

# Alumni Connection

**HOLYOKE**  
**COMMUNITY**  
**COLLEGE**  
SPRING 2017



## Royal Days Ahead

HCC's new president gets to work

**PLUS**

Four inspirational alumnae leaders

Construction projects benefit campus, community

## Dear Alumni



Bonnie Zima Dowd  
Director of Alumni Relations



Dawn E. Bryden, '89  
President, Alumni Council

### Talk to us!



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**W**hat joy!

It's the beginning of a new year, and words alone cannot capture the excitement we feel welcoming Christina Royal as HCC's new president. She is only the fourth president in the college's 71-year history and officially began her tenure on Monday, Jan. 9. You'll find out a lot more about her in our cover story beginning on Page 4.

Given that she is HCC's first female president, we decided to highlight a few of our female graduates who have become leaders in their own right. We are proud of their accomplishments and commitment to inspiring change within their fields and know there are many more like them out there.

We are looking forward to three major capital projects that will improve and expand HCC's instructional facilities and student services. Off campus, in Holyoke's downtown Innovation District, HCC is constructing its new Hospitality and Culinary Arts center. The center, scheduled to open later this year, will not only contribute to the vitality of the city but will also be the new state-of-the-art home of HCC's credit and non-credit culinary and hospitality programs.

On campus, on the first floor of the Marieb Building, HCC is building the Center for Life Sciences in spaces formerly occupied by our nursing and radiologic technology programs (now located in the nearby Center for Health Education). The center will feature upgraded and brand new science labs and a high-tech "clean room," where students will be able to train on industry-standard technology while gaining transferable skills for biotechnology jobs.

And, finally, work has begun on a two-year, \$43.5 million renovation of the Campus Center that will create a new "front door" to the college and change both the look of the campus and flow of people around it.

We're excited to see these projects change the learning environment for our HCC students — they are at the heart of everything we do. With the help of our alumni and friends, Holyoke Community College is building a strong future. Thank you for the part you play in transforming lives and providing hope. We invite you to come back and see how your alma mater continues to grow and develop for the next generation of students. You can also demonstrate your vote of confidence in HCC by using the enclosed envelope to make an annual gift.

This is truly a pivotal time in the college's history. We are pleased to have President Royal's leadership and look forward to her representing HCC throughout the Pioneer Valley, the state of Massachusetts and beyond.

Here's to an exciting new chapter!

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## The Royal Question

President Royal has a question for you, our alumni: "What makes Holyoke Community College unique?" Beyond the distinctive collection of individuals that make every institution singular, what will prospective students find at HCC they cannot find anywhere else? Why do people of all ages come here, and why should they? Did HCC make a difference in your life? How? Please share your story, and we might publish it in an upcoming issue of *Alumni Connection*. Send us an email at [alumni@hcc.edu](mailto:alumni@hcc.edu).

### HCC cited for 'critical role'

HCC has been named a "Difference Maker" for 2017 by *Business West* magazine. The annual awards recognize individuals, agencies, and institutions that improve the quality of life in western Massachusetts. HCC is being honored collectively with Berkshire Community College, Greenfield Community College and Springfield Technical Community College. "While perhaps not as famous as the region's many fine private schools or UMass Amherst and other four-year institutions in the state system, these schools ... are playing an absolutely critical role in the development of this region," the magazine wrote in its Jan. 23 cover story. "They act as both a door of opportunity ... and a pathway to careers, through both degree and certificate programs that provide job skills and also transfer opportunities to four-year schools. Meanwhile, behind almost every major economic-development initiative in this region, there is a community college playing a significant role."



HCC president Christina Royal, far right, is joined by GCC president Bob Pura, far left, BCC president Ellen Kennedy, and STCC president John Cook, during a January visit to HCC.



### Cougars collect 5th straight New England crown

The 2016 HCC women's soccer team won the New England Championship for the fifth consecutive year, defeating longtime local rival STCC 4-0 in the title game at HCC. The Lady Cougars, coached by former HCC All-New England goalkeeper Rob Galazka, '97, had a perfect 11-0 record in NJCAA Div. III regional games, outscoring the competition 73-2 and recording nine shutouts. Sophomore sisters Natalie and Jennifer Galindo (graduates of Chicopee Comprehensive High School) led the on-field action all season, Natalie with 42 points (15 goals, 12 assists) and Jennifer with 37 (12 goals, 13 assists). Jennifer, a defensive center midfielder, was named the team's most valuable player and an NJCAA Div. III first-team All-American. Natalie received the same honors in 2015.

All-American Jennifer Galindo moves the ball downfield against American International College in HCC's 2016 home opener.

### ESL program celebrates 30th year

It started in 1986 as a non-credit, grant-funded program with three part-time instructors. Today, HCC's English as a Second-Language Program has five levels (four for credit), five full-time professors and more than 10 adjuncts teaching 34 different classes each semester. During the past 30 years, the program has helped thousands of non-native speakers prepare to do college-level academic work, in English. Dozens of ESL alumni returned to HCC Oct. 26, joining students, current and former faculty and staff to celebrate the history and success of what is now the largest and most comprehensive academic ESL program in western Massachusetts. The lunchtime event featured recollections from HCC officials and local dignitaries and tributes from award recipients and alumni. "When I came here in 1987, my English was zero," Deydamia Rodríguez, '92, told the standing-room crowd. "Holyoke Community College prepared me to be successful in life."

ESL academic counselor (and HCC alum) Carlos Malavé, '96, ESL teacher Vivian Leskes, and ESL tutor Bella Feldman received awards for their longtime service to the ESL program.



## Around Campus



### Pakistani educators glean lessons at HCC

A group of 19 educators and administrators from Pakistan visited HCC during the fall 2016 semester as part of a six-week trip to the Pioneer Valley to study the Massachusetts community college system. Participants were matched with mentors at the college, whom they met with weekly while also visiting classes, attending meetings, and talking with faculty, staff, and students. Each returned home with an individual action plan. "I'm looking to come up with frameworks to get industry more involved with our institution," said Hazrat Hussain, principal of the Government Polytechnic Institute Sardar Garhi, Peshawar. This was the third of four scheduled cohorts from Pakistan to visit HCC as part of a program put together by the nonprofit Institute for Training and Development in Amherst and funded by a two-year grant from the U.S. Dept. of State. HCC served as the lead community college partner on the project. The last group, all women, will visit this spring.

Sidra Khalid, principal of Punjab Vocational Training Council, with her HCC mentor Marie Troppe, director of Adult Basic Education/Transition to College & Careers.



### Shameless Woman takes stage

A reading by poet Magdalena Gómez is more than just a recitation of her writings. It's a theatrical event. Gómez, an author, performance artist, and co-founder and artistic director of the Springfield-based Latino performance group Teatro Vida, performed selections from her memoir *Shameless Woman* during a fall show at HCC. For openers, though, she introduced Miguel Angel Paredes, a 21-year-old UMass student, who played his own version of the rap song "My Shot" from the musical "Hamilton"; and 25-year-old HCC alumna Francheska Morales, '15, a slam poet and writer, now at UMass, who said she was inspired to write by HCC English professor Petriana Monize. Morales read an original poem called "Depression is Real." "My tradition as a performer is to always open the mic to younger artists," said Gomez. "It takes courage to write about things we would rather keep secret."

Magdalena Gómez performs selections from her memoir, *Shameless Woman*, during an appearance at HCC last fall.



### Immigrants' stories inspire scholarship

In collaboration with New England Public Radio and the University of Massachusetts Press, HCC hosted an evening last fall celebrating immigration and education in the Pioneer Valley. The event marked the release of *Words in Transit: Stories of Immigration* and the creation of a scholarship at HCC for student-immigrants, funded in part by proceeds from the book. The first-person accounts collected in the book were originally broadcast on NEPR for an oral history project called "Words in Transit." They were edited for print by Ilan Stavans, an Amherst College professor who moderated the evening's panel discussion. The idea for HCC's "Words in Transit Immigrant Scholarship" was largely inspired by two stories featured in the book, those of HCC student Angelica Merino Monge, '17, and HCC alumnus Bryan Torres, '14, now a student at Amherst College. Merino Monge and Torres both immigrated to the U.S. from El Salvador as children.

