

THE

CONNECTION

SPRING 2022

Dr. Franklin Patterson
President of Hampshire College,
will be the chief speaker at
Commencement, June 13.

offices. Upon completion, the
second story will house the new
library, a faculty lounge, and
additional administrative

where students may have classes
at the Elmwood building, Dr.
Frost said that the school will try
set in scheduled

expected to cost
\$18 million. Upon construction of
the campus, which is expected
in five years.



Patty
Coastneau
Captain

150

75 YEARS
1946 - 2021

*HCC alumni tell their stories
In Their Own Words*



FOR THE FUTURE

FOR OUR STUDENTS
who deserve access to unparalleled support
and academic excellence

FOR OUR COMMUNITY
which will thrive with a workforce of
Holyoke Community College graduates

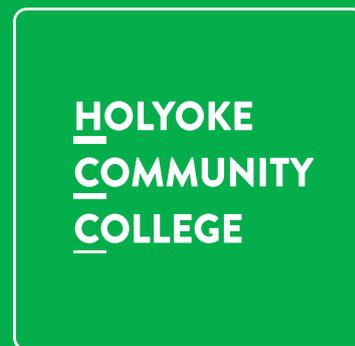
FOR THE FUTURE OF HCC
to fulfill a promise we made 75 years ago

HCC announces its first-ever comprehensive campaign: For the Future. Since our founding 75 years ago, we have committed ourselves to being a college of academic excellence known for helping students overcome barriers to success. For the Future will enhance innovative teaching and learning, advance our commitment to equity, inclusion and student success, and strengthen our facilities and infrastructure. Now is the time to join us in this ambitious project as we create a future where all students have the opportunity to thrive.

Be on the lookout for more details about the campaign in the next issue of The Connection.

To learn more about the **For the Future campaign**, or for ways that you can contribute, please contact:

Patrick Carpenter,
Director of Institutional Advancement
at 413.552.2746
pcarpenter@hcc.edu





President Christina Royal

In this edition of *The Connection*, we tell HCC’s remarkable story in the words of those who experienced it firsthand. For 75 years, HCC has been defined by the people who learn, teach, and work here, the relationships they form, and the ways those relationships shape lives. We do this in an environment that is about rising to challenges, adapting to change, engaging in creative thinking, and connecting people to services, support and one another.

I was recently inspired by the story of one of our current students, Angel Vargas. Angel is a computer science major originally from the Dominican Republic. While searching for the right path to college in the U.S., Angel felt overwhelmed by the financial aid and admissions process and had few individuals around to advise him. Then he found HCC. Angel was guided by our Admissions staff and welcomed by our New Student Orientation team. Through the HCC Foundation, he was one of 20 recipients of the college’s first-ever Bienvenidos Latinx Scholarship. He also received a STEM scholarship that recognized his excellence in the classroom. He was connected to a peer mentor – an HCC alum studying mathematics at Boston University – and now, in his second year at HCC, Angel is serving as a student ambassador for new students.

“Scholarships and student programs have not only helped me stay in school but have inspired me to work even harder,” Angel recently shared. “My mentor helped me believe that if he can succeed, I can succeed too. Now, being an ambassador allows me to be a servant leader and help new students – many of whom are feeling the same way I did when I started at HCC – overwhelmed and full of uncertainty.”

Angel’s story is one of many reasons we are thrilled to launch HCC’s first-ever comprehensive campaign: For the Future. We know that it takes more than scholarships to change students’ lives and keep them on a path to success – it also requires access to mentors, tutoring, state-of-the-art equipment, experiential learning, and more. Together, these investments enable students like Angel to thrive and prepare HCC for whatever the future holds.

During the 2021-2022 academic year, we had to lean into our values of innovation, collaboration, kindness, inclusion and trust as we continued to navigate challenges presented by COVID-19. We did so with remarkable success. We welcomed students back to campus. Faculty members taught courses in a variety of ways. Athletic teams resumed practices and games. Our arts programs found ways to perform and showcase student work. Clubs found creative ways to engage. It was challenging and exhausting, but there was also something special in the way our students showed up committed to making it work and the amazing ways our faculty and staff embraced this year with a full commitment to our students and their education.

Since its founding in 1946, HCC has been devoted to student success. Seventy-five years later, we remain committed to that ideal – constantly working to ensure that our students not only survive here, but thrive.

The Connection (formerly the *Alumni Connection*) is published two times per year by the HCC office of Marketing & Communications, Holyoke, Massachusetts, and is distributed without charge to alumni and friends of HCC.

Editors:

Editor-in-Chief
Chris Yurko

Art Director
William Murphy

Photography:

Chris Yurko

Class Notes/Change of Address:

Please contact the Alumni Office
413.552.2253 or alumni@hcc.edu.

