

# ALUMNI CONNECTION

FALL 2009

## Alumni Veterans

Diverse voices and experiences, united by the desire to serve



**HOLYOKE**  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Futures Inspired

# Bill's bulletin

The *Alumni Connection* is published two times per year by the Holyoke Community College Alumni Office, Holyoke, Massachusetts, and is distributed without charge to alumni and friends of HCC. Third-class postage is paid at Springfield, Massachusetts.

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**Class Notes:**

News from alumni should be addressed to the Alumni Office, Holyoke Community College, 303 Homestead Avenue, Holyoke, MA 01040 or via email to [jbrown@hcc.mass.edu](mailto:jbrown@hcc.mass.edu).

**Letters:**

Readers are invited to submit letters and stories concerning HCC and its alumni. Contact the alumni director by phone (413) 552-2253 or email: [jbrown@hcc.mass.edu](mailto:jbrown@hcc.mass.edu) (put "HCC Alumni Connection" in the subject line).

**Class Notes/Change of Address:**

Please submit the reply form on page 10, or call the Alumni Office (413) 552-2704.

**2008-2009 Alumni Council:**

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The Alumni Council, a group of key alumni volunteers, oversees alumni initiatives. To learn about joining, please call Joanna Brown, (413) 552-2253.



HCC President William F. Messner

**In 1946, HCC, then Holyoke Junior College, opened its doors to the multitude of veterans returning from WWII, eager to pursue the education made possible through the Servicemen's Readjustment Act, better known as the GI bill. One of those veterans, Thomas E. Zebrowski '48, is profiled in this issue of Alumni Connection.**

In the more than sixty years since its founding, the college has helped thousands more veterans lay the foundation for advanced education at a four-year college or university or acquire skills needed for entry into the workforce.

With the recent passage of the Post 9/11 GI Bill, we anticipate an increase in the numbers of veterans attending HCC. The

lives of our veteran alumni, chronicled here, reflect the rich possibilities available to this next wave of servicemen and women.

I hope you will enjoy learning about the many contributions of HCC veterans, and the HCC faculty and staff who strive to create a welcoming, inclusive environment for all HCC students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Messner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

-William F. Messner

## Corrections

Our apologies to Kathryn Shepardson Carpenter '94, for incorrectly identifying her on p. 6 of our Fall 2008 issue.

Also in the Fall 2008 issue, we published a photo of Lin Patterson, PN, and Ruth Flores '08 at the 2008 Practical Nurse pinning ceremony. In the accompanying text (p. 18) we incorrectly identified Patterson as the recipient of the Dean Nursing School Alumni Award for Clinical Excellence. In fact, the award was given to Flores. Our apologies for the error and our congratulations to Ruth Flores.

Due to a database error, Elizabeth Grzeszczyk's name was misspelled on p. 12 of the Spring 2009 issue, and in the *HCC Alumni Directory*. Our apologies.

# Letter from the Alumni Relations director

**D**ear alumni,  
**We need your help to GO GREEN!**

The HCC Alumni Association's new E-Publication initiative addresses two urgent college priorities: reducing HCC's use of natural resources and saving HCC tens of thousands of dollars at a time of reduced state support.

Our goal is to add 20,000 alumni email addresses to our database by December 15, 2009. We will then email you a link to view each issue of the *Alumni Connection* online.

Please take a moment to reply now via the form below to supply us with your e-mail address, or send an email to [sdoyle@hcc.mass.edu](mailto:sdoyle@hcc.mass.edu) with a subject of "HCC E-Publication (your full name)".

I hope that you will decide to become more involved with HCC in the coming year, whether as a volunteer tutor, an alumni donor, a member of a departmental advisory board, or in some other capacity. Please call me if you wish to talk about how your skills and talents could benefit HCC. Many hands do make light work.

Sincerely,



Joanna Brown  
Director of Alumni Relations  
413-552-2253 [jbrown@hcc.mass.edu](mailto:jbrown@hcc.mass.edu)

P.S. I invite you to attend HCC's Veterans' Day Program on Wednesday, November 4, 2009, at 11 a.m. in the HCC Courtyard (HCC will be closed on November 11, the day on which Veteran's Day is observed.)



Director of Alumni Relations Joanna Brown

## HCC Alumni E-Publication Initiative Reply Form

Yes, I want to help HCC conserve natural resources and direct college funds where they are most needed. Please sign me up to receive email notification that the Spring *Alumni Connection* may be viewed online.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to: HCC Alumni Office, 303 Homestead Ave., Holyoke, MA 01040 by December 1, 2009

# Alumni Veterans Tell Their Stories

## Gregory W. Brown '96



Shutesbury resident Gregory W. Brown '96 has worked in higher education administration at UMass Amherst since 1999. Currently the

director of recruitment and transfer affairs for the College of Engineering, he described his service and his HCC experience to *Alumni Connection* staff.

### Why did you join the service?

College funds, and an interest in serving my country during a challenging time of war (the Persian Gulf War had begun six months prior). I could not just take the privileges of being a citizen without giving something back. I believe that my military service protects the very fabric of our nation's constitution, and that I had a responsibility to protect those rights we all have.

### What war(s) and branch of service did you serve in, what was your rank, and where did you serve?

I served active duty in the U.S. Army for four years, honorably discharged at the rank of Specialist. I served in the Massachusetts Army National Guard (MA ARNG) for six years. I was honorably discharged from the Guard with the rank of first lieutenant. I was awarded the Joint Meritorious Unit Citation and Combat Infantry Badge while serving in Somalia. I was deployed primarily to training installations: Panama (Jungle Operations Training Center) twice, California (National Training Center), Washington state (Fort Lewis), Virginia (Urban Warfare Center), New York (West Point Academy), and numerous training schools at Fort Drum.

### What was your job/assignment?

During my active duty time I was a team member of an infantry unit stationed at Fort Drum, NY. During the MA ARNG time, my unit assignments were: Greenfield, Camp Edwards, Pittsfield, Westfield, and Springfield. I have spent time as a

platoon leader, mortar platoon leader, and company executive officer.

### Did you see combat?

Yes, 23 combat missions in Somalia.