Bryan Torres, '14, and Angelica Merino Monge, '17, sign copies of *Words in Transit: Stories of Immigration* after an Oct. 26 panel discussion at HCC.

# "he was an incredible inspiration to me"

Dear HCC,

I must inform you that I am not an alumni of your awesome institution. I am one who attended briefly in my quest for a college education in 1971. Today I found a letter I have kept for 45 years from your institution. The letter is dated Feb. 12, 1971, and is signed by Robert E. Evans, Jr., Guidance Counselor. I am attaching a copy. (Reproduced below.)

As you read the letter you will note I am being denied access to Mr. Evans' class. I was desperate to take his class in African American Studies. I never got to take a class with him. However, he graciously agreed to add me to the long list of students he counseled. I kept the letter because he was in incredible inspiration to me. His words stayed with me long after I left HCC and the state of Massachusetts.

For many years I wondered what happened to my counselor, Mr. Evans. I wanted him to know that the skinny girl with the big Afro and even bigger mouth had gone on to earn her bachelor's degree in elementary education at the University of Illinois at Chicago. After teaching for 10 years, she went on to earn her master's and doctoral degrees in clinical psychology. And then — surprise — she went on to serve as a counselor at the University of Illinois Counseling Center as a psychotherapist.

Thanks to the wonders of the internet today I was able to access an article of an interview with several family members of Mr. Evans who are also HCC alumni. The story ("A Natural Progression") was in the Fall 2015 *Alumni Connection* about HCC legacy families. I am sad to learn of his passing but grateful for the sense of closure the article afforded me.

I am delighted to know that HCC is going strong as well. I will always have warm memories of the brief time I attended the college.

Most sincerely,

Bonita Berryman-Gilliam, PhD  
Former HCC student

Robert Evans, Jr., '50, after receiving a Distinguished Service Award from HCC in 2001. Evans was one of the first African-American professors at HCC and the college's first affirmative action officer. He died in 2002.



Dear Miss Berryman:

Please be advised that the rules of the college prohibit attendance in courses unless students are registered for said course.

In as much as your name does not appear on my class list, I cannot accept you in the course.

While I regret not having you there, there are 10 or 15 others who desire the same privilege. We cannot accept all of them. Therefore, in fairness to all, we must not accept anyone whose name does not appear on our class list.

Thanks for your interest in our class. We appreciate you wanting to attend. The course will be given in September. You can enroll then.

Sincerely yours,

Robert E. Evans, Jr.  
Guidance Counselor

## We want to hear from you



HCC welcomes letters from readers (350 words maximum) relating to articles or items that have appeared in recent issues of the magazine or contain information of interest to HCC alumni,

students, faculty or friends. Send your remarks to Editor, Alumni Connection, 303 Homestead Ave., Holyoke, MA 01040 or email comments to [alumni@hcc.edu](mailto:alumni@hcc.edu). Please include your name, class year, home address and telephone number.



# Royal Days Ahead

HCC'S NEW PRESIDENT GETS TO WORK

By CHRIS YURKO

**T**he office belongs to her now. She moved in on a Monday. Before that — long before that — it belonged to him.

By “him,” here, we do not mean her immediate predecessor. A him. We mean the hims:

George (Frost). David (Bartley). William (Messner).

All the presidents — men.

Already, much has been made of the fact that Christina (Royal) is the first female president of Holyoke Community College, and much should be.

To be the first in anything is often worth noting. To be the first woman hired to lead the oldest community college in Massachusetts, though, means more — to her, as much as anyone.

“It was a real awareness when I realized all the finalists for this job were women and that this was going to be a historic moment, if I had the pleasure of serving in this role,” she said not long after she arrived in early January, “and I do take that seriously.”

She mentioned it with pride during her first official address to faculty and staff in the Leslie Phillips Theater before the start of the Spring 2017 semester.

“I’m excited to be here. I’m really excited to be the first woman president of the college,” she told the audience, which responded with cheers and a standing ovation that had more than a little extra in it.

They were ready for this moment. She was too.

“It’s been nice in my lifetime to see more females assume CEO positions at various companies,” she said during an interview in her office a few days later, “and so it is a great honor and privilege for me to be able to do that here.”

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At 44, Royal is not the youngest to assume the presidency of HCC — both George Frost, the founder, and his successor, David Bartley, were 40, and Bill Messner 59 — but she is the first Generation Xer. That alone assumes a certain comfort with technology, which happens to be one of her areas of expertise.

She has both taken and taught courses online. She has designed and built online academic programs as well as virtual student support systems. In December, instead of writing a traditional



HCC PRESIDENT CHRISTINA ROYAL TALKS WITH HILDA ROQUE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NUESTRAS RAICES, DURING AN EVENT AT THE NONPROFIT HEADQUARTERS COMMUNITY GARDENING GROUP IN DOWNTOWN HOLYOKE, AS ANTHONY BRITT, A PROGRAM MANAGER AT THE COMMONWEALTH CORPORATION, CENTER, LOOKS ON

welcome message to the college community, she recorded, uploaded and emailed out a selfie video.

She likes social media. In another first for an HCC president, she maintains accounts on both Facebook (*Christina Royal*) and Twitter (*@christinaroyal7*).

“I won’t be sending any 3 a.m. tweets, I can promise you that,” she said, “but I do believe it’s a part of being approachable and accessible to folks.”

Another part of being approachable is getting to know her colleagues. That day in the theater, she gave this assignment to faculty and staff: “Share three things with the person next to you that are not common knowledge.”

“Work relationships are so critical,” she said. “We spend a third of our lives together. It’s really nice to ensure that we’re getting to know each other as human beings and formulating those connections.”

[Read the full interview with President Royal at hcc.edu/royalchat](http://hcc.edu/royalchat)



ROYAL MEETS IN HER OFFICE WITH ROBERT GILBERT, CHAIR OF THE HCC BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

Ballston Lake High School for giving her special attention and guidance: her math teacher, Mary Kosky, who recognized that Royal needed glasses and recruited her to join the math club; her Spanish teacher, Louise DiNapoli, who encouraged her to take an early college course; and her English teacher, Carol Forman-Pemberton, who walked her through the college application process and gave her a ride to a haircut appointment and her part-time job one day when her “new” car, a gift from her proud dad, broke down after school.

“I was fortunate to have had some really good teachers who really cared for me beyond academics, and those experiences really resonated with me,” she said.

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For college, Royal chose Marist. The private liberal arts school in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., had offered her a scholarship. Plus, it was close to her father and his family.

A life-long fan of puzzles, cards, and logic games, Royal majored in math, initially not understanding how that would lead to a career. “My adviser said, you’ll be able to do whatever you want because mathematics

For her part, Royal shared these: one, she practices mindfulness and meditation; two, she is fascinated by tiny houses, although she shares a regular-sized Northampton home with — three — her dog Milo, a min-pin Chihuahua. “He’s adorable,” she said.

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Royal grew up outside of Albany in the towns of Latham and Burnt Hills, N.Y., the oldest of three children born into a mixed race family, her mother white and father black.

They didn’t have much money. For most of Royal’s childhood, her mother worked as a waitress; her father, a high school dropout, tended bar. She recalls that there were times when they had to rely on public assistance. Her parents divorced. Her father moved back to his hometown in Clifton Park, N.Y. Eventually, when her mother could no longer afford to pay rent on an apartment, they moved in with Royal’s grandparents.

“For some reason, I had some pretty good insight growing up that education was going to be the way out of my circumstances,” she said. “Growing up poor and with limited means, our world was quite small. I’d heard through my counselors at school that I could go to college, but financially I knew it was going to be quite difficult. They encouraged me not to worry about that and to focus on doing well in school.”