Alumni Council Officers

President
Dawn E. Bryden '89

Vice President
Gertrude E. Monson '97

Alumni Trustee
Lucy F. Perez '87

Alumni Director
Ryan Rege '08

Alumni Council
Ruth Amador '05
Maureen Babineau '00
Laura L. Brennan '79
Karen Brown '05
Gloria G. Lomax '75
Patrick McCann '00
Matt McMahon '06
Kim Monson '01
Thomas Rachele '96
Paul Rogers '81, '13
Elizabeth Román '03
James M. Sheehan '74
Chloe Soto '17
Jonencia Wood '11

**HOLYOKE
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE**

reconnected

3 DEAR HCC

4 CAMPUS ROUNDUP



CONTENTS

7 In Their Own Words



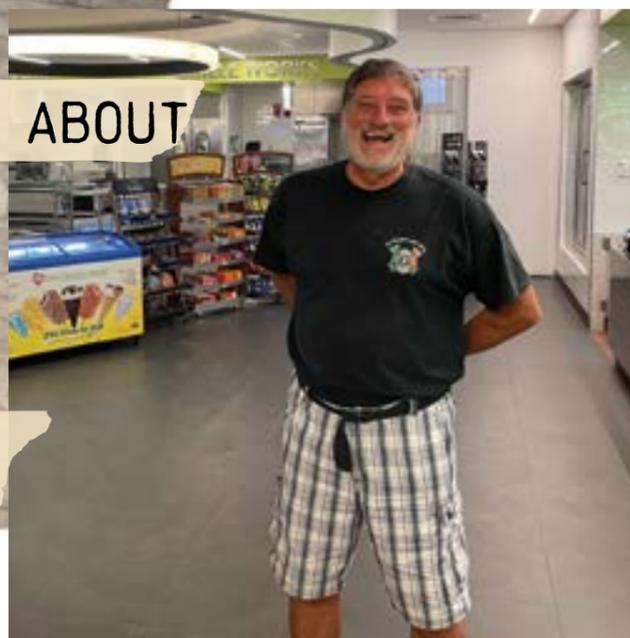
24 GIVING: FINDING A WAY THROUGH THE PAIN

26 ALUMNI OUT AND ABOUT

29 CLASS NOTES

31 KUDOS KORNER

32 DEAR HCC
CONTINUED



Dear HCC

75th Tributes

The Fall 2021 issue of The Connection celebrating HCC's 75th anniversary elicited a lot of thoughts and memories from readers. Send us yours!

We want to hear from you! HCC welcomes comments from readers. Contact us on social media, send an email to alumni@hcc.edu or mail a letter to us at The Connection, 303 Homestead Ave., Holyoke, MA 01040. Please include your name, class year, home address and phone number.

When my mother, Laura Ringuette '99, first went back to school, she would bring me to HCC to get all of her books at the bookstore. As a young girl in middle school, that was so cool to me.

When I walked into HCC for the first time to register for classes in 2018, it brought me back to that happy memory of the precious time I had with my mother. After HCC, she worked in the community as a registered nurse for 20 years. I was working in retail management when she got sick, so I decided to make a change and follow her path into healthcare. She was my best friend, and I just wanted to make her proud. I am graduating this May from the ASN program, and in the very near future hope to create a memorial scholarship to honor her. I have received so many HCC scholarships myself that I thought it would be my way to give back.

— Melissa Perry '22, Chicopee, Mass.



“Mr. Frost gave us all the opportunity for a better life.

— Barbara '54 and William Meckel '54
Leeds, Mass.

We are forever grateful.”
OPPORTUNITY

Dear HCC

The Connection 3

Back on Stage

HCC student Miguel Perez (as sadistic guard Valdez) torments inmate Lucius Jenkins, played by student Richard Parris Scott.



The HCC Theater Department presented "Jesus Hopped the A Train," a play by Stephen Adly Guirgis, about religion, race, and redemption at New York City's infamous Rikers Island prison for three nights (and one matinee) in November. The show marked a return to the stage for HCC's theater program after one cancelled season and two subsequent semesters of virtual, live-streamed performances due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

MANY HAPPY RETURNS sweet thrills



Neighborhood children got more than their fill of sweet treats at HCC on Oct. 29. The college's annual pre-Halloween "Trunk or Treat" event gave them plenty of eye candy as well, as nearly 40 HCC clubs, departments, programs, area businesses and community groups decorated vehicles with Halloween-themed displays. Organizers estimated that some 2,000 to 3,000 children – plus parents – attended the two-hour celebration. "Clearly, the event was a hit!" said organizer Sheila Gould, director of HCC's Early Childhood Education program. "We were thrilled to be able to offer this popular community event again after missing last year." << HCC's Veterinary Technician program offered a creepy take on their field of study.



"there is nothing like seeing the *art* in person"

HCC's Taber Art Gallery welcomed an exhibition of paintings and drawings by Northampton artist Anna Bayles Arthur titled "Cosmology of the Body" during the fall semester. While the gallery had been closed since March 2020, it did over the following months showcase the work of HCC's visual arts students and faculty in a series of online collections. "Like much of the rest of the world, our steps back into sharing a physical space are cautious and considerate," said gallery director Amy Johnquest. "Online exhibitions are a fine alternative when forced to stay in, but there is nothing like seeing the art in person." For spring 2022, the gallery is hosting artwork by retired HCC professor Frank Cressotti, followed by a memorial exhibition honoring the late HCC professor Alix Hegeler, who specialized in printmaking. << HCC professor Frank Cressotti installs pieces from his exhibit, "Pages: Paintings on Newspaper" in the Taber Art Gallery.