### Describe a few of your most memorable experiences.

Basic training at Fort Benning, GA: The simple fact that you could bring together 300 individual men and within weeks have them act, think, and be one individual unit is amazing. The next experience was leaving the United States on December 23, and arriving in Somalia on Christmas Eve. I left my young bride of one year and my home to go and assist someone six thousand miles away achieve the basic needs of human existence.

### What did you do when your service ended?

I returned to Sunderland, MA in 1994, enlisting into the MA ARNG and enrolling as a full time student at HCC in the Liberal Art Commonwealth Transfer Compact. During this time I was also employed part-time (25 hours per week) at National Evaluation Systems in Amherst, MA.

### When did you attend HCC?

January 1995 to December 1996.

### Describe your time at HCC.

Supportive and encouraging. I found my classmates wanting to challenge themselves at a higher level than they had been challenged before, much like my fellow veterans. It was surprising how many other students were just like me; older, more experienced, and clear with their goal and objectives while at HCC. During my time at HCC I had two mentors: Professor George Ashley from the History Department and Mrs. Idelia Smith. Both of these people pushed me to achieve something beyond the basics.

### How did your service experiences affect your life?

I have a better understanding of global events and how small acts can have large (positive and negative) effects on someone's life half way around the globe.

## Lydia Rodriguez '06



Lydia Rodriguez '06 joined the service "looking for a challenge and a way to give back to my community, my state, and my country." In 2001, she enlisted in the

Army National Guard. Two years later she was deployed to Fort Bragg, NC, and then Fort Drum, NY, as part of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division. She served in Kuwait, where she was a sergeant assigned to transportation. She currently works for the VA medical center, and says "although it is a great job, I am still working on going back to school to earn my bachelor's degree."

### How did your service affect your life?

Being in the military has been a challenge. The Army has made me a stronger person, and in many ways a better one. But also with all that, you lose special moments that can never be replaced.

### Describe a few of your most memorable experiences.

Every day in the military is an experience. We have our good and bad days, but one of my most memorable experiences was the day I came back from overseas and saw my daughters at the gate running towards me. Just thinking about it brings happy tears to my eyes.

### How did being a woman shape your military experience?

In the military, everyone gets treated equally regardless of gender, from my experience anyway. Being a woman, and especially Latina, put me in the position where I was compelled to give my all and prove myself, not only for myself, but for my kids.

### Did your military experience influence your thinking about war or about the military in general?

Having grown up in a very religious family, I knew to follow the Bible's teachings. War was never justified in the eyes of God. However, when I joined the military,

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I never thought I would face this battle between God's beliefs and what was right for my country. Although I fulfilled my duty as a veteran, I never stopped believing in God's ways.

## **When did you attend HCC?**

I had started school before I went overseas and didn't have the chance to finish. In 2004, right after coming back home, I went back to school to finish what I had started. I graduated in 2006 with an AA and started working at the VA medical center that same year.

## **What was your time at HCC like?**

Holyoke Community College was not only a welcoming place, but the right place to be for me at the time because it helped me move on. Being in a different environment helped me unwind and take better control over my life.

## **Did being a veteran affect your college experience?**

Being a veteran did not affect my college experience, [but] I think that being a combat veteran did, and I say that because it took a lot for me to try to fit in and adjust to a normal life again.

## **What issues do you face as a woman veteran?**

I don't think that there has been a moment where I felt concerned or unappreciated because I was a woman veteran (of course, being overseas was a different story). On the contrary, the minute people know that I am a veteran they thank me for my service. That is much appreciated!

## **You spoke at the first Massachusetts Women Veterans Conference in June. In what other ways are you trying to meet the needs of women veterans?**

I am always trying to help anyone in any way that I can. Last year, I took the commander position for the Pioneer Valley Women's Legion Post 463. This has been very rewarding. As a group, we do our best to get more involved in the community and help other women veterans. Also, working at the VA has given me that opportunity, too.

## **Colonel James J. Tabak '76**



Colonel James J. Tabak '76 always wanted to be a Marine, "due to the influence of some WWII Marines that were in my neighborhood when I was growing up,"

he explained. "These gentlemen extended tremendous kindness to me. Even before I knew what a Marine was, I knew I wanted to be one." Colonel Tabak answered questions via email from Germany.

## **Where have you served and what jobs/ assignments have you performed?**

I have served from Japan to Germany, from California to North Carolina, and in many other places. I have commanded at every rank. I have commanded an artillery battalion in 29 Palms, California, the Marine Corps' Combined Arms Training Center, Camp Fuji, Japan, and the NATO School in Oberammergau, Germany. I have served in many other places.

## **Describe a few of your most memorable experiences.**

Commanding the NATO School in Oberammergau, Germany, and Camp Fuji, Japan. The NATO School is NATO's premier educational institution. Almost 11,000 people from about 60 countries come to NATO School each year for courses, conferences, seminars, workshops, and more. There were 25 nations represented on the staff, both NATO and non NATO nations. To meet and work with so many people from across the world on a daily basis was a great experience and a world class education. It was my honour to command NATO School for three years, 2006-2009.

Commanding Camp Fuji was a great experience. Located about 3,000 feet up the side of Mount Fuji, Camp Fuji is the largest US training facility in that part of the world. The US Air Force, Navy, Army and Marine corps trained there regularly as did the Japanese Self Defense Forces. To keep everything working smoothly was

quite a handful. With about 200 Marines and about the same number of Japanese employees, it was a great experience in multi cultural leadership. I commanded this facility from 2004-2006.

## **Describe your time at HCC. How did it influence your career path?**

HCC opened up my eyes to the full spectrum of possibilities available to me and prepared me to continue my education. Although my mind was already made up to become a Marine, the HCC experience caused me to complete my undergraduate studies prior to joining.

## **How has your experience being in the Marine Corps affected your life?**

The two most important experiences the Marine Corps provided were: First, the unfettered pursuit of excellence. This alone is a tremendously formative experience. The institutional expectation and support to pursue the highest levels of internationally-recognized excellence in all things allows one to develop and contribute all of one's talents and energies. I believe this commitment to excellence in all things is an amazing environment to work in and experience on a day to day basis. Second, my service in the Marine Corps showed me my limits. I have held positions in the Marine Corps that, if they were any harder, any more demanding, I do not know if I could have been successful in those positions. It is a great experience to bring everything to work everyday and max out all my talent, brain power, judgment, and stamina and know that there nothing more to give. I wouldn't have traded my time in the Marine Corps for any other career path.