In particular, she credits several of her teachers from Burnt Hills-

teaches you how to think critically about life and how to solve problems,” she said. “That always stuck in my head.”

A career in education, though, had not yet crossed her mind. After college, she expected to work with her uncle at IBM.

“I actually had a voice mail message on my dorm phone that said, *Future IBM executive overseas*,” she said.

Royal intended to go directly to grad school to study industrial organizational psychology. She postponed those plans when her father got sick. “It was a good thing, ’cause he died the next year,” she said.

Instead, she sold insurance for Prudential. That didn’t last long. The world, she could see, was shifting away from paper processing. She wrote a business proposal to create a department that would train agents to carry laptops and use software to write policies.

The company hired her as technical adviser to oversee the training.

She did similar work for CompUSA, teaching computer applications to employees of the Social Security Administration in branches all over the U.S. and then moved to Dallas to run that program. After that, she went to Fort Lauderdale as director of curriculum for the Beacon Institute for Learning, a start-up that

*continues on page 8*

# Thriving in Technology

## Mary Ekmalian, '78

By **LAURIE LOISEL**

When Mary Ekmalian enrolled at Holyoke Community College in 1978, she majored in accounting at the urging of her father.

James Ekmalian, a longtime HCC accounting professor, was a pragmatist. He wanted to be certain his daughter would always be able to earn a living.

Little did he know, that accounting degree would ignite an academic interest in economics that would lead to a successful career in the male-dominated field of corporate finance that has put her at the top echelon of the banking world.

"He's very proud of what I've achieved," Ekmalian said in an interview over the telephone from her Upper East Side residence in Manhattan.

Today, Ekmalian, 56, is chief information officer and head of corporate technology at First Data, NY, a company with headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia, where she is in charge of 600 employees all over the world.

Ekmalian, a Springfield native, said her decision to get a community college degree on the way to a bachelor's was at heart a financial one — her parents were raising five children — but one she never regretted. After earning her associate degree at HCC, Ekmalian went on to earn a bachelor's degree at Mount Holyoke College, majoring in economics.

At both institutions, she said, she received an education that was superior and challenging.

"I remember every professor, whether chemistry, economics or accounting, they all genuinely cared about the student," she said.

As she was preparing to graduate from Mount Holyoke, she was offered a job at Citibank. There, over three decades, she rose through the ranks of the multinational company and its subsidiaries, earned her MBA at New York University, and made the switch from sales, management and marketing to technology and product development. In that role, she led teams that developed and implemented early iterations of online banking technology for corporate clients, products that won acclaim for their innovation. She moved over to First Data two years ago.

As a woman working in leadership positions, she acknowledged that her path was not always smooth, in part because she was always in a "significant minority," though she never experienced what she referred to as overt discrimination.

"It's definitely had its challenges — I certainly have found that people hire people who look like them and that they are comfortable with," she said. "It's a boys' club and you feel it. It was never conscious, you just have to work hard to be included and to have a voice within the management team."

Ekmalian noted that from her first day on the job, there were women in senior management positions who mentored her, encouraged her, and helped her along her career trajectory. "And that's something that, in turn,



I've tried to pass on," she said.

Reflecting on her career path, she noted that her greatest breakthroughs happened when she came to terms with the limitations she placed on herself, what she described as "my own fears of going for it, whatever the next role was."

"As a woman, you always have to check every box, constantly not feeling you have all the skills needed for the next job," she said.

Over the years, Ekmalian has felt great support from and remained close with her family, including her now-retired father, who is 82. Her parents have a home on Cape Cod in Dennis, and Ekmalian bought her own place there for weekend trips.

Despite her Massachusetts roots, she's now a New Yorker at heart. She is a passionate theatergoer, and outside her demanding career, she's also served on the boards of nonprofits including the Center Against Domestic Violence and the Riverside Symphony.

"I've always tried to be involved in the community in some way," she said. ♣

designed IT certification programs for colleges and universities — her first taste of higher ed.

Royal had opportunities to advance her career in corporate IT but decided to return to her alma mater, Marist College, as director of Technology-Assisted Learning, recruited to design and implement an undergraduate online program. Meanwhile, she earned her master's degree in educational psychology and started teaching.

"I loved being in the classroom," she said, "I loved working with students, and I loved being able to find new ways to deliver information that made it interesting."

She kept teaching, even after taking a position as executive director of Distance Learning at Cuyahoga Community College in Cleveland, which in turn led to a position as associate vice president of eLearning and Innovation, where she led a team that built a system of virtual support services for online students.

After seven years at "Tri-C," she turned down a job as president of a virtual campus of a Texas college in favor of the provost's position at Inver Hills Community College in Minnesota, her last step before HCC.

"I really wanted an opportunity to impact an entire college," she said. "When I was thinking about becoming a college president, I was not interested in just getting there quickly but getting there most prepared."

In HCC, she said, she found a college that was already doing a good job, "a place I felt people really cared for students beyond their job descriptions," and one with a multicultural student body and employee base.

Her goals are nothing short of addressing — and trying to solve — the problems confronting all community colleges these days: enrollment, retention, student success. She plans to do that, she said, through collaboration — she likes the term "co-creation" — rather than edicts.

"I think sometimes the idea of co-creating something or being a collaborative leader people perceive as weak," she said, "but I actually think it makes you stronger in terms of working with people and being in touch with those you are leading."

She is already moving forward on the long process of creating a strategic plan for the college that will include a series of "listening sessions" with different campus and community constituents.

"I am an innovator," she said, "and I love looking for the ways we can challenge ourselves to go beyond what we think is possible. I don't want HCC to be just a good school. I want us to be an outstanding school."

## The Royal Resumé

B.A., Mathematics, Marist College, May 1994

M.A., Educational Psychology, Marist College, May 2003

Ph.D., Education, Capella University, Sept. 2007

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

CompUSA, manager (Research and Development), project manager, instructor, 1997-2000

Beacon Institute for Learning, director of curriculum, 2000-2001

Marist College, director of Technology-Assisted Learning, 2001-2006

Cuyahoga Community College, executive director, Distance Learning, 2006-2010; associate vice president, eLearning & Innovation, 2010-2013

Inver Hills Community College, provost and vice president of Academic Affairs, 2013-2016

### TEACHING

Adjunct faculty, Marist College: online, hybrid and classroom (communications, technology education, computer and information literacy, psychology, integrative studies), 2002-2016

Adjunct faculty, Cuyahoga Community College: online and hybrid psychology courses, 2009-2011

The corner office on the third floor of the Frost Building commands an impressive view of the campus. Windows face east and south and stretch the length and width of the room. From here you can see from the bus circle all the way to the main entrance on Homestead Avenue. It's bright.

For good reason, the president's desk remains in that corner, as it has through past administrations. Little by little, though, Royal has begun to redecorate the room.

Framed on the far wall is the famous quote from Martin Niemöller that begins, "First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out, because I was not a socialist," which she has carried with her from office to office throughout her career. On the floor, waiting to be hung up: her diplomas from Marist College and a mounted newspaper story announcing her hiring as HCC president.

Standing, on display, are a few books about leadership with titles most people will not know and one that most people certainly will, set apart, across the room, on a high shelf: *Oh, the Places You'll Go*, by Dr. Seuss.

Along the windowsill there is a souvenir from her 30th birthday party, when her colleagues at Marist College turned the lunchroom into "The Casino Royale," and next to that some family photographs and one of her dog Milo — just a few personal touches to make the office feel more like her own. 

# Commanding Presence

Barbara Arrighi, '74

By **RONNI GORDON**

Like most of her classmates in HCC's Criminal Justice program, Barbara Arrighi, '74, didn't understand then how a speech and theater course could help her realize her dream of becoming a police officer.

"Everybody hated the idea of being in that class, but when we went, everyone loved it," she said, recalling her teacher, Jeanne Hatch. "I learned a lot in that class: how to present an argument, advocate a position, educate, and get your audience's attention."