The 34th annual HCC Foundation Golf Classic raised nearly \$50,000 for student scholarships at HCC.



TOURNAMENT DELIVERS

The HCC Foundation welcomed 90 golfers to Springfield Country Club Sept. 13 for the annual fundraising tournament, which resumed last fall after the 2020 event was cancelled due to COVID-19 concerns. "The return of the HCC Foundation golf tournament was definitely one of the highlights of 2021," said Amanda Sbriscia, HCC vice president of Institutional Advancement and executive director of the HCC Foundation. "We had a picture-perfect day at a gorgeous golf course, where we were able to gather in support of HCC students. Connecting in person with our alumni, local business leaders and friends was such a joy, and we are truly grateful for our community's generosity."

<< A golfer lobs a shot onto the green during the annual HCC tournament.

Newsworthy

Market Initiative

For HCC students who rely on public transportation to get around, food shopping can often be an onerous and expensive chore. For many, food shopping has gotten much easier since the opening of Homestead Market, HCC's on-campus convenience store, which the college celebrated with a ribbon-cutting ceremony Nov. 4. The store is a collaboration between the college, Aramark Dining Services, and the Thrive Student Resource Center, which operates the college's food pantry. The Homestead Market is now the first campus store at any public college or university in Massachusetts to accept federal food subsidies. The initiative started in 2018, led by HCC's Student Senate. "Our own student leaders identified this as a priority for themselves and their peers," said President Christina Royal. >> **HCC student Luis Pinto-Jimenez picks up some refreshments at HCC's Homestead Market.**



"children who live here don't have enough **ACCESS** to books that represent them and their experience."