## **Did your military experience influence your thinking about war or about the military in general?**

War will be with us for the foreseeable future. We must be prepared to protect the vital interests of our nation using the entire range of diplomatic, economic, informational, and military tools to keep America free and vibrant. This requires a deep commitment from across our nation; a commitment to education and to service and to liberty.

*continues on page 6*

# Alumni Veterans Tell Their Stories



## A passionate advocate for veterans

### Karen Riedl

Though not a veteran herself, HCC Counselor Karen Riedl has distinguished herself for her efforts to make HCC a welcoming place for student, faculty, staff, and alumni vets.

Riedl comes from a family with a proud tradition of military service. The Vietnam War protests had a profound effect on Riedl, whose first husband was an enlisted officer who served in Vietnam. One incident in particular stayed with her.

"I was seven months pregnant and trying to finish my BA at a local college. My husband, home on leave, was going back to Vietnam. I went to my professor to tell him I had to miss a class to drive my husband to the airport. His response was, *How can you let your husband do such a thing?* He said I was immoral for letting my husband go to Vietnam—and lowered my grade on a paper that was due that day."

Memories of the Vietnam era were revived after the attacks of  
*continues on facing page*

*continued from page 5*

### If you had any advice to give to students who are veterans, or veterans thinking of coming to HCC, what would it be?

To veterans considering attending HCC—go! Education is critical to developing the intellectual skills necessary to succeed in your chosen fields. Education is a life-long activity. Your education didn't begin at HCC and it shouldn't end at HCC. But, HCC can be an important part of your life long educational journey. It was for me and thousands of others and I hope it is for you too.

### Thomas E. Zebrowski '48



Infantry, of the Massachusetts National Guard. It was 1938, and Zebrowski, then 20, spent the summer at Camp Edwards as part of his reserve training. He stayed in the reserve until the 104<sup>th</sup> Infantry was federalized in 1941, then volunteered for active duty.

Zebrowski spent nearly five years on battlefields in France, Germany, and Eastern Europe. As part of the 26<sup>th</sup> Infantry Yankee Division, he fought in the Battle of the Bulge and liberated the Mauthausen and Gusen concentration camps in Austria. "I will never forget what I saw in the camps," he reflected. "Bodies in striped prison uniforms were scattered on the road. When we got inside, we saw the prisoners, emaciated, like skeletons. They didn't respond to us; many couldn't even walk."

For his service in World War II, he received numerous medals and ribbons. Honorably discharged on October 27, 1945, he returned to Holyoke and a year later married "the girl across the street," Emily Szadu.

In response to the large number of veterans seeking to attend college under

the GI Bill, the city of Holyoke had just established Holyoke Junior College. Zebrowski enrolled in 1946, graduating with the first class in 1948.

Detail oriented, Zebrowski readily found work as a draftsman for engineering and architectural firms. He spent 29 years with a steel fabrication firm, drafting and reviewing plans and specifications for fire doors and frames for institutional contracts. He and his wife raised three children, and in his spare time he got a pilot's license and flew on weekends out of an airfield in Agawam, now long gone.

But his real passion was working on behalf of his fellow veterans. He produced the weekly *Veterans News* and the monthly *Yankee Doings*; served the Holyoke chapter of the Yankee Division Veterans Association as secretary, treasurer, commander, historian, and public relations officer; and poured his energy into recruiting new members. He has chaired national conventions and served on reunion committees.

Zebrowski was among those honored when the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and the U.S. Center of Military History recognized 10 Army divisions for their role in liberating the concentration camps. Like many veterans, Zebrowski doesn't see what he did as heroic or special. As he put it, "It was just what we did."

### Nicole Darden '06

Through my whole life journey I have



been aware of the sacrifices that the men and women who serve in the military make. My father is a Vietnam veteran. While he did come home alive,

his mind never did return. As a child I was embarrassed to even speak about my father. My only childhood memories of him are his vacant stare and how he spent hours standing guard at the front door yelling at an invisible enemy.

# Alumni Veterans Tell Their Stories

Today, I am the wife of a veteran, a woman veteran, and the veteran services person at HCC. Through my own service I acquired a level of respect and a deep admiration for my father and all veterans. I feel that we all should appreciate the sacrifices that were made to preserve the American way of life. So to all of the alumni and current students who have served our country, *thank you!*

I am feeling quite excited to see the positive energy from so many in our community to better serve those who have served. It seems lately that everyone is interested in what we do for veterans on our campus. I do realize that recent world events have made the needs of American veterans a priority for many individuals and agencies throughout the country. However, the word "veteran" is not merely a buzzword. I am glad to say that at HCC, the desire to support service members, veterans, and their families did not come in response to the post 9-11 GI Bill, news reports, or any other recent phenomenon. We have been here doing this work for a while. For many years there has been a group of dedicated faculty, staff, and students working hard to recognize and support the veterans here on the HCC campus. The work of these individuals, the Veterans Services office and Veteran Support Group at HCC is evolving into something great.

I hope that all of our veterans and their families feel that HCC is a welcoming and supportive environment. That being said, there is much work to do, and many changes to be made. Support from the college community, as well as alumni, will help make our work in maintaining a veteran-friendly campus easier.

## James G. Berrelli Jr. '74



West Springfield resident James G. Berrelli Jr. '74 originally wanted to go into counter intelligence when he enlisted in the Army in June, 1969. In September of

that year he went on active duty, serving in South Vietnam and at Fort Devens, MA, with the 10<sup>th</sup> Special Forces. SP4 Berelli served as an interrogator and order of battle specialist. A proud alumnus and veteran, he answered a few questions for the *Alumni Connection*.

### **What did you do when your service ended?**

I attended HCC from September 1972 - June 1974

### **Describe your time at HCC**

I was very active at HCC. I participated in student government in several ways. I was a student senator, vice president of the senate, student advisor to the governor, and also chaired the judiciary board, budget, and student affairs committees. I was a member of the soccer and baseball teams and manager of the hockey team.

### **Did being a veteran affect your college experience? Did you feel welcome on campus?**

I was a more mature and organized college student with leadership qualities. Yes, at that time the Vietnam Veterans on campus were the leaders.