"When you do anything having to do with your job you use your voice to command presence," she added. "It was fun and empowering and helped me with everything I did."

Everything included rising in the ranks of her karate organization and in the Mount Holyoke College campus police department, where she is now the deputy chief and overseeing the campus.

Arrighi is an 8th degree black belt in a traditional Japanese style of karate called Shito-Ryu, and a hanshi – teacher of masters – making her the highest ranking woman in the world in her organization, the International Karate Do Kai. At Mount Holyoke, she directs Bushido-Kai Karate, the college karate club – leading weekly training sessions year-round at Kendall Hall.

She also holds a fifth-degree black belt in Gosoku-Ryu, another Japanese style of karate, and teaches self-defense classes for women called Rape Aggression Defense (RAD), both at the college and at conferences around the country.

Knowing she wanted to go into police work, the Easthampton native started taking karate classes in her 20s at the old Henry Jay's Health Club and School of Karate in Holyoke.

"I fell in love with the art and was amazed at the discipline and the camaraderie," she said. "It's the art of fighting without fighting, because you know when to walk away."

When she arrived at HCC in 1972, she was already a yellow belt with a black stripe.

At the time, she said, she chose HCC because it had "the premiere program in the valley" for criminal justice. She credits her rise in the police ranks to the solid foundation she received there. She recalls the late West Springfield police chief Thomas McNamara as an especially strong role model along with the other law enforcement professionals who taught courses at the college.

"They were good people, they knew what they were doing, and I had a lot of respect for them," she said.

"It was all about understanding the law and knowing what you're allowed to do and what you're not allowed to do and making sure that you're not cutting corners, and knowing that it's in your best interest to be ethical



and to always treat people with respect."

Back then, she said, women were in the minority in her classes at HCC, but she didn't feel like she needed to prove herself because she was a good student and often helped others.

"But once I was in the field, both in karate and police work, I felt it," she recalled. "I was lucky I worked with quality male instructors all my life, and, because of that, I became a strong instructor and therefore respected. But it was always in the back of my mind that I needed to be better to get the respect."

The 70-year-old Arrighi, who lives in Northampton with her partner, Marla Allisan, said her interest in police work stemmed from talking to the officers who frequented Arrighi's, her parents' restaurant in Easthampton.

"They were interesting, and I wanted to be on my feet and in the action," she said. "I wanted to directly help people and not be off to the side."

When she started working as a campus security officer at Mount Holyoke in 1974, she was the first woman hired in that position. She graduated from the Massachusetts State Police Academy in 1980. Later, as a supervisor, she earned her bachelor's degree in police administration from the University of Massachusetts.

After 42 years, she clearly recalls the reason she initially applied for the job at Mount Holyoke. "I liked the idea of helping women in their lives," she said. ♣

# Taking Flight

Linda Markham, '83

By JANICE BEETLE

Growing up in Westfield, the youngest of six children in a blue-collar family, Linda Markham, '83, never imagined that one day she would become the first female president of a U.S. airline company.

Markham's mother had wanted her to be a nurse. Though still unsure about her future, upon high school graduation, Markham knew nursing wasn't for her.

She followed friends to HCC, was impressed by the Admissions staff, and knew she could afford to attend — with money her mom had saved for nursing school.

"There were students from all over Massachusetts of all different ages," Markham says of HCC. "It was diverse. People wanted to help each other."

She wound up majoring in business and retail management and experienced a few pivotal moments that led her to continue down that career path. One came in a business law course, where she learned how to ask the right questions before making a decision.

In another, students set up their own stores. That taught her about all the facets involved in running a business.

"You had to hire a team," she says. "You had to think about your budget, your personnel, your tools, your resources. I think that's basically a lot of what my work at Cape Air is today."

In 2013, Markham became the president and chief administrative officer of Cape Air and its sister company, Nantucket Airlines, making her at the time the only female president in the male-dominated U.S. airline industry.

Her first move as president — creating paid maternity and paternity leaves.

That's because the heart and soul of her work is in engaging and supporting the company's 1,200 employees, she says. Case in point: She also co-founded the Cape Air Resources for Employees Fund to aid employees in financial crisis due to a death in the family, a fire or other tragic circumstance.

"We're an organization that cares," she says. "Our leaders are on the bottom of the pyramid, here to support front-line employees."

Markham has come a long way since her first job after graduating from HCC, when she worked as a recruiter for Reliable Temps in Agawam. Later, as office manager of the family-owned business, she experienced her first taste of leadership.

After that, she held recruiting positions in Boston, and in 1988 applied for one she was hired to fill, a job in the personnel department of a high-tech engineering firm, where she was immersed in the world of employee relations, benefits, recruiting, hiring, payroll. "I got to learn all the disciplines," she says.

After they'd started their family of three children, Markham and her



husband, Jim, moved to Cape Cod, where she worked in human resources for the Visiting Nurses Association of Cape Cod, seeing it through several mergers.

In 2002, Cape Air founder and CEO Dan Wolf hired Markham to build a human resources department at the Hyannis-based business. "I really had to start from the ground up," she says.

At the time, she knew business and people, but not the airline industry. That she learned by listening and interacting with employees until she understood everything from customer service to maintenance to flights management.

As vice president of HR, Markham took the airline through a reorganization. "We had many people in titles that didn't fit what they were doing. We had to make sure we had the right person in the right role. That's key," she says.

In her 14 years there, she says, she's grown a strong, multi-faceted team with the airline that serves 40 cities in five regions around the world, including Micronesia, 8,000 miles away.

Even though the airline industry is not known for women in leadership positions, Markham says Cape Air strives for it. "We have a high number of female leaders and pilots," she says. "We're skewing more toward female leaders than male."

Active in the industry at large, Markham serves on the board for Women in Aviation and is the chair of the board for the Regional Airline Association in Washington, D.C., the first woman to serve in that role in the organization's 40-year history. ✈

# Making Things Happen

## Ruby Maddox, '03

By LAURIE LOISEL

**R**uby Maddox took to heart one important experience during her time as a student at Holyoke Community College: If you want something, make it happen.

That's why, as a student, she took an HCC-produced play around to local high schools and why she started an after-school theater program in her hometown.

It's why she helped found, in 2001, the community-based food justice organization Gardening the Community in Springfield.

It's why, two years ago, she founded the nonprofit Leaders of the Free World, an international leadership development program for young black men, which she serves as founding director.

"HCC was a place where I learned, 'Oh, I can make things happen. This is awesome,'" Maddox said in an interview at her alma mater while she was home visiting for the holidays.

Maddox, 36, who was born and raised in Springfield, hadn't planned on attending college after she graduated from high school. She had hated school and remembers being happy to be done with it.

But when she learned her best friend was heading off to college, she had a change of heart. "I didn't want to be left behind," she said.

Two weeks before the fall semester was about to start, Maddox went to HCC for some basic information. She walked out an enrolled student.

It would take Maddox five years to earn her degree, and it wasn't easy. She worked a full-time job for those five years.

"It's a struggle, and, sometimes, you're the only one who knows what you are doing and sometimes it seems like it would be so much easier to drop out," she said. "I don't ever remember being able to just be a student. That world didn't exist."

Still, the struggle was worth it and HCC a place she thrived. She became active in the theater, was honored with the Player's Medal given to role models in the Theater Department. She produced a play in HCC's black box theater, coordinated the box office, and organized a project that brought an HCC play to high schools in Springfield and Northampton. The following year, as a final project in her sociology class, she started an after-school theater program at a community center in Springfield.

In high school, Maddox recalls, she felt powerless but her experience at HCC was the complete opposite.

"I felt like HCC was a place where I could make things happen," she said.

Maddox graduated from HCC in 2003 and went on to earn her bachelor's degree from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst in 2011 with a degree in urban communities and public policy. She earned a master's degree in nonprofit management and philanthropy from Bay Path



University in 2013.