Bookmarked

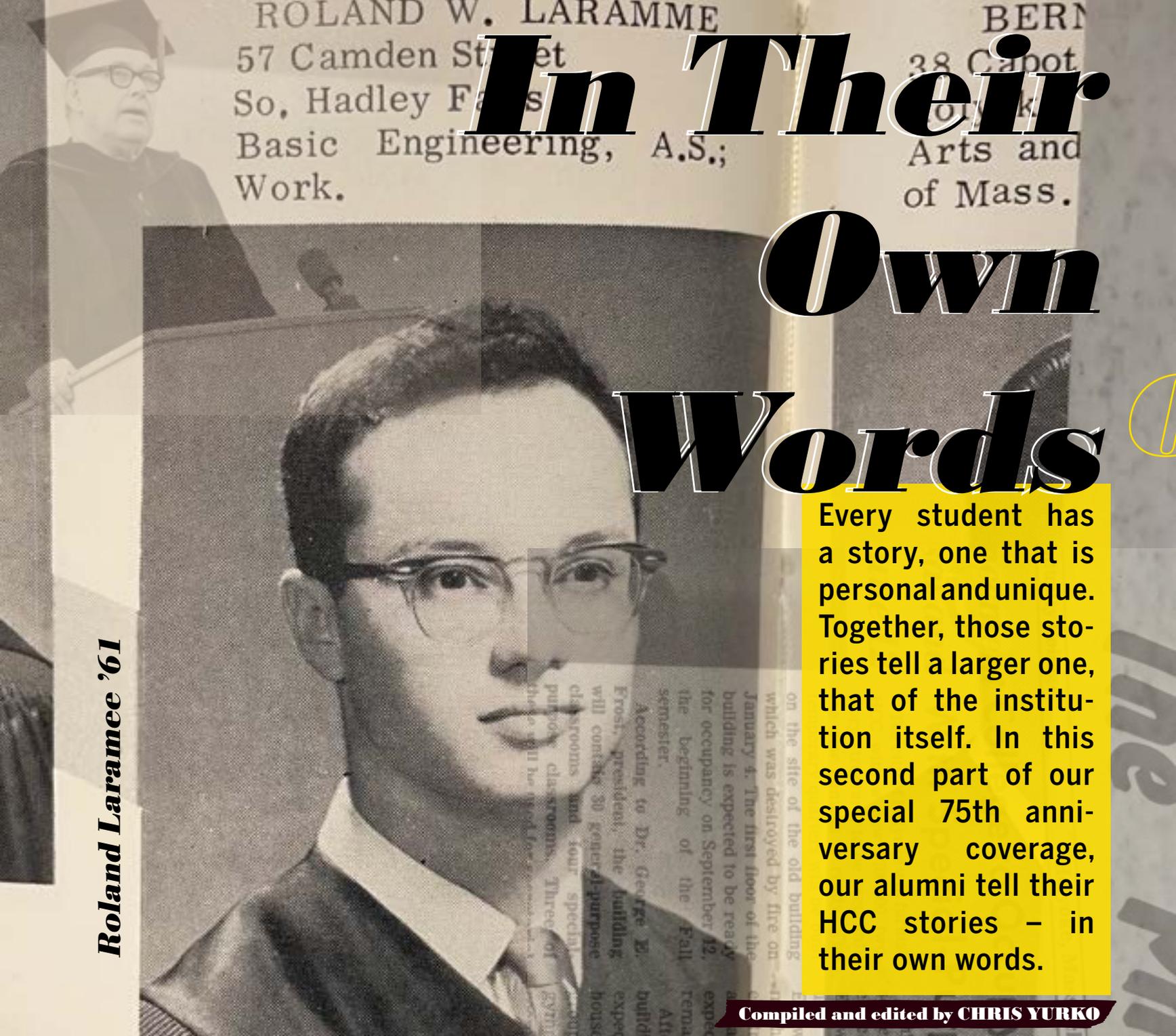


Third-graders at Kelly Elementary School cheered in October for the opening of their new Little Free Library, a community project developed by students from HCC's Latinx Empowerment Association. The library kiosk is mounted just outside the main entrance to the Holyoke school, where students gathered with their teachers and others to mark its debut. The project was led by HCC alum Alexandra Santiago '21, former co-president of the LEA club, and Miren Neyra Alcántara, the current president, who organized a book drive last year to build a library collection. "As a resident of the Holyoke Flats, I believe that children who live here don't have enough access to books that represent them and their experience," said Santiago, who is now studying at Westfield State University. They hope to install more. >> **A third-grader from Kelly Elementary School holds up a book she selected.**



¡Sí, se puede!

As part of HCC's 75th anniversary celebration, the HCC Foundation allocated \$75,000 to create a new Latinx Scholarship Fund. During this inaugural year, scholarships worth \$50,000 were distributed to 20 eligible Latinx students, with the remaining \$25,000 set aside in an endowed fund for future years. This year's recipients were celebrated in August at a reception in the HCC Campus Center. "As a Hispanic Serving Institution, we are honored that you have chosen Holyoke Community College," said Elsie Rodriguez-Garcia, director of HCC's TRIO Student Support Services and chair of the college's Hispanic Leadership Committee. "We want you to be educated, inspired and connected as you continue your studies by exploring and expressing your Latinidad." >> **Scholarship awardee Jamil Roman and his mother Mabeline Burgos.** 



Roland Laramée '61

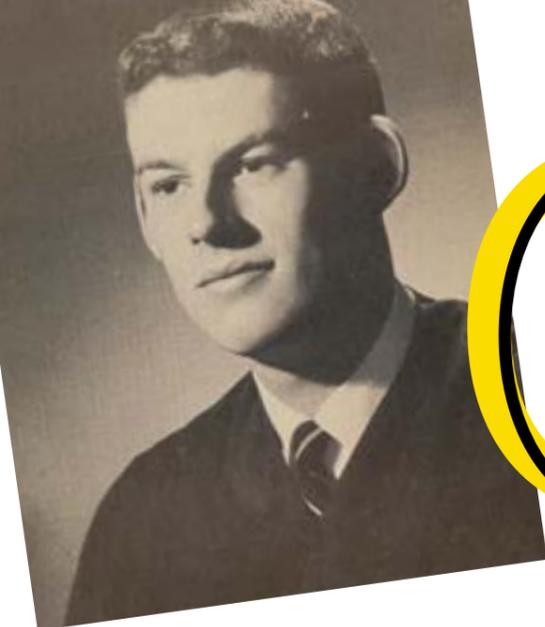
In Their Own Words

Every student has a story, one that is personal and unique. Together, those stories tell a larger one, that of the institution itself. In this second part of our special 75th anniversary coverage, our alumni tell their HCC stories – in their own words.

Compiled and edited by CHRIS YURKO

My introduction to Holyoke Junior College was certainly memorable. During the fall of 1959, I was finalizing a four-year hitch with the U.S. Air Force at Westover Air Force Base, and upon discharge, I intended to continue my education in engineering at HJC in the former Holyoke High School building on Pine Street. As I entered, after the day's dismissal of high school classes, I found the building seemingly deserted, except for a key person on a rickety 10-foot ladder, changing hallway light fixtures. I asked if there was someone available to process me into the HJC program, and he replied,

"I'll be right with you," as he finished another fixture. That was President George Frost himself. He then single-handedly processed my entrance exam and even gathered up a few texts I would need. The next two years were the best I could imagine, and taught by instructors from several four-year colleges in Western Mass. Eventually, I would continue my education at Western New England, and some 30 years later my two grandchildren followed in my footsteps, but at your expansive campus in the valley. Thank you for all you do, for what you do.



Our Height of Hope

Arthur W. Brodeur '56 received an Alumni Service Award from HCC in 2007. He delivered these remarks at the alumni awards ceremony.

I had initially gone to Cornell University to become a papermaker like my father, although he continually urged me not to make paper but to learn to write on it.

I found myself in a paper mill all right, but much quicker than I had thought. In June 1955, a letter from Cornell University arrived, stating that my freshman year grades indicated I would never be a chemical engineer and that perhaps I should seek my academic fortunes elsewhere.

