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# MIDDLESEX

C O U N T Y C O L L E G E

April 2017

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Teresa Perez Ciccon, a master teacher in the Simonson Jazz Dance Method, was recently a visiting instructor at MCC Professor Aimee Mitacchione's Modern Dance class. "During my sabbatical I became certified in this jazz dance syllabus, and studied intensely with Teresa," Professor Mitacchione said. "I invited her to teach a master class here to begin to expose our dancers to this technique, as a way of celebrating what I learned. It is my intention to incorporate this methodology into my teaching here at the College."

## Library to Celebrate Spring with Poetry and Examine Homelessness

The MCC Library is offering two programs in April celebrating spring and examining homelessness, with proceeds from book sales going toward student scholarships. Both will be held by the Library's main entrance.

The first, on Thursday, April 6 at 12:30 p.m., celebrates National Poetry Month with readings by poets Emanuel di Pasquale, Gregg Glory, Hank Kalet, Mat Spano, Dan Weeks and Dan Zimmerman, who will read from their critically acclaimed books. Signed copies will be available for purchase with all proceeds going to MCC student scholarships.

Thursday, April 13 from 12:30-2 p.m. is In Your Community: Addressing Homelessness. A panel will

discuss homelessness and poverty in and around Middlesex County. Hank Kalet, an MCC adjunct professor and journalist, will read from his book, "As an Alien in a Land of Promise," on the now-closed tent encampment for the homeless in Lakewood, called Tent City. MCC student Alexander Lewis will share his story as a 20-year-old who found himself homeless during a cold New Jersey winter. Representatives from Coming Home Inc., Elijah's Promise, and Catholic Charities of Metuchen will talk about how they support the homeless and what volunteer opportunities are available to help the local community.

"We are offering these programs because we want to continue to

provide students with the opportunity to engage in what's happening in the community," said Marilyn Ochoa, Library director. "Our poetry reading will allow students to see our talented faculty outside the classroom. And the homelessness program is designed to raise awareness about this important issue and to inform students of how they can help."

Book sale proceeds will go to MCC student scholarships. Donations of non-perishable food, paper plates, napkins and plastic cookware will be accepted at the Library that day and leading up to the event. For more information visit <http://Middlesexcc.libguides.com/homelessness>.

For more information, please call the Library at 732-906-2561.

# Diverse Speakers Highlight Arts & Sciences Lecture Series

The Arts & Sciences Lecture Series will feature four distinguished speakers lecturing on genocide, earthquake and tsunami danger, international politics and national security. The program is free and open to the public.

“The Division of Arts and Sciences aspires to provide unique opportunities for students to gain a broader understanding of human culture and global societies from a multi-disciplinary perspective,” said Timothy

Hack, chair of History and Social Sciences. “Co-curricular events provide students the opportunity to incorporate the ideas presented in the talks with the theories, methodologies and content they have encountered in their studies at MCC.”

The first program, on Thursday, March 30, is on “The Long Shadow of Genocide: From WWI to the Rise of ISIS.” Khatchig Mouradian of Columbia University will speak on

genocide over the past century. This assault on humanity has a long history. Drawing parallels with the Armenian Genocide in 1915, Dr. Mouradian will discuss mass violence and its aftermath as well as the connection between refugee crises and genocide in the 20th and 21st centuries. It is at 2 p.m. in the Parkview Room in West Hall. The event is in cooperation with the MCC Holocaust and Human Rights Center.

Alexander Gates of Rutgers University will lecture on “Earthquake and Tsunami Dangers in New Jersey” on Thursday, April 13 at 2 p.m. in the Parkview Room. Dr. Gates’s research area is fault zones, tectonics and their processes. Dr. Gates has published four books, including “Encyclopedia of Earthquakes and Volcanoes,” and extensively in scholarly journals. The Discovery Channel has twice featured Dr. Gates in televised documentaries. His talk will focus on the dangers posed by natural disasters in New Jersey.

The keynote speech will be Monday, April 17 at 11:15 a.m. in L’Hommedieu Hall 205 by Wafaa Bilal of New York University. He will talk on “Performing Change.” He is known internationally for his on-line performances and interactive works provoking dialogue about international politics and internal dynamics. He will discuss his most recent work as well as other aspects of his life and career.

The series wraps up with Michael Barany, who will talk about “Resilience Mindset in National Security,” which will include discussion of current and emerging threats from within the United States and throughout the world. Dr. Barany has extensive knowledge of security and risk management, and he is currently working with U.N. Women in Security Access Strategy in Fragile States. He focuses primarily on developing organizational strategy and response to expansion of operations into fragile states and humanitarian spaces. It will be Monday, April 24 at 11 a.m. in the Brunswick Room in Crabiell Hall.