All the while, she worked full time as an event coordinator at Mount Holyoke College and at the college's Center for the Environment, where, among other things, she would bring groups of students to work at Gardening the Community.

Since 2015, Maddox has worked at Clark University in Worcester as director of LEEP Projects, which stands for Liberal Education and Effective Practice, where she helps students set up project-based summer internships.

"I love doing for students what I feel like HCC did for me in terms of just saying, 'What do you want to do, and let me help you do that,'" Maddox said.

A trip to Ghana — part of her UMass education — propelled Maddox to found Leaders of the Free World. That life-changing journey shifted her consciousness, she said, and made her want to offer the same experience to young black men.

She and co-founder Lavar Thomas took four young men to Ghana for two weeks in 2016, a journey that was wildly successful, she said. They are now planning another trip for 2018 and hope to bring 15 to 20 young men along from different states.

Recruitment will focus on a cohort near and dear to Maddox: community college students.

"We feel like that's where the young men are who are already striving who could benefit the most from an experience like this — but who are least likely to get this opportunity," she said. "To this day, when community college students are in front of me, they immediately become my favorite people. They don't take their education for granted." 



# UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Three building projects under way will improve the look, function and facility of the college

By CHRIS YURKO

If a picture is truly worth a thousand words, it might be instructive to take a close look at the image at the top of the opposite page. That's a photo of the HCC Campus Center as it has looked pretty much since it opened in 1980.

Compare that to the image above. That's an architect's rendering of the Campus Center the way it will look sometime in 2019 after a \$43.5 million, bottom-to-top renovation.

Gone, you'll notice, is the sloping façade, squared off with a new roof and a long bank of high windows. Below, there's a new bridge over a refreshed Tannery Brook, leading to a covered entryway that will be, once the building reopens, the new "front door" to the college, inside which visitors will find the new home of the Admissions Office and other student-focused departments and programs.

Big changes, for sure, though not the only ones.

Although the Campus Center renovation is by far the largest, it is just one of three HCC building projects now under way. The first floor of the Marieb Building is getting its own makeover and its own name to reflect its new purpose: The Center for Life

Sciences. Also, off campus, in a historic building in downtown Holyoke, HCC is constructing a new home for its Hospitality and Culinary Arts programs.

All told, HCC is investing some \$54 million to improve the look, function and facility of the college. Here's a brief look at each project, in words and pictures:

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## THE CENTER FOR LIFE SCIENCES

**Location:** First floor, Marieb Building

**Scope of Renovation:** 7,500 square feet

**Cost:** \$4.5 million

**Funding:** \$3.8 million grant (Massachusetts Life Sciences Center); \$750,000 (donations from HCC Foundation Building Healthy Communities Campaign)

**Estimated Completion:** Summer 2017

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The Center for Life Sciences will take over classroom and laboratory space vacated by HCC's nursing and radiological technology programs, which moved into the Center for Health Education after that facility opened in August 2015.

The Life Sciences project involves the creation of two state-of-the-art laboratories dedicated to life sciences, one for biotechnology and genetics, and another for microbiology, along with lab prep areas, storage and a large classroom.

“This is the easiest project of the three,” said Bill Fogarty, vice president of Administration and Finance.

A key feature of this project is the addition of an instructional “clean room” to train students to conduct experiments and research in a sterile environment.

This could be just the first phase of a much larger renovation. HCC will complete a building study this spring that will be used to write a grant proposal to turn the entire building into a Life Sciences center.

“We’ve been encouraged to think big,” Fogarty said.



CAMPUS CENTER BEFORE RENOVATION

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## HOSPITALITY AND CULINARY ARTS CENTER

**Location:** The Cubit Building, 181 Appleton St., Holyoke

**Scope of Renovation:** 19,888 square feet

**Cost:** \$6.2 million

**Funding:** \$1.75 million (Mass. Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development); \$1.55 million (U.S. Economic Development Administration); \$2.4 million (HCC reserves; HCC Foundation; external support and donations); \$400,000 (City of Holyoke); \$100,000 (MGM Resorts)

**Estimated Completion:** Fall 2017

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The new home of HCC’s Hospitality and Culinary Arts programs will occupy the first and second floors of the Cubit Building, a square, four-story, red brick former factory in Holyoke’s Innovation District, right across the street from the city’s new cobblestone Canal Walk and adjacent to the Massachusetts Green High Performance Computing Center.



CENTER FOR LIFE SCIENCES ARTIST RENDERING



HOSPITALITY AND CULINARY ARTS CENTER ARTIST RENDERING



CAMPUS CENTER ARTIST RENDERING



HOSPITALITY AND CULINARY ARTS CENTER ARTIST RENDERING

students seeking two-year degrees and one-year certificates, as well as those looking for short-term noncredit job training.

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## CAMPUS CENTER

**Location:** Campus Center (formerly G Building)

**Scope of Renovation:** 67,727 square feet

**Cost:** \$43.5 million

**Funding:** State Bond Bills

**Estimated Completion:** Spring 2019

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Leaks have plagued the Campus Center for decades. Waterproofing the building is the main reason to renovate it. So, the building’s sloping surfaces, the primary source of those leaks, will be squared off and the entire structure sealed with a protective envelope to make the building watertight and energy efficient.

The squaring off and the addition of high windows on the east side will give the building a look that complements the adjacent Kittredge Center, which opened in 2003. This will also add about 9,000 square feet to the current 58,727, mostly in the dining room on the second floor where the external balcony will be enclosed.

On the Courtyard side, an atrium will cover the external double stairs that descend into “the pit,” another source for water collection.

On the east side, facing Homestead Avenue, a walkway from a new visitors parking lot will lead across the bridge to the main entrance. Inside, on the first floor, visitors will find a new “Welcome Center” anchored by the Admissions Office, Assessment Center (for college placement tests), and the Advising, Career and Transfer (ACT) Center, services all relocated from the second floor of the Frost building.

The second floor will house a renovated cafeteria and expanded dining areas. Also on this level: the College Store (relocated from the first floor); Student Activities and Student Clubs (relocated from Donahue); and Multicultural Academic Services (relocated from Frost). This “student-engagement” area will include study “pods” with comfortable seating and charging stations for electronic devices.

The layout, on both the first and second floors, will be more open and airy, with glass walls and doors separating offices and community spaces.

“We wanted to do things to improve the operation of the building,” said Fogarty, “and also bring together programs and departments that complement each other to give the building a real feel of a campus center.” 

On the first floor, students and teachers will have at their disposal multiple training zones: a teaching kitchen, bakery laboratory kitchen, production kitchen, dining room, and a classroom with a demonstration kitchen, all fitted with the best and most modern equipment.

The second floor will feature two smart classrooms, a hotel laboratory, another teaching kitchen for noncredit programs, men’s and women’s changing rooms, and conference space, as well as faculty and staff offices.

“We’re going to have the latest and greatest of everything,” said chef and HCC Culinary Arts professor Warren Leigh. “It’s going to be the finest, free-standing community college hospitality and culinary arts education and training center in New England – nearly 20,000 square feet. That’s exciting.”

There will be plenty of room for HCC to expand programs for

# Alumni Mentors Connect

By JUDITH KELLIHER

As a business administration major at Holyoke Community College from 2014 to 2016, Laura Whiteley realized she needed some real-world wisdom about life during — and after — college.

What was the best way to build her resume? What internship opportunities were available? How could she best transition to a four-year college, or as an alternative, into the working world?

Enter Nancy Fields, '74, a longtime graphic artist who wanted to share her own experiences as an HCC student and what she had learned since then.

Fields and Whiteley connected through HCC's Alumni Mentor Program and would meet periodically to talk about ideas such as marketing a business and web design techniques.

And now that mentoring tradition continues.

Whiteley so appreciated Fields's advice and insights that she volunteered to become an alumni mentor herself right after she graduated, with high honors, from HCC. As a freshman, Whiteley took first place in the 2015 Harold Grinspoon Foundation Elevator Pitch Competition. She is now a student in the Isenberg School of Management at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst.