In 1955 and 1956, I worked the 7-to-3 shift in the mill, then rushed "up street" to Holyoke High for late afternoon and evening classes at Holyoke Junior College, home to study and to bed, then up again to be at the time clock in Whiting's by seven. It was a long way from "Far Above Cayuga's Waters" – Cornell's theme song – to those venerable corridors of Holyoke High, but within those halls was the opportunity to learn from a panoply of academic personalities, faculty drawn not merely from one college but from nearly a dozen nearby colleges and universities.

There was Ellen Ellis of Mount Holyoke, one of the preeminent political scientists of the time, and sociologist Neal De Nood of Smith, who had me down in the Boston & Maine freight

yard researching a paper on hoboos, and there was Kenneth Wright, also of Smith, who taught botany and wore a different flower in his lapel each class. I still love flowers.

Learning was not confined to the classroom. Over at Emily and Jenny's Italian Cooking luncheonette (caddy corner to Holyoke High), Emily and Roberto bought me an Italian grammar book and spent much time introducing me to the mellifluous and lyrical flow of the Italian language as I sat at the counter munching a cheeseburger and drinking a Coke.

From these resplendent threads, I was able to weave a Technicolor coat which took me to Holy Cross on a scholarship in the first class of transfer students it had ever admitted, and from there on to some 40 years in journalism and university administration, including 13 at the right hand of the president of Cornell University, who said, in what I hold to be the most treasured encomium of my professional life: "Art did a lot of my thinking for me."

And, in another irony, as special assistant to the chancellor at the University of Connecticut, I helped develop transfer agreements between the state's community colleges and the university. In that context, I could

fully articulate, promulgate, and advocate the role of the community college in higher education. I knew what it was like to have a community college provide an opportunity, give you a chance.

When alumni speak of their alma mater, I like to speak of my alma mentor, kindly George Frost. He believed in us and he made us believe in ourselves. As a Holy Cross man, he too had been subjected to memorizing John Henry Cardinal Newman's "Second Spring" sermon, in which Newman tells us "in our height of hope, ever to be sober; in our depth of desolation, never to despair."

George Frost disassembled my despair and reassembled it into a height of hope.



Emily & Jenny's
ITALIAN COOKING

Wonderful Memories

The Latchkey Staff



MSE

Staff 1, Secretary
ring Formal Com-
mittee 2;
Christmas Dance
ltee 1,2,
usually found at the
- bowling or golf,
ed help - attended
Joe's" - "Help!" -



Margaret "Peg" (Laframboise) Wendlandt '58

At 16, I got a job at New England Tel & Tel as a long-distance operator – think big time switchboard. They were only hiring women who had no college plans. There were a couple of hundred women operators, a small number of supervisors and one chief operator – not much room for advancement.

About a month after high school graduation, I decided that I really did want to attend college. Most colleges had already chosen students to fill their rosters. My older brother, Joe Laframboise, had graduated from Holyoke Junior College in 1952. He suggested I talk to the folks there. I did. The president, George Frost, was wonderful and so encouraging. I applied and was accepted. I think there were 70 or so students in our class of 1958.

Our classes were held in the Holyoke High School building. They began at 1 and ran until 8 p.m. The faculty was all part time and included professors from Mount Holyoke, Smith, Amherst, UMass, AIC, Westfield State, and Springfield College.

I worked a few part-time jobs while I was in school: Friendly Ice Cream on Appleton Street, the Whiting Coal Co. office, and then DeFoe Ford. I worked there until I transferred in fall of 1958 to UMass, where I received my bachelor's degree in mathematics. After UMass, I worked for insurance companies in actuarial and computer departments. Twenty-five years after graduating from HJC, I went to law school. Three years later, I passed bar exams in

Massachusetts and Connecticut and opened my own law practice.

I'm retired now, but still have wonderful memories of my time at HJC. I made lots of friends there and participated in many activities: student council, cheerleading for the basketball team, dance committees, tea for incoming female students, graduation committee, yearbook, and more.

George Frost and his secretary/assistant, Ellen, were always available for student questions, help or just to chat. They were quite helpful in my quest for a scholarship. My dad had died in March 1958. Without a scholarship, I would not have been able to afford UMass.

My mother worked and helped as

much as she could. I worked on campus during the academic year, first in food service and then in the office of the athletic department. During school breaks, I was able to work at the phone company again.

Together, my mother and I managed to survive without huge college loans. Because of this, my husband Gary and I feel very strongly about the benefits of scholarships. We are proud to have funded scholarships at HCC and Washington University in St. Louis, my husband's alma mater.

Peg Wendlandt '58 lives in New York City with her husband Gary. Together they have endowed two student scholarships through the HCC Foundation.