As part of Women’s History Month, Ivy Charmatz, an Emmy-award-winning producer at News 12 New Jersey, spoke to students, including those in Professor Louis Dell’Omo’s public relations class. She chatted with several before the program. From left: Rohan Khanna, Professor Dell’Omo, Stephanie Michael and Ms. Charmatz.

## THIS MONTH AT MIDDLESEX

This Month at Middlesex is a publication of Middlesex County College  
2600 Woodbridge Ave., Edison, NJ 08837

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# Brian Clemmons: “We’re Meeting Students Where They Are”

The first things you notice about Brian Clemmons are his infectious grin, boisterous laugh and southern accent. He grew up in a small town 30 minutes from Charlotte, North Carolina.

“The only things there were football and barbecue,” he said.

Mr. Clemmons likes both, and he went to Duke University on a football scholarship. But he blew out his knee before the first game and never played a down for the Blue Devils.

But the gridiron’s loss was MCC’s gain. He graduated from Duke, worked at two community colleges in North Carolina before becoming the Financial Aid director at MCC. He became dean of Enrollment Management in January of 2016.

“I want to try to develop better relationships with students and to work to meet their ever-changing needs,” he said. “We have a very good staff that is flexible and willing to try new things. It can be overwhelming, but at community colleges and higher education in general, we have to try new things. We have to meet students where they are.”

That is the core of Mr. Clemmons’ message: MCC needs to be flexible to help students become successful.



Brian Clemmons

For example, Enrollment Management is piloting a program, Schedule Builder on Demand, which will develop a student’s schedule for him or her. The student can adjust as necessary, but it will provide a framework that he hopes will give the student the impetus to register early. It will also give students a schedule with classes at more convenient times.

In addition, Enrollment Management now has two part-time financial aid hybrid advisors who counsel students on how to regain and keep their financial aid by filing appeals.

“These positions allowed us to increase the number of financial aid students with a Satisfactory Academic Progress Status by 400 students this past fall compared to last year,” Mr. Clemmons said.

He also developed an Early Fall Enrollment Fair on March 20 – the first day of fall registration – to encourage students to think ahead and register well before the end of the spring semester. The first 200 students who registered that day received a voucher for a tall Starbucks drink and anyone who registers by April 30 is entered into a drawing for up to \$2,000 in tuition credits.

“The purpose behind all this is to encourage students to register early,” Mr. Clemmons said. “First, it simply helps them to be more successful. Second, if they come in now, they can get more personal attention than in August when the lines are long.

“It’s all about student success, retention and completion.”



James Monroe Elementary School recently cut the ribbon to officially open its brand-new building. In 2014, fire destroyed the school, and for several months, the students used space in the old South 1 and 2 buildings at MCC. College President Joann La Perla-Morales was one of several people honored at the ceremony by Edison Superintendent Richard O’Malley. Photo by PM Studios.



The Visual Arts Student Exhibition, an annual showcase of the work of students in the Associate of Fine Art degree and the Liberal Arts Visual Art degree program, will be on display in the Studio Theater gallery from April 3-17. Drawing, painting, sculpture and mixed media will be on view. All are welcome. Opening reception is on April 3 at Noon. Far left: a sculpture of Justine Burnett. Left, a creation of Caryn McLeod.

**MIDDLESEX**  
COUNTY COLLEGE

# LAUGHTER

*A New Play*

Conceived & Directed by  
Anna Sycamore DeMers

*Written and performed by MCC students*

**STUDIO THEATRE PERFORMANCES**  
Thursday, April 27 - 2:00 and 7:00 p.m.  
Friday, April 28 - 7:00 p.m.  
Saturday, April 29 - 7:00 p.m.  
Sunday, April 30 - 2:00 p.m.

**TICKETS:** All students free with ID, others \$10  
**RESERVE TICKETS:** [www.tinyurl.com/mccdrama](http://www.tinyurl.com/mccdrama)  
**FREE STUDENT CODE:** MCCSTU

Middlesex County College  
Studio Theatre  
2600 Woodbridge Ave., Edison, NJ 08837

**SUCCESS STARTS HERE**



A total of 119 students were inducted into the Middlesex chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society for two-year colleges in March. The ceremony also included inducting Linda Scherr, dean of Arts & Sciences, as an honorary member. She is shown with Hamzah Ghani, co-president.