"My time as a mentee inspired me to help others through their college career, especially the transition from a two-year to a four-year college," Whiteley said. "I know from personal experience that having a mentor to consult with and ask questions of is very helpful. It gave me comfort knowing Nancy had had similar struggles, and she also provided advice on how to make it through."

Whiteley now mentors Eva Nieves Ramos, an HCC business administration major who is also on a transfer track. The two have met a few times so far and discussed resume writing and career paths.

"It is more about bouncing ideas off each other and being supportive rather than coming up with an instant answer," Whiteley said. "I hope to help her feel more confident stepping into the next chapter of her life."



LAURA WHITELEY, '16, LEFT, WITH HER ALUMNI MENTOR NANCY FIELDS, '74, AT HCC EARLIER THIS YEAR.

Bonnie Zima Dowd, HCC director of Alumni Relations, says the goal of the program is to connect students with successful, professional alumni who can help them develop career skills and also help them grow personally.

HCC launched the program in 2015 with four student mentees and an equal number of alumni mentors. Since then, it has grown to 20 pairs of HCC alumni mentors and student mentees for the 2016-2017 academic year.

"Students gain a broader perspective of the business world, networking opportunities, as well as inspiration, motivation and increased confidence," Zima Dowd said. Just as important, mentees can learn about the hardships and failures alumni experienced on their way to success.

An art education major at HCC, Fields has worked as an editor at *Glamour*, *Mademoiselle* and *Weight Watchers* magazines. She served as a mentor in the program's inaugural year in 2015 and continues to mentor other HCC students this year.

The owner of Fields Graphic Designs in Leeds, Mass., she enjoys using some of her free time to help students move forward in their careers. She continues to participate as an alumni mentor, she said, to "inspire and connect past, present and future."

"Entering HCC in the fall of 1972, right out of high school, I was focused on getting through in two years and moving on to a four-year university," said Fields, who earned bachelor's degrees in art and fine arts from the University of Colorado. "It was wonderful to see how excited Laura was about being a student at HCC. I loved hearing her wins and how nurtured and guided she feels."

Alumni mentors experience opportunities to give back to the HCC community and to inspire and possibly change a student's life.

"Our hope is that both gain equally from the program while having fun at the same time," Zima Dowd said. "Ultimately, our goal is to have student mentees become alumni mentors once they graduate and get established in their careers." 

# ALUMNI IN ACTION



## Behind the Camera

When local TV-broadcasting legend Sy (“Another look at the movies!”) Becker visited HCC in October to report on a story about the 30th anniversary of HCC’s ESL program (See Around Campus, Page 2), one of our alumni was manning the camera behind him. **Michael Savage, '03**, works full time for WWLP-22News as a camera operator and editor. He earned his associate degree in Electronic Media from HCC, where he was a student of professors Justin West and **Jay Ducharme, '78**. “He’s a hard worker and has come a long way,” says Ducharme.

Michael Savage, '03, shares a rare on-camera moment with TV news reporter Sy Becker during a fall visit to HCC.



## Alumni Employees Celebrated

As it does each year, HCC’s Office of Alumni Relations hosted a pre-Thanksgiving celebration in November to recognize and thank all alumni employees and retired faculty for their service to the college. The turkey-with-all-the-trimmings meal is prepared by Aramark Dining Services under the direction of director **Mark Pronovost, '81**. HCC’s alumni-employee network numbers more than 140 women and men who work as faculty, administrators and staff. About 100 alumni attended the luncheon.

HCC campus police officers Lizabeth Martinez, '04, (left), and Selina Ortega, '16, enjoy some early T-Day takeout.

## Music Lessons

**Aaron Lakota, '05**, returned to campus in September as part of the Music Department’s Alumni Music Series. He talked about his academic and professional career during breaks between performances of Schumann’s “Three Romances for Oboe and Piano,” accompanied on piano by alumna **Ania Bostock, '03**.

Lakota is an active teacher and performer and has played with the Holyoke City Symphony and the Farmington Valley Symphony, as well as other chamber music groups. But it’s his reed business, A. Lakota Reeds, that has enabled him to be a full-time musician. “I’m a good reed maker, so these little things are what I do to supplement my income,” he told students. “I don’t have a day job. I teach, I make reeds, I play music, and it’s worked out great.”



Aaron Lakota, '05, plays Schumann for HCC music students as part of the department’s Alumni Music Series.

## Theater Alumni Reunite to Remember Leslie Phillips

What better way to remember your theater teacher than putting on a show. To wit: Dozens of alumni and friends gathered in September for HCC's first "24 Hour Play Festival," a benefit to honor the memory of the late and much beloved HCC theater teacher Leslie Phillips. The event, which brought theater alumni together to write, rehearse, produce and perform four original one-act plays in 24 hours, was organized by **Linda Eger-Fitzel, '83, Denise Boutin, '77, Lisa Poehler '84, and Linda Hegarty, '82.** The four original plays were staged the night of Sept. 24 in the theater that bears Phillips' name. The festival was also a fundraiser. Proceeds from ticket sales and donations helped establish the Leslie Phillips Fund for Theater Arts and Education, which will support a variety of initiatives such as scholarships, guest artists, master classes, theater enrichment programs, and other opportunities for HCC students and faculty members.

**1** Linda Eger-Fitzel, '83, Denise Boutin '77 and Lisa Poehler, '84, in the Leslie Phillips Theater; **2** Leslie Phillips; **3** Emcee Stephen Bailey, '77, welcomes Bonnie Zima Dowd, director of Alumni Relations, and Danny Eaton, '74, to the show; **4** Leslie Phillips' children, Ben Phillips, '85, Abby O'Connor, and Melissa Hruska, '92 returned for the special event with their families; **5** Jonathan Duquette, '87, and Silvana Gravani, '92, act in "Don't Drink the Cool Aid," directed by Paul Goddu, '72; **6** Alex Cruz, '11, takes a break after directing "Brighter Days" by Linda Eger-Fitzell, '84.



# CLASS NOTEBOOK

## 1976

**John Janulewicz** is the newly appointed police chief for Palmer, Mass. He's been with the department for almost two decades and has been a resident of Palmer nearly all his life. He has a master's degree in criminal justice from Anna Maria College.

**Pamela A. Quirk** R.N., GCNS, CDONA, retired as the director of Nursing from the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke after 29 years. Using HCC as her stepping-stone, she continued on to Fitchburg State College for her BSN and eventually received her MSN in nursing from UMass-Amherst. She is a member of the board of directors at Harmony House, whose mission is to provide compassionate care at the end of life to those who lack capable caregivers.

## 1977

**Michael Griffin** is a claims executive in Gen Re's reinsurance claims department. He joined Gen Re in 2013, after working in various claims and claims management positions for primary insurers. He works with a variety of property clients on catastrophe plans, complex claims, coverage, and litigation matters. Gen Re is a leading global reinsurer and a member of the Berkshire Hathaway family of companies.

## 1979



Irish-born Northampton, Mass., resident **Patrick Cahillane** was sworn in as the new sheriff of Hampshire County in January. He has worked at the Hampshire County Jail and House of Correction for more

than 30 years starting as a corrections officer in 1977. After graduating from HCC, he earned a bachelor's degree from Westfield State University and a master's degree in criminal justice administration from Western New England University. He is married to the former **Barbara Sheehan, '79**. Together they raised three daughters, Heather, Erin, and Shannon.



**1980**  
HCC administrative assistant **Gail Golas** is a member of the Pioneer Valley Riverfront Club in Springfield and paddles on the Dragon Rays Dragon Boat team. Last summer she

participated in the annual Springfield Dragon Boat Festival, which was hosted by the club on the Connecticut River.

## 1981

**Kenneth Spafford** is an investment consultant at MassMutual Trust Company in Enfield, Conn. He earned his bachelor's degree and MBA from Western New England University. He and his wife Christy have one daughter, Madeline. Spafford's brother **Richard Spafford** graduated from HCC in 1997.