### **What did you go on to do as a career?**

After HCC I went on from HCC to Westfield State and graduated in 1976 with a BS in Criminal Justice. I continued my education and obtained a CAS/M.Ed in Rehabilitation Counseling from Springfield College in 1995. I am currently the Director/ Service Officer of Veterans' Services of West Springfield.

### **How did your service and experiences affect your life?**

Some of my experiences assist me in my profession.

### **Did your military experience influence your thinking about war or about the military in general?**

Yes it did, I am pro Veteran and believe in defending my country.

*Karen Riedl continued from facing page*

September 11 and subsequent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Antiwar sentiment and criticism of the U.S. "...replayed all the old stuff I experienced when I was in my 20s," said Riedl. "People didn't feel safe to openly identify themselves as veterans. One HCC student told me he was treated very differently by his professor after disclosing that he had been on tour in Iraq."

Though reminded of the past, "I realized I was in a position of power and could speak up. I looked at the structural evolution of the LGBT community, and knew we needed to do the same thing for veterans." Riedl began looking for ways to heighten awareness of the veterans and servicemen and women in the HCC community. She developed a bulletin board highlighting faculty and staff vets to complement a veterans' information board created by a student and displayed outside of the Admissions office. Together with HCC Veterans Representative Nicole Darden and Student Clubs Coordinator Liz Golen, she organized weekly meetings and pizza parties for vets, developed informational handouts for faculty and staff on working with returning combat vets, and incorporated an annual Veterans Day event into campus life.

With passage of the Post 9/11 GI Bill, more veterans are expected to enroll at HCC. "I want to have an environment where vets, as well as GLBT and disabled adults and others, feel they belong, feel "there is space for me here," said Riedl. Toward that end, she and others hope to create a veterans center at HCC, a dedicated physical space to serve as a declaration of that belonging.

## Around campus

### Professor Awarded Fulbright-Hays



HCC professor Rubaba Matin was chosen to participate in the prestigious Fulbright-Hays Seminars Abroad Program this summer. The seminars provide U.S. educators with the opportunity to deepen their understanding of non-Western peoples and cultures, with the broader goal of integrating this knowledge into the curriculum. Matin spent the summer investigating the cultural, social, and historical aspects of Jordan and Oman, as part of her research into the role of women in Muslim societies.

"As a Muslim woman myself, I am particularly interested in examining the experience of Muslim women immigrants in Western society," said Matin. "I want to compare the experience of these women in their own environment to their experience in the West. Seminar participants are expected to develop a curriculum project that incorporates information gleaned from the experience. Matin looks forward to sharing her findings with HCC students, faculty, and staff, and also with the community beyond the HCC campus. "Especially now, it is important for people to better understand the Muslim world," she concluded.

### Commencement

The Alumni Association welcomed 954 new members at HCC's 62<sup>nd</sup> Commencement on May 30, at the David M. Bartley Center for Athletics and Recreation.



Student Orators Lysette Navarro '09 and Robert L. Phillips '09 delivered moving reflections on the paths that led them to HCC. Navarro is attending Mount Holyoke College in the fall, and Phillips is at American University in Washington, DC.

Valedictorians (those with a GPA of 4.0) included Christina Maria Cayford, Susan J. Chicoine, Megan E. Couture, Elisabeth A. Flaherty, April C. Grant, John E. Henchey, Danelle M. Laflower, Jeffrey G. Marshall, Anthony P. Morris, Colleen A. O'Connor, Laurie D. Sihvonen, and Lisa M. Souliere-Geran. The Salutatorian (the student with the next highest GPA) was Leanid V. Ryhal.



Professor of Psychology Jane M. Vecchio, recipient of the Elaine Marieb Faculty Chair for Teaching Excellence Award, also spoke.

In recognition of service to HCC, Distinguished Service Awards were presented to Douglas J. Arnold '75, Alumni Association President Gloria G. Lomax '75, outgoing trustee David J. Simm, and Holyoke Mayor Michael J. Sullivan '77.

To quote Valedictorian and Student Senate Vice President Robert Phillips '09, "HCC is more than buildings, textbooks and classes... HCC is a family, dedicated to helping everyone who walks through the doors prepare themselves for the next step in life, whatever that step may be...I hope that as I move on in my life I will be able to provide the same help to others that the people here gave me."



## Kittredge Mini Grants Fund Diverse Dreams

Established by alumnus Michael Kittredge '73, Kittredge Mini Grants support entrepreneurship and help HCC students take important next steps in achieving their goals. This year's recipients were Hunter Foote (left) and Heidi Martin-Coleman (right). Foote, a talented student and local performer who has played the violin since he was five, will use the grant to record, duplicate, and package a full-length CD of his music, a release his fans eagerly await. Heidi Martin-Coleman, an RN and former developmental nurse specialist, has begun a career as a family-oriented disabilities consultant, providing consultation, service coordination, and grant writing for people with disabilities and the nonprofit organizations that serve them. The award will allow her to purchase office equipment that will enhance her business services.



## Wigs For Kids Fundraiser

HCC's Unity Club hosted its fifth annual Wigs for Kids Cut-a-Thon on May 6. Stylists Barbara Paulo '06 and Scott Cousineau of Northampton's Shear Xtreme salon, and independent stylist Anne Molinari, provided free haircuts and styling for those donating at least 12 inches of hair, and \$10 haircuts for all others. The proceeds help the nonprofit Wigs for Kids assist children who have lost their hair as a result of medical treatments, health conditions, or burn accidents. Unity Club advisors Dorothy Blair and Sharon Cenedella contributed their time and talent organizing this terrific event.



## NASA, Brookhaven Internships for HCC Students

HCC students secured several noteworthy internships this past summer. Engineering major Timothy Coyle (pictured right) spent the summer learning research methodology and exploring space-related technology at UMass, thanks to a science fellowship from the NASA Massachusetts Space Grant Consortium. "It's a great opportunity to learn more about the field, and an experience I wouldn't have otherwise had without this funding," said Coyle. Physics major Rod Klich and engineering major Adebayo Adeyemi '09 were each awarded a \$4,000 summer internship at Brookhaven National Laboratory – the first time that HCC has had two summer internships at a national laboratory.



