Speak on Mars Mission at Mesa Community College

This is a free lecture by Robert Zubrin, an aerospace engineer and author, best known for his advocacy of manned Mars exploration. Zubrin holds master's degrees in aeronautics and astronautics and a doctorate in nuclear engineering. He is the driving force behind "Mars Direct," a proposal intended to produce significant reductions in the cost and complexity of a Mars mission.



The lecture is sponsored by East West Exchange Bookstore and held at Mesa Community College. East West Exchange Bookstore is located in Chandler and specializes in enabling people to explore diverse perspectives on philosophy, culture, religion, sociology, psychology, alternative medicine, physical and mental health, etc. through books and reading clubs.

This event is timely as MCC opens the college's new planetarium. MCC and East West Exchange look forward to additional joint offerings at both locations.

What: Mars Direct: Humans to the Red Planet within a Decade
When: Oct. 13, Lecture: 9-10 a.m., Author book signing: 10-11 a.m.
Where: The Navajo Room at Mesa Community College's Southern and Dobson Campus, 1833 W. Southern Ave., Mesa.
Contact: MCC's Lora Lassiter at 480-461-7475



MCC's Read for the Record Event Supports Jumpstart's Early Education Program

Jumpstart's Read for the Record is a national campaign to encourage hundreds of thousands of children and adults to read the same book, *Corduroy*, on the same day, October 2, 2008. The expansive shared reading experience will raise public awareness about the early education gap that exists between income levels, as well as raise money to support Jumpstart's national early education program.

MCC's event is free and open to the public, with activities and snacks for the kids between the readings. Free copies of the book will also be given away. Parents and grandparents are encouraged to bring children. Donations of gently used books will be accepted and donated to a children's shelter.

What: MCC's Read for the Record Event
When: Two events on Oct. 2: 10:30 a.m. - noon and 5:30 p.m.-7 p.m. on a drop-in basis. Families can leave after one reading or stay the entire time.
Where: The Southwest Reading Room in the library at MCC's Southern and Dobson Campus, 1833 W. Southern Ave., Mesa.
Contact: Zoë Luter at MCC at 480-461-7286