## 1983

The Green Mountains of Vermont are home to **Greg Joly** and his wife, Mary Diaz, where they have homesteaded for more than two decades. In 1994 they bought 20 acres of land, built a two-story log home and now live off the grid. Joly is a poet and operates Bull Thistle Press, a one-man small press in Jamaica, Vt., where he publishes original works of poetry.

## 1988

**Kimberly Ferris**, a registered nurse and vice president/managed care manager at FutureComp and **Cindy Crosby, '78**, adjunct clinical instructor at Holyoke Medical Center for HCC's Radiologic Technology program, returned to HCC to talk to students about their professional careers in health care.

## 1993

**Cindi Warner** is a strategic account manager with Keurig Green Mountain, a global personal beverage system company. She attended HCC at night, worked full time, and then went on to earn a bachelor's degree in business administration from Muhlenberg College, Penn. She recently reconnected with HCC as an alumni mentor.

## 1996

**Jeremy Merlo** manages the Facility Services Category Management Center for the United States Postal Service in Windsor, Conn. He oversees more than 40 people in locations in Windsor and Denver, Colo., and is responsible for procuring services at approximately 32,000 facilities. In recognition of his exceptional performance and outstanding professional contributions, Merlo has received numerous awards and honors over the years. He also volunteers as an HCC alumni mentor.

## 1997

**Richard Spafford** is the president and owner of Footit Health Care Store, a full-service medical equipment center in West Springfield,

Mass., which he purchased a few years ago. He holds degrees from Western New England University and Springfield Technical Community College. He lives with his wife Monica in West Springfield.

## 1998

**Gerry Gosselin** of Agawam, Mass., was named vice president of engineering at VertitechIT, a national healthcare information technology and consulting firm. He has more than 18 years of programming and network engineering experience. He oversees VeritechIT's team of senior engineers and architects at their headquarters at Open Square in Holyoke.

## 2001



PeoplesBank promoted **Meghan Parnell-Gregoire** to assistant vice president business lending center manager. She has more than 14 years of banking experience. After graduating from HCC,

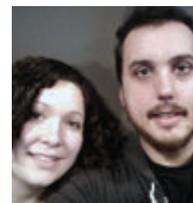
she earned her bachelor's degree in business administration from UMass-Amherst.

## 2005

**Ellen Morbyrne** (formerly Ellen Morb) works as administrative director at North Star, an alternative learning center for teens in Sunderland, Mass. Morbyrne is a graduate of Smith College and a yoga teacher, mother of two children, and co-founder of Real Live Theatre. She has been running North Star's theater program since 2003 and joined the core staff in 2010.

## 2007

**Roshonda DeGraffenreid** is assistant director and pre-law advisor at Mount Holyoke College's Career Development Center. She is also a member of the board of directors for the Boys & Girls Club Family Center in Springfield. After graduating from HCC, DeGraffenreid earned her bachelor's degree from Mount Holyoke College and her master's degree from Bay Path University.



**Drake Descant** and **Jennifer Krassler, '14**, provide music lessons to children and adults in their Agawam home. The business, Descant Music & Art Studio, currently

serves 35 students, ages 4 to 60, with different musical abilities. Descant has been teaching music for over 20 years. He graduated from the Springfield Conservatory of Music and met Krassler at HCC when they were both studying music performance and education. Drake's son Donovan is now studying music at HCC.

### 2008

**Jeffrey Byrnes** wrote that he credits the faculty at HCC for nurturing his creativity and encouraging him to follow his heart, which in turn helped him become a published fashion and portrait photographer in Holyoke.

### 2009

**Chris Reichelt** is a self-employed tax consultant. Before starting his own business, he worked for four years as a staff accountant with a Springfield firm. He earned an associate degree from HCC in business administration and finance and his bachelor's degree in finance from the UMass Isenberg School of Management. When he's not working, he enjoys playing golf and volunteers his time as an HCC alumni mentor.

### 2010

**Christina Vandoloski** relocated from New England to Colorado and is pursuing her bachelor's degree in criminal justice at the Metropolitan State University of Denver. She is the assistant manager of TCBY and Mrs. Fields in Westminster, Colo., and engaged to be married to Gordon Lawcock in 2018.

### 2011

**Alex Cruz** is a teaching and performing artist with the Enchanted Circle Theater, a nonprofit, educational theater company based in Holyoke.

He directed "Brighter Days," one of the four short plays performed in the 24 Hour Play Festival, which benefited the Leslie Phillips Fund for Theater Arts and Education at HCC. Cruz earned his BA in theater from UMass-Amherst. See Alumni in Action, Page 17.

**Ruben Sepulveda** is the new Community Outreach & Admission counselor for HCC's Office of Admissions. After graduating from HCC, Sepulveda earned his bachelor's degree from Amherst College. He brings a strong presence in the community, a background in case management and community organization and a student-focused perspective to the job.



### 2012

**Addison Boroff** earned his bachelor's degree in communications from Westfield State University and is now producer/video editor at WCSH 6 News Center, the NBC affiliate for the Southern Maine and Eastern New Hampshire markets. He returned to campus last year as a guest alumni panelist in Prof. Joanne Kostides's communication class, where he shared information about his career path and current job.



**Domingo "Dino" Diaz** spent five weeks last summer as a cooking and computer instructor for HCC's Summer Youth Programs.

**Victor Nunez-Ortiz** was appointed to the Mass. Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services last November. The council is composed of 12 members appointed by the governor for three-year terms. They focus on veterans' access to employment and job training, healthcare and well-being, housing and educational opportunities, and how to best position veterans to enter or reenter the workforce successfully.

### 2013

**Miriam Alkattan** is a public health volunteer with the Peace Corps in Guinea, West Africa, focusing on child and maternal health. After graduating from HCC, she earned her bachelor's degree from Hampshire College in Environmental & Water Resource Engineering.

### 2015

**Jeffrey Anderson-Burgos**, a former president of the Student Senate, is studying political science at UMass-Amherst, where he will earn his bachelor's degree this spring. He previously worked as an intern for State Rep. **Aaron Vega**, '09.

### 2016

**Sarah Calabrese** is an administrative assistant with Comcast Spotlight. Last fall, she participated as an alumni panelist in Prof. Joanne Kostides's communication class.

## Connect with your classmates.

Everyone has an update to their life story. What's yours? New job, grandchild, retirement, relocation, whatever? Share what is happening in your life with us. Send your news and photos to [alumni@hcc.edu](mailto:alumni@hcc.edu) or mail us at the Alumni Connection, c/o Alumni Relations, 303 Homestead Ave., Holyoke, MA 01040. The deadline for receiving copy or photos for our fall publication is June 1, 2017.

## In Memoriam

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

Edward J. Murphy, 1948  
 Terrence T. Heffron, 1957  
 Karen A. Grace, 1971  
 Rita M. DeGray, 1978  
 Edward R. Alston, 1983  
 Denise I. Williams, 1998  
 Carl L. "Nick" Wood Jr., 1998  
 Thomas S. Jamison, 1990

### In Memory of . . .

If you would like to make a contribution in memory of a classmate, friend, or relative, please make your check payable to the HCC Foundation and mail it to Holyoke Community College, 303 Homestead Ave., Holyoke, MA 01040; call Bonnie Zima Dowd at 413.552.2253; or go online to [www.hcc.edu/donate](http://www.hcc.edu/donate).

# HCC Album



**S**usie, for better or worse, has spent much of her short life in a hospital bed. During the past year alone she's been treated for diabetes, a hip replacement, cancer, post-partum complications, pneumonia, and atrial fibrillation, among other maladies.