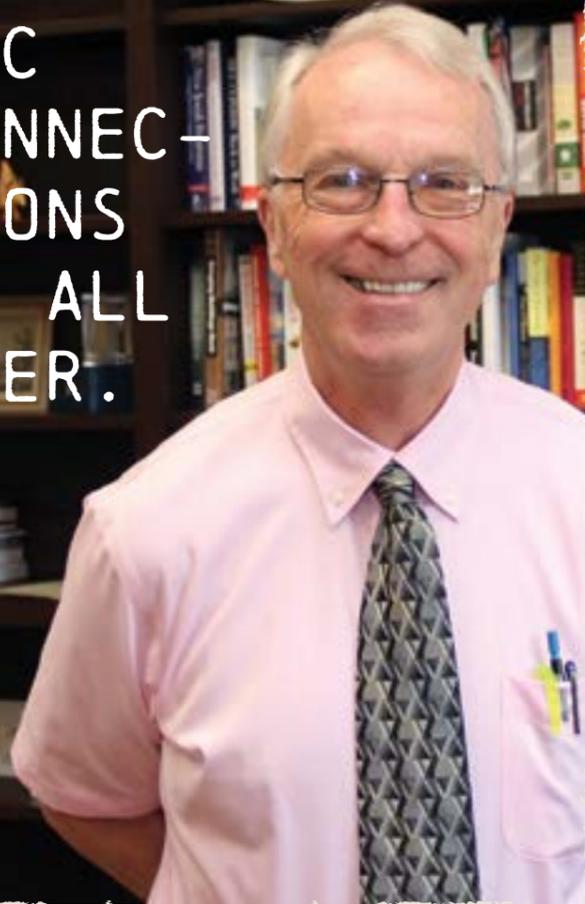
Get Acquainted Tea



COMMITTEE - SEATED: Nancy Chartier, Peggy Laframboise, Chairman, STANDING: Romie Frost, Peggy Egan, Cecile Pelopon, and Della Gouette.

THOSE
HCC
CONNEC-
TIONS
GO ALL
OVER.

Terry Murphy '68, '77



When I started at HCC, they were still renovating the old high school, so I spent my first college year at Elmwood Elementary with a chemistry class in the high school annex on Sargeant Street.

I enjoyed sports but my first year we did not have varsity teams. I played intramural basketball and fractured my skull. I still have a picture of myself, out cold on a stretcher.

The next year, we did have varsity sports, and I played basketball and baseball. The intramural director, Bill Scanlon, became the basketball coach. Congressman Richie Neal '70 also played at HCC when he was here. We both played for Coach Scanlon.

My second year we were in the renovated high school. Half-way through the school year, on Jan. 8, 1968, we had the fire, so for my second semester sophomore year we were back at Elmwood.

A GOOD FOUNDATION



Terence Murphy '68, '77, has served in Holyoke city politics since 1975, most recently as acting mayor. He is the retired HCC bookstore manager, a former HCC instructor and baseball coach.

I remember people like Dean Burton Butler, who was very kind to me. He was very active, supporting students and athletics. He helped me get into Stonehill College, and I got a chance to play baseball there.

I ended up going back to HCC for the legal assistance program, which gave me a background in politics. That's when I started working in the college bookstore. As I was getting ready to graduate, Mr. McNamara, the manager, asked me to stay on as the assistant, which I did, and later became manager.

After I got my master's degree in public administration from American International College, I was asked to teach an American government class at HCC. I ended up teaching for about eight years, so I've done a variety of things at HCC.

I always loved coaching. I still hear from students who played for me and from players that I played with. When I got the job as acting mayor, I had quite a few people call to congratulate me and reconnect. Those HCC connections go all over. I know a guy who worked at NASA, people that run their own businesses. It goes the full gamut.

HCC was without question the most significant organization in my life. I appreciate what I got. HCC is a good foundation. Always has been.



A Musical Journey

Marie Proulx Meder '72

I attribute my life's work and calling to Holyoke Community College.

In June 1970, as a senior at Chicopee High School, it was decision time – become a part of the workforce or attend college. Having studied piano and been involved in the choral and band programs, music was the only subject of interest to me. However, this last-minute decision left me unprepared to audition, a prerequisite to enter any college music program.

HCC to the rescue. With trepidation, I arranged a meeting with Sidney B. Smith, Music Department chair. His calm and gentle manner immediately put me at ease. I can still picture my "pop" song piano audition in a classroom at the interim campus building on Beech and Sargeant Streets, where the Holyoke Senior Center now stands. Mr. Smith saw my potential and took me under his wing. Not only was I accepted on the spot, but he personally took me to the Bursar's Office and walked me through the financial aid process. In the end, I received a Pell grant and a work-study position in the Music Department office, for which I was extremely grateful.

The HCC Chorale gave me some of my fondest memories. At that time, rehearsals were conducted at Blessed Sacrament Church.

With graduation approaching, I was

at another crossroads. Mr. Smith encouraged me to continue my education at Lowell State College (now UMass Lowell), well known for its music program. My acceptance reflected the quality education I had received at HCC. I left HCC with several honors, including the Book Award in music.

Going above and beyond, Mr. Smith set me up with his former colleague, who was an applied piano instructor at Lowell. I graduated from Lowell cum laude with a bachelor's degree in music during the 1976 bicentennial year – it was one of the happiest days of my life. After that, I settled into teaching private lessons at my home studio.