## Undefeated in Region, Cougars go to the Nationals

For the second straight season, the HCC Golf team went undefeated in the region (18-0 in 2008, 12-0 in 2009). The Cougars won the Regional Championship and qualified for the National Championship (held in Chautauqa, NY, June 2-5), where they placed ninth out of 13 teams.



## 2009 Nursing Supper (PN group at table)

Nearly 100 HCC nursing alumni and students attended HCC's annual Nursing Supper on April 30. Pictured are members of the Practical Nursing program who will graduate in December 2009. From left: Margarita Rivera, Nancy Otero, Babagoro Babar, Olga Alforova, Brian Murray, Janet Frame, Alla Davidenko, and Phuong Lam.



# Letter from the Alumni Association president



Alumni Association President Gloria G. Lomax '75

We are proud to note that Gloria G. Lomax received a Distinguished Service Award from HCC to honor her 27 years as an Early Childhood Education professor, her leadership of the HCC Alumni Association, and her volunteer service to many nonprofit organizations in Western Massachusetts. Below are the words that Gloria delivered to our 2009 graduates at commencement exercises on May 30, 2009.

## Good Morning!

In January, we witnessed an historic event, the inauguration of President Barack Obama. President Obama called upon each of us to become more involved—in our families, our communities, and in a world which is so rapidly changing.

I have seen the world change dramatically in my lifetime, including living through the Great Depression and World War II.

I stand here to tell you that in each of these trying times there have been many occasions to choose hope. In the face of the greatest adversity, the choice of hope has enabled me to rise above it all and to hold fast to a positive vision of the future.

I invite you, today, to remember to choose hope as you continue your journey, especially when adversity comes your way. You will discover that hope will strengthen you. You will find that hope will give you endurance to reach your goal, no matter what. You will realize that focusing on the positive, rather than the negative, will attract new possibilities to you.

Today, you join 27,000 amazing alumni of HCC. So, celebrate today. It is your day!

You will always be a part of our Alumni Association and you will always have a place where you can come to share your hopes, your dreams, your vision of the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gloria G. Lomax".

Gloria G. Lomax '75  
President, Holyoke Community College  
Alumni Association

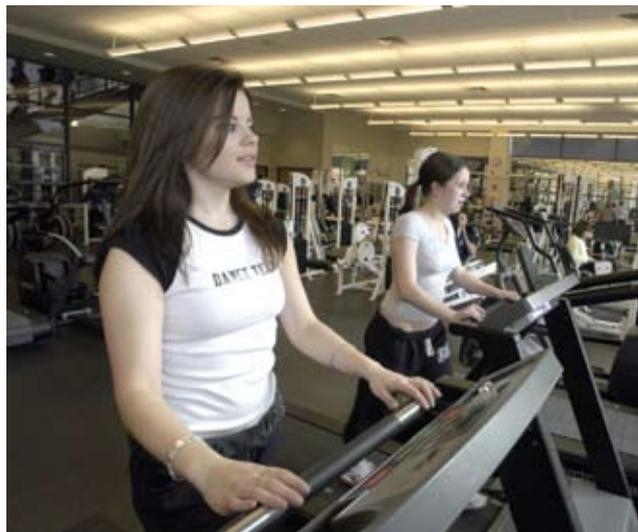
## The Bartley Center is *your* wellness center

If you graduated from HCC or accrued at least nine credits before leaving, you can join the David M. Bartley Center for Athletics and Recreation for a very affordable fee.

This 45,000-square-foot facility features a three-court gymnasium, full locker rooms, steam baths, saunas, and a fitness/wellness room with more than 60 pieces of aerobic and weight-training equipment.

### Join today!

You can receive an alumni membership to the Bartley Center for \$215/year, \$95/semester, or \$85/summer. For an application call Mary Shelasky at (413) 552-2161.



## 1968

**Maddie Callaway** (Madelyn Rahaim) is the owner of two "Best Nutrition" vitamin stores in Alpharetta and Duluth, GA. She has been a nutritionist for more than 20 years, doing one-on-one nutritional protocols with healthy people as well as persons with illnesses such as cancer, AIDS, lupus, and MS. Her stores have well-informed staff and practitioners for massage therapy and Reiki therapy. She can be reached at (678) 893-0202.

## 1972

**Gloria M. Cote** was a member of the first nursing class at HCC. She moved to Florida in 1980 and continued her nursing career until the age of 70. She has been retired for 11 years and continues to enjoy looking through the 1972 Latchkey.

## 1977

**Kathryn Brown** received her BSN from University of Phoenix. She lives north of Denver, CO and works with Medicaid patients to educate and empower them regarding their health and health care. HCC alumni can reach her at: kathy.brown@mckesson.com.

## 1978

**Marie Deitz** received a BSN from the University of Phoenix in 2007. She has been employed in the Holyoke Visiting Nurses Association since 1993 and has

been the Director of Hospice Life Care with the Holyoke VNA for the past two years. Hospice provides services for patients who are terminally ill. The VNA offers a variety of programs covering a wide range of medical problems for adults 18 years and older. For more information regarding the VNA, please contact her at ndeitz@holyokeyvna.org.

## 1978

**Thomas A. Giguere** has followed the HCC baseball team since he graduated. He wrote a letter to Terry Murphy, the bookstore manager and baseball coach, to reminisce. Thomas received the "Player Award" in 1978, as a member of the team that Murphy coached. Giguere played for HCC in 1974 and again in 1978. He moved to Florida in 1982 and was the assistant coach for a high school softball team in the Miami area. He is still a Red Sox fan, but has adopted the Marlins as his National League team.

## 1979

**Jeff Barna** hosts the afternoon show (weekdays, 2-6 p.m.) on Real Oldies 1250 WARE, the area's only remaining oldies station. He also works for the station scheduling commercial traffic and daily music logs and producing talk shows and commercials. He also does freelance voiceover work and audio production. His website is [www.jeffbarna.com](http://www.jeffbarna.com).

## 1980

**Gail Annis** graduated with a BA in Liberal Studies in 2006 from Bay Path College. She is a full time administrative assistant in the Arts & Humanities Division at HCC. Gail is also an independent consultant with The Pampered Chef, a direct sales company that sells high-quality cooking and kitchen tools and entertainment products. Contact her at [gannisp@gmail.com](mailto:gannisp@gmail.com) or [www.pamperedchef.biz/gailscooking](http://www.pamperedchef.biz/gailscooking).