That's her above wearing the headband, attended by Danyelle Cady, '17, bedside, and Anzhelika Kidder, '17. Also known as the S2000, Susie is advertised by her manufacturer Gaumard as the "First Female Advanced Simulator," complete with "wireless communications," "streaming audio," "reactive pupils," "conductive skin," and three more pages' worth of high-fidelity features. Since she arrived in 2016, at a cost of about \$40,000 (purchased with a grant for educational technology from the HCC Foundation), Susie has been a permanent patient in the LaMere Simulation Suite in HCC's Center for Health Education, where her perpetual, programmable infirmities inform the lessons of students like Cady and Kidder, who will both graduate from HCC this spring with their associate degrees in nursing. ♣



# 2017 Events

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!



**April 5, 12, 26, 2017**  
**2017 Spring Culinary Arts Lunch Series**  
*Picknelly Dining Room, Frost 265*

Seating time is every 15 minutes from 11:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Join us for lunch and sample what HCC students are preparing in the kitchen. Make your reservations today by calling 413.552.2713 ext. 2713. If you receive a voicemail message, leave your name; phone number; number of guests in your party and your seating time. Reservations are accepted Monday – Wednesday of the week prior to the scheduled lunch date, \$8 per person.



**Thursday, April 20\*, Friday April 21; and Saturday, April 22**  
**Getting Out**  
*7:30 p.m. (and 2 p.m. Saturday, April 22), Leslie Phillips Theater, FPA Building*

Written by Marsha Norman and directed by Patricia Sandoval, '84, *Getting Out* is the story of Arlene, a woman struggling to survive on the outside after being incarcerated for eight years in a Kentucky prison.

\*ASL-interpreted performance

For more information or to reserve a seat, call the box office at 413.552.2528.

Tickets: \$10 (general admission); \$8 (students and seniors); \$5 (HCC students, faculty and staff).

## Wednesday, May 3, 2017

**Nursing Alumni Celebration**  
*5 – 7 p.m., Center for Health Education, 404 Jarvis Ave., Holyoke, Mass.*

The event includes hors d'oeuvres, desserts and beverages; remarks from retired faculty member Patricia Triggs, RN, MSN, who launched the college's Nursing Success Program. Be inspired by a panel of recent graduates from diverse backgrounds; explore ways alumni can help today's students, and stay connected. \$10 per person. You must pre-register by April 25 to confirm your spot. Register at [hcc.edu/alumni-events](http://hcc.edu/alumni-events).



**Thursday, May 11, 2017**  
**Scholarship Meet and Greet**  
*11:15 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., Gymnasium, Bartley Center for Athletics & Recreation*

Join members of the HCC Foundation and Alumni Council as they honor more than 200 student scholarship recipients and thank the individuals and organizations whose generosity made the awards possible.



**Wednesday, May 24, 2017**  
**Honors & Student Awards Night**  
*6:30 p.m., Leslie Phillips Theater, FPA Building*

Join the HCC community as we celebrate student success with faculty, staff, families and friends.



**Saturday, May 27, 2017**  
**Commencement of the Class of 2017**  
*10 a.m. – Noon, MassMutual Center, Springfield, Mass.*

## Tuesday, June 6, 2017

**Alumni Awards Dinner**  
*5 – 8:30 p.m., Log Cabin, Holyoke, Mass.*

Join HCC president Christina Royal and the Alumni Council for an inspirational evening of celebration as we honor our 2017 Distinguished Alumni and Rising Star award winners: **Howard Greaney, '66**, retired Holyoke public school teacher/administrator and Holyoke City Council member; **Nancy Fields, '74**, business owner and graphic design specialist; **Patricia Sandoval, '84**, HCC theater professor; and **David Condon, '06**, president Northeast Security Solutions, Inc., (Rising Star Award). This event, which is open to alumni, students, and the general public, is a fundraiser for student scholarships. It includes a reception, dinner and awards ceremony.

Tickets: \$65. Table of six: \$400. Advance registration and payment is required by May 26. Register online at [hcc.edu/alumni-events](http://hcc.edu/alumni-events). Attire is business formal.

## Thursday, June 30

**Fiscal Year End**  
It's the last day of HCC's fiscal 2017, so we want to provide a friendly reminder to make your tax-deductible annual gift if you have not already done so. You could change a student's life. Visit [www.hcc.edu/donate](http://www.hcc.edu/donate). Thank you in advance for your generosity.



**Monday, September 11, 2017**  
**30th Annual HCC Foundation Golf Classic**  
*Springfield Country Club, West Springfield, Mass.*

Join alumni and friends on the golf course and help raise funds for HCC students and programs. Register to play or sponsor at [www.hcc.edu/golf](http://www.hcc.edu/golf). For more information, call Kim Gifford at 413.552.2308.



**Thursday, September 28, 2017**  
**Save the Date! Boston Red Sox vs. Houston Astros**  
*7:10 p.m., Fenway Park, Boston, Mass.*

Join HCC alumni, friends, and families for a night of baseball in Boston. It's Community College Day at Fenway Park! For more information, call 413.552.2182.

# Alumni Connection

Holyoke Community College Alumni Office  
303 Homestead Avenue  
Holyoke, MA 01040

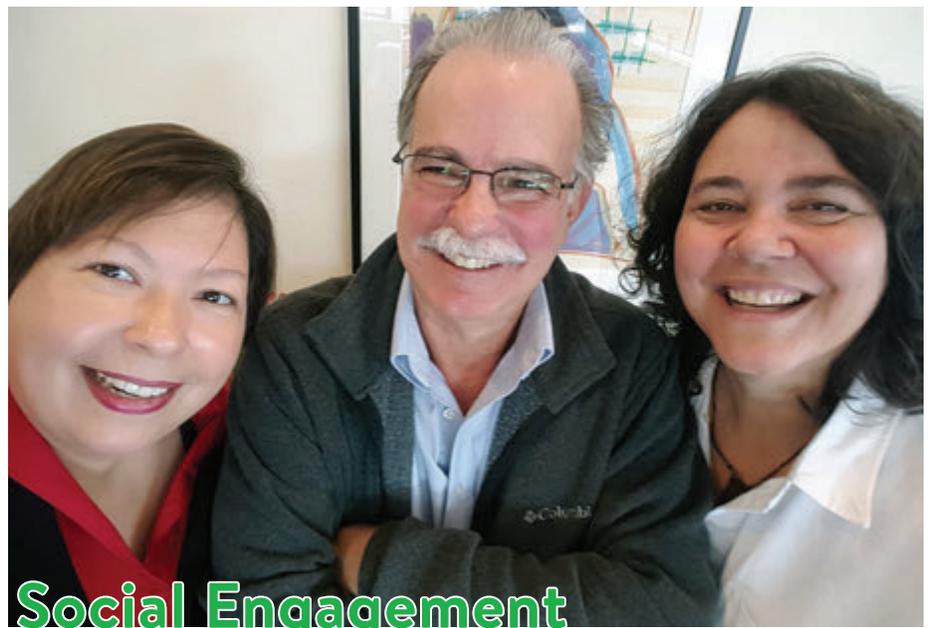
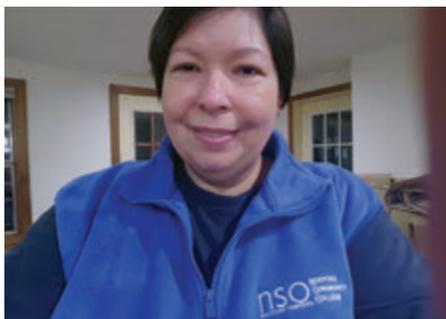
[www.hcc.edu](http://www.hcc.edu)



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## Social Engagement



HCC's new president, **Christina Royal**, is a big fan of social media and uses it to keep in touch with the campus and community. She is active on both Facebook and Twitter and sometimes posts selfies, such as the ones above: (Clockwise from top) modeling a New Student Orientation vest; with reporters Manuel Frau-Ramos and Natalia

Munoz; at a community college conference in Washington, D.C., with U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Warren (far right); and another from D.C. with new STCC president John Cook. You can follow her on Facebook (*Christina Royal*) and Twitter (*@christinaroyal7*) and read more about her inside, starting on Page 4.