Fast forward to 1992. With my youngest daughter about to enter kindergarten, an interest in improving my piano skills returned with a vengeance, and the road led me back to HCC, where I began taking lessons with piano teacher James Maes. Under his tutelage, my musical ability advanced by leaps and bounds. In 1996, I earned my master's degree in piano pedagogy from the University of Hartford's Hartt School and was inducted into the music honor society Pi Kappa Lambda.

Armed with my new credentials, there was only one place where I wanted to teach and give back – my alma mater. April 2021 marked my 25th year teaching piano in



the Community Services division at HCC. Having ended up where I started, I have come full circle. My goal was to make a difference in the lives of my students through the joyous gift of music. HCC gave me that opportunity, and I will forever be grateful.

Marie Proulx Meder '72 lives in Chicopee, Mass.

On This Land



Jim Sheehan '74

My grandfather bought this land in 1903. The original farmhouse burned around 1905. The second was a discontinued school. It's still there on Homestead Avenue, last house you come to before you start down the hill toward Westfield Road. My father was the youngest of six, three boys and three girls, and they all lived in that farmhouse. As they each got married, they would move out.

I was born in 1946. When I was a kid, this was the country. Holyoke was industrial down by the dam and all through that area with the mills. Most of the people lived in apartment blocks.

We lived down in the city. We didn't have a car, so my father would bring the milk truck home. Around 3 or 5 o'clock in the morning, when my mother was sick of me and there was no school, she'd say, get in the milk truck and go to the farm. When you're growing up, everybody works on the farm.

By the time I knew anything, my uncle Neil, my uncle Michael, and my father ran the farm. At one time they'd had about 60 cows, but by then it was 30-40.

I would go there many days with my father. In the spring, when he would harrow the ground to plant corn, my job was to pick up the big rocks and put them in a pile. He used to say, this land grows rocks better than it grows crops, and it's true. It's all rock in here.

There were two fenced pastures and two stone stockades down where the baseball field is now, where previous owners maybe kept sheep. The pastures were like golf courses, with a lot of rocks and a lot of cow pies.



The cows kept the grass short, and they didn't cross the brook that I ever saw.

Tannery Brook was a little bit bigger then. My father used to trap all through here. Beaver, fox and a few other things you could get paid for. My father told me he used to dam the brook when he was kid and put trout in there.

As kids, we roamed all over. You didn't have to worry about someone saying get out of my yard or get off my land. We could do anything we wanted as long as we didn't disturb the cows.

We'd go camping up on the mountain. From the ridge you could look down into Rock Valley. The trees were nothing like they are today. They're all grown up now.

In 1957, the barn burned down, and 30-something cows were burned up. That was the end of the farm, but the land stayed in my family til 1968 when the city bought it for the college.

I started as a student at HCC in 1971 for criminal justice. That was after the fire downtown. We took classes in the interim building the city had built where the Holyoke Senior Center is today. The college administrative offices were in there and some classrooms. We also used the Elmwood School building on South Street. That's gone now too. I was there until

I graduated in 1974. Then I went to UMass, and George Gaudette hired me to teach part time at HCC in the Criminal Justice department, which had started about 1970.

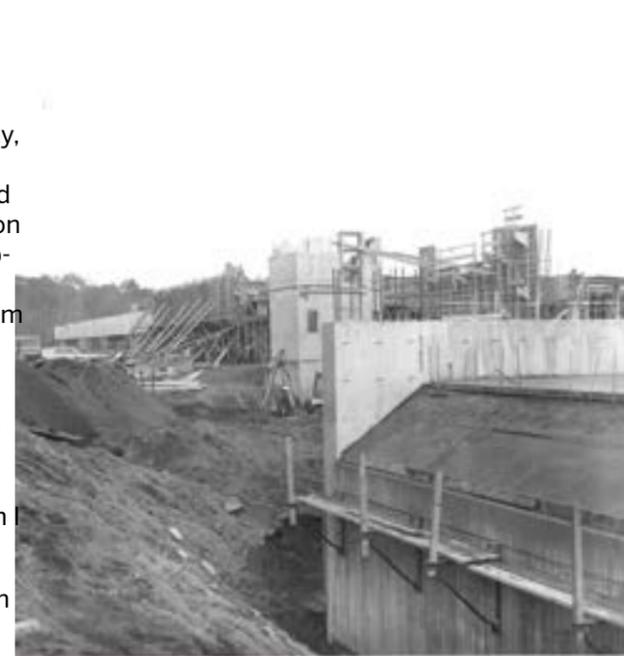
When they were building the college on the old farm land, I used to come over on occasion and watch them working.

After they were done for the day, a gentleman who lived at the end of George Frost Drive would come along with this little wagon and dig around looking for dinosaur tracks. He'd donate them here and there. You still see them all around Holyoke.

I was always around because I never lived that far away. When I retired from the Mass State Police, I started coming to the gym in the Bartley Center. Then I joined the Alumni Council.