## 1981

**Agnes Siniscalchi** received a BS from Western New England College and an MBA from the University of Hartford. She is employed at Yale University in the Finance Department, where she has been United Way Champion for three years. She and her husband have been foster parents for 10 years and adopted one of their foster children. Siniscalchi recently started tutoring English as a second language with Literacy Volunteers and reports that it is a pleasure to teach such motivated students!

## 1986

Fulbright Scholar **Karen Hurd** completed a 30 day stay in South Africa with the Five Colleges, Inc. Since her return to the US

*continues on page 12*

### In memoriam:

We are saddened to learn of the passing of the following members of the HCC community:

|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Rev. Rodney John Szymczyk '64 | Paulette Alston Fawkes '89             |
| Maryanne LaValley '67         | Judith M. Clare '90                    |
| Ruth Elfman '68               | Eileen M. O'Brien '94                  |
| Maryellen Tauscher '75        | Mary R. Costa-Jackson '95              |
| Donna M. Stefanik '76         | Donna A. Sheldon '96                   |
| Steven H. Kahalas '83         | Rebecca J. Threat '96                  |
| Francine M. Leclair '83       | Laura Coelen,<br>retired administrator |
| Gregory R. Egan '87           | Mary Ann O'Brien,<br>retired professor |
| Eric G. O'Brien '87           |  |

### HCC Alumni Directory On Sale Now

Hard-backed copies of the *HCC Alumni Directory*, published by Harris Connect, the premier alumni directory publisher, are available for purchase. Please send a check for \$90 to the HCC Foundation Inc., with a memo line of "Alumni Directory" to HCC Foundation, 303 Homestead Ave., Holyoke, MA 01040. (Copies of the directory will be sold to HCC alumni only.)

# Class notes

*continued from page 11*

she has raised over \$3,000 for the Tina Nursery Day Care and Preschool center in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. A teacher at the Bridge Street School since 1995, Hurd taught her second grade students how to knit, and they have made bonnets for neo-natal babies and as gifts for shut-ins in Northampton and Florence. She also helps her students write letters to soldiers in Iraq, where her son is on his second tour of duty. Hurd has been an active member of the Ladies Auxillary Corp in Greenfield and Florence, volunteers at the Cancer Connection in Florence, and is a Master Teacher in Reiki. She has a daughter and three granddaughters.

## 1989

**John M. Prenosil** was not sure which direction he wanted to take after high school, so he decided to attend HCC. Subsequently, John obtained a BS from UMass Amherst. Seeing a demand for environmental consulting services, Prenosil founded JMP Environmental Consulting, Inc., in 2002. Since that time, JMP has provided cost effective and creative consulting services for hundreds of clients throughout New England. Alumni can reach John at: JMP Environmental Consulting, Inc., (413) 272-0111 or [jprenosil@jmpec.net](mailto:jprenosil@jmpec.net).

## 1993

**Lois (Tripper) Pare** is Queen Silly Bear of the BEARy Hot Hatters, a chapter of the Red Hat Society. She is queen by right of having started the chapter to which she belongs. Red Hatters are women from every walk of life, with a hunger to find some comic relief in the aging process. FUN and FRIENDSHIP are the gifts Red Hatters offer each other. If alums would like to find out what Red Hatting is all about, go to [www.redhatsociety.com](http://www.redhatsociety.com).

## 1994

**Valerie Wilder** is the optician/owner of Everything Optical in Northampton, MA. She specializes in the latest lens

technology with unique eyewear from all over the world. She first attended HCC in 1997, when she took classes in Early Childhood Education with Professor Gloria G. Lomax. A serious auto accident prevented Valerie from continuing her studies. She returned to HCC in fall 1990. By 1993, she had earned her certificate in Ophthalmic Technology and was board certified by the American Board of Opticianry. In 1994 she was board certified by the National Contact Lens Examiners, and was the first student to receive an associate degree in Ophthalmic Technology. She was a member of the Green Key Honor Society and is an active member of the Lions Club.

## 1999

**Ramona Guilbe** is a domestic violence investigator for the Holyoke Police Department. She has been an investigator on the domestic unit since it began in 1998, conducting investigations and gathering evidence, including photographs and statements, and assisting victims in acquiring restraining orders. She has a referral network with shelters locally and nationally to place victims in safe houses. Guilbe has expanded the range of support service referrals to offer the highest level of assistance to domestic violence victims. She speaks publicly about domestic violence when invited to do so.

## 2000

**Marcia Wise** was featured in *Studio Visit* magazine in May 2009. Her work will be shown in an exhibition at the Hampden Gallery at UMass. "Close Up" will run from October 15 to November 13, with an opening reception on October 15 from 5-7 p.m. Marcia is also in a group show November 17-December 6, called "Feedback: A Critique Group Revealed" at the Hampden Gallery. Alumni are invited to visit her website at [www.marciarwise.com](http://www.marciarwise.com).

## 2002

**Kathleen A. Zebrowski**, a resident of Holyoke, has been promoted to branch

manager at the PeoplesBank Sixteen Acres office in Springfield. Zebrowski had served as assistant branch manager at the Elmwood office in Holyoke. She holds a BS from Elms College and possesses over 20 years of banking experience.

## 2005



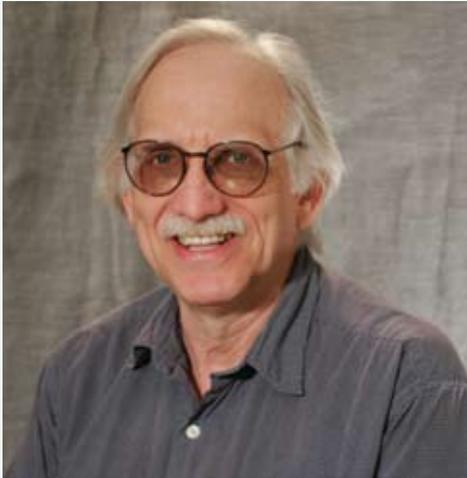
**Mark Nasjleti** was named to the "40 Under Forty" list of young business leaders in Western MA., by *BusinessWest*. The awards were given in June at a gala event

at the Basketball Hall of Fame. Nasjleti, who happens to have Downs syndrome, is a consultant to families, agencies, and service providers on the topic of healthy lifestyles for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. His website, [govoiceforchoice.com](http://govoiceforchoice.com), tells the inspirational story of his weight loss of 130 pounds, which he has maintained for five years.