It seems like this is a place I can always return to. I've had use of this land my entire life, and I've been here a lot. I get a good feeling. I know this place.

Jim Sheehan '74 is a retired Massachusetts State Police major. He still lives in Holyoke, not far from HCC.

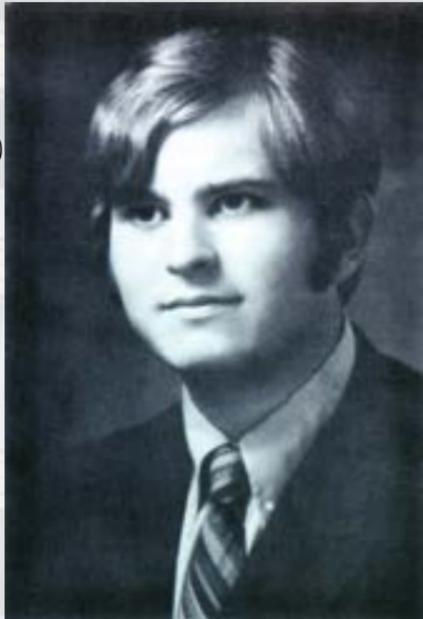


AS KIDS, WE ROAMED ALL OVER. YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT SOMEONE SAYING GET OUT OF MY YARD OR GET OFF MY LAND. WE COULD DO ANYTHING WE WANTED AS LONG AS WE DIDN'T DISTURB THE COWS.



The Candle Maker's Tale

Michael Kittredge '73



In 1971, I served as the HCC freshman class president. I stood somewhere on these 135 acres along with a host of dignitaries which included Dr. George Frost. Together, we turned over the first spadefuls of groundbreaking sand, turning the dream of a new Holyoke Community College – on its own campus – to reality.

HCC played a huge role in my social and career development. My high school grades and my family's finances would have otherwise prohibited me from furthering my education. Fortunately, HCC was there and accepted me. It gave me the important start I needed. We are all very fortunate to have such a quality institution – and the opportunities it affords – right here in Holyoke.

The thing I remember most about my years at HCC was this: For the first time in my life, adults not only gave me permission to follow my interests, they actually encouraged me and spurred me to seek excellence. And I had my goals. I had

often thought about continuing my rock and roll career. I had also thought quite seriously of becoming an English teacher.

By this time, I had been making candles for about three years. Well, I had been but due to the insistence of my family and friends that I contemplate only "a real job," candles were intended to be just a small supplement to my teaching salary.

I kept going at HCC. The insults about candle making continued, and so did my confusion about career choices. Time was also marching on and a decision about transferring to UMass for my junior year loomed over me. I needed to discuss the courses I would take there, so it was time for a meeting with my Holyoke Community College advisor. He asked me about my career goals, and I explained about maybe being an English teacher. He told me there was a surplus of teachers at the time and pay scales were also relatively low due to the oversupply. I was ready for that and explained about my candle business concept as an income supplement.

why don't you give your candle business a serious try?



It was at that moment that a little bit of history was created. He leaned back and said, "Well, then why don't you give your candle business a serious try?" Wow, I thought. He was the first person to actually suggest I might make a living doing this. We spoke for a while about the UMass BDIC (bachelor's degree of individual concentration).

The more we kicked it around the better it sounded to me, so I arrived at UMass all excited about my BDIC – "the history of marketing of candles." However, I was apparently the only one with this level of enthusiasm. I tried and tried but couldn't find a UMass faculty member willing to sponsor my new major.

After a year of this, I decided to take a semester off from UMass to follow my HCC advisor's advice and "give my candle business a serious try." I never went back. That's why I can honestly say, without HCC, there might not have ever been a YCC."

Michael Kittredge founded the Yankee Candle Company. In 1996, he delivered these remarks during his HCC Commencement address. He died in 2019.

"When I moved to this country from the Bahamas, HCC was one of the first places that embraced me. I literally felt like I was back home. If you've ever visited the Caribbean, everyone loves on you, and that's how HCC was. It was the same kind of welcoming vibe."

Business Futures

INSPIRED



HE GREETED EVERYONE AND WOULD HAVE A CONVERSATION WITH THEM. HE WAS A DOWN TO EARTH PERSON.

HCC has done a lot for me. I joined the Student Senate. I was a DJ at the radio station. I played on the tennis team. I wasn't great at tennis, but I learned it was OK to be bad at something new. It was all about the mindset. I tried so many new things. That's the beauty of this place. It's a genuine place where people want to see you succeed. If someone is looking to get a start or start over, this is where you begin.

Through HCC, I met Mike Kittredge, who started Yankee Candle. He's on my Mount Rushmore when it comes to entrepreneurship. He taught me so much about business. There literally is no Myke Connolly and Stinky Cakes or Launch and Stand Out without Mike Kittredge.

I had learned about Mike Kittredge when I lived in the Bahamas, reading about him in magazines. When HCC was raising money for what is now the Kittredge Center, he hosted a fundraising event up at his house. I was one of the student ushers.

One of the first things I noticed about him is that he wasn't arrogant. He greeted everyone and would