## 2006

**Geraldo Cotton** graduated from Westfield State College with a BA in Liberal Studies with concentrations in Sociology, Social Work, and Art, and a minor in Psychology. He enters Springfield College this fall for his MS in Social Work.

**Lydia Rodriguez**, a Massachusetts Army National Guard veteran, delivered the keynote address at the first Massachusetts Conference for Women Veterans, held at HCC on Saturday, June 27. She currently works at the Northampton VA Medical Center as a medical support assistant. See article on p. 4.



**It's a pleasure to be able to thank Holyoke Community College for the excellent educational opportunity the institution provided me in the past, and for the chance it now affords me to use skills gained then in guiding my current students as an adjunct instructor here.**

When I enrolled at HCC, I had already earned a Bachelor of Arts degree with Honors from Brandeis University some fifteen years earlier. At the time, I was helping dear friends care for their small children, and having very little experience with, or insight into, young children, I

decided that I needed some intensive training in child development.

I enrolled in three early childhood courses, which gave me an excellent grounding in the field. Especially memorable was a course taught by Professor Gloria Lomax, truly one of the most inspiring and engaging instructors with whom I've ever had the pleasure to study. Gloria was enthusiastic and knowledgeable, accessible and creative; her love of children was palpable, and she used that sensibility to craft wonderfully dynamic class sessions that challenged each student to learn more and do more to serve and educate the next generation.

I was sufficiently inspired by Gloria's superb pedagogy that I shifted my core career path from the arts to child development. I have since gone on to earn my Clinical Master of Education degree in Early Childhood Education and my Doctorate in Child and Family Studies, both from the School of Education at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

I'm proud to be able to credit HCC with a pivotal role in that professional trajectory. I am likewise challenged to do exemplary work in the classes I am privileged to teach at HCC, as I remember memories

of Professor Lomax and the other fine teachers and mentors I've been fortunate enough to encounter over the years.

– John Cipora , '83, M.Ed., Ed.D.



## We Love Letters!

We welcome hearing from our alumni and enjoy reading the letters we receive, which we publish in the *Alumni Connection* whenever possible. If you would like your current photo published along with your letter, please send it to us electronically. We are also happy to include a photo of you during the era you attended HCC. We reserve the right to edit letters to conform with space and editorial requirements.

Please direct letters to:  
 Joanna Brown  
 HCC Alumni Office  
 303 Homestead Avenue  
 Holyoke MA 01040  
 FAX: (413) 552-2479  
 Email: [jbrown@hcc.mass.edu](mailto:jbrown@hcc.mass.edu)

## Class Notes/Change of Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class year: \_\_\_\_\_

Former name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Class note to be published in the **Alumni Connection**.  Comments to the director of alumni relations (will not be published).

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form to: Alumni Office, HCC, 303 Homestead Ave., Holyoke, MA 01040, fax to (413) 552-2479, or email to [jbrown@hcc.mass.edu](mailto:jbrown@hcc.mass.edu) with subject line of "HCC Notes" by December 4, 2009.

**Sustainability and the environment will be themes of the next issue. is a theme of the next issue of *Alumni Connection*. Tell us about your related activities in a class note (see below).**

# Alumni Giving



## Your support makes a difference!

Culinary Lab Technician Jill Burckhardt and Professor Mark Antsel with some of the items purchased with alumni donations this year. A professional grade char-broiler unit was also purchased with alumni funds, enabling culinary students to work with the equipment they will find in restaurants once they graduate from HCC.

## 2010 Annual Fund

For the first time in the college's history, direct state support of Holyoke Community College represents less than 40% of the college budget.

Alumni contributions are essential to the well-being of HCC! Become an alumni donor by making a contribution today using the form below, or by giving online at our secure online donation page, [www.hcc.edu/donate](http://www.hcc.edu/donate).

Please find a way in your heart to include HCC in your giving plans this year.

## Alumni Fund Giving Levels

President's Circle (Gold)–\$5,000 and up  
President's Circle (Silver)–\$2,000–\$4,999  
Summit Society–\$1,000–\$2,499  
Sheehan Society–\$500–\$999  
Phoenix Society–\$250–\$499  
Homestead Society–\$100–\$249  
Emerald Society \$50–99  
Cougar Club–Up to \$49

For information about donor benefits, please call Joanna Brown at (413) 552-2253.

## 2010 HCC Annual Fund (closes June 30, 2010)

### Enclosed is my contribution of:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_  \$25  \$35  \$50  \$100  \$300  \$500  \$1,000  \$2,500  \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I/we wish to contribute to the following fund:

**Where the need is greatest**

**Equipment for classrooms & labs**

**Scholarship fund**

**Other:** \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Graduation year or years attended: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home/Cell telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_ Position/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

My/our check is enclosed, payable to HCC Foundation, Inc. (2010 fund drive ends June 30, 2010)

My/our gift will be matched by: \_\_\_\_\_ (please submit matching gift form)

**To charge a gift, please call (413) 552-2546 or visit our secure donation page at [hcc.edu/donate](http://hcc.edu/donate)**

**I wish to give anonymously. Please do not publish my name in the 2010 Annual Giving Report**

Please mail to: HCC Foundation, Inc., 303 Homestead Ave., Holyoke, MA 01040. For more information please call (413) 552-2253.



ASL interpretation is available upon request for all HCC events. Please email your request, with "Interpreter Request" in the subject heading, to [csmalley@hcc.mass.edu](mailto:csmalley@hcc.mass.edu), at least two weeks in advance of the event. To receive advance notice of interpreted events, email [csmalley@hcc.mass.edu](mailto:csmalley@hcc.mass.edu) with "ASL Event mailing list" in the subject heading.

## October Events

As this issue goes to press, dates and times for several events have not been determined. Please check the Alumni & Friends link at [www.hcc.edu](http://www.hcc.edu) for updates!

### Thursday, October 8

**HCC Tutor Open House 4-5:45 p.m.  
DON 240**

Here is your opportunity to do community service by tutoring HCC students! Academic Support will host an open house for alumni interested in becoming volunteer tutors. Please join Gail Hilyard, Frank Johnson, Andrew Fletcher, Yanina Vargas, and Tom O'Brien for light refreshments. Invite your friends! To RSVP or for information, call Gail Hilyard at (413) 552-2552 by Wednesday, October 1, Free.

### Wednesday, October 14

**Remembering Mountain Park 7 p.m.  
Kittredge Center**

Back by popular demand, electronic media professor Jay Ducharme '78 will present a slide show about the history of Mountain Park. Copies of his book, *Remembering Mountain Park* will be available for sale. Register early at [www.hcc.edu](http://www.hcc.edu) (Click on "Alumni & Friends" and then "Alumni events") or call Joyce Desorcy at (413) 552-2704. Light refreshments served. Free to HCC alumni, students, faculty, staff, and their guests.

### Friday, October 16

**Information Security Awareness  
Conference 8 a.m.-1 p.m.**

Learn how to protect yourself from cyber crime. Speakers from the FBI, SANS institute, and corporate information security professionals will discuss trends and answer your questions.

### Sunday, October 18

**Holyoke Civic Orchestra 3 p.m. Leslie  
Phillips Theater, C building. Free.**

### Wednesday, October 21

**Fall Silent Pizza Gathering 11 a.m.**



ASL and Deaf Studies students and alumni, deaf students and alumni, interpreters, and members of the Deaf community are invited. Free; please RSVP to Carol Ann Smalley at: [csmalley@hcc.mass.edu](mailto:csmalley@hcc.mass.edu). Also Friday, November 20, 6 p.m., and Wednesday, December 9, 11 a.m.

### Thursday and Friday, October 22-23

**Sixth Annual Forest Summit  
9:30 am-9:30 pm, Leslie Phillips  
Theater, C building**

This year's summit, coordinated by professor Gary Beluzo, will focus on forest health in the Eastern United States. For more information, visit [www.hcc.mass.edu/forest](http://www.hcc.mass.edu/forest). Free and open to the public.

### Monday, October 26

**Nursing Alumni Reception  
2-4 p.m. Marieb Building**

Alumni nurses are invited to attend a reception hosted by Dean of Health Kathy Hankel and Chair of the ADN program Dr. Ian Camera. Tour the nursing lab and hear faculty speak about a recently attended nursing conference. Free. Register online at [hcc.edu](http://hcc.edu) (follow "Alumni and Friends" link to the events page) or call (413) 552-2704.

### Wednesday, October 28

**4:30-6:30 p.m.  
Media Arts Center Opening**

Tour HCC's new center for electronic media and photography. Registration required by October 20 to [jdesorcy@hcc.mass.edu](mailto:jdesorcy@hcc.mass.edu) or (413) 552-2704.

### Wednesday, November 4

**Veteran's Day Program 11 a.m. HCC  
Courtyard (rain location TBD).**

HCC alumni and their guests are invited to honor our HCC veterans, past and present. Free.

### Thursday-Sunday, November 19- 22

**The HCC Players present "Much Ado  
About Nothing" 8 p.m. (Sunday matinee  
2:30 p.m.) Leslie Phillips Theater, C  
building.**

Professor Patricia Sandoval '87 directs William Shakespeare's romantic comedy. Admission is \$10 general public; \$8 students/senior citizens. For tickets, call the Box Office at (413) 552-2528 after November 1.

### Sunday, December 13

**Holyoke Civic Orchestra 3 p.m. Leslie  
Phillips Theater, C building. Free.**

### January 28, 2010

**Scholarship Information Available**

The HCC Foundation and HCC Alumni Association award more than 130 scholarships each year. The scholarship application will be available online at [www.hccscholarships.org](http://www.hccscholarships.org) as of the end of January 2010. Applications must be submitted online by the third week of March 2010.

### Sunday, March 14 & Sunday, May 2

**Holyoke Civic Orchestra 3 p.m. Leslie  
Phillips Theater, C building. Free.**

### April 2010 TBA

**Day of Service**

Join students, faculty, and staff as we contribute our time to area nonprofit organizations. Check Alumni & Friends on the HCC website for information.

### April 2, 2010

**HCC Jazz Festival**

Check the HCC website or call (413) 552-2480/2485 for information.

See additional campus and alumni events at [www.hcc.edu](http://www.hcc.edu), or at the HCC Alumni group on Facebook, or call (413) 533-7188 for a recording of alumni events.

# ALUMNI CONNECTION

Holyoke Community College Alumni Office  
303 Homestead Avenue  
Holyoke, MA 01040  
[www.hcc.edu](http://www.hcc.edu)

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The HCC Foundation 2009 Giving report is now online. To view it, please visit [www.hcc.edu](http://www.hcc.edu) and then click on "Alumni and Friends"

## 2009 FALL EVENTS

Additional details about these events can be found on p. 15. To see a complete listing of musical performances and campus events, please go to [www.hcc.edu](http://www.hcc.edu). To register for events, call (413) 552-2704.

**Thursday, October 8**  
HCC Tutor Open House  
4-5:45 p.m. DON 240

**Wednesday, October 14**  
Remembering Mountain Park  
7 p.m. Kittredge Center

**Friday, October 16**  
Information Security Awareness  
Conference 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
Kittredge Center

**Holyoke Civic Orchestra**  
Performances

Leslie Phillips Theater, C building. Free  
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Sunday, December 13, 3 p.m.

**Sunday, March 14, 3 p.m.**  
**Sunday, May 2, 3 p.m.**

 **Fall Silent Pizza  
Gatherings**

Wednesday, October 21, 11 a.m.  
Friday, November 20, 6 p.m.  
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p.m.) Leslie Phillips Theater, C building.

**February 1, 2010**  
HCC Foundation and Alumni  
Scholarship information online at  
[www.hcc.edu](http://www.hcc.edu).

**April 2010 Day of Service**  
Date TBA  
Check [www.hcc.edu](http://www.hcc.edu) for information.

**April 2, 2010**  
HCC Jazz Festival  
Check the HCC website or call  
(413) 552-2480/2485 for information.

**HOLYOKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
Futures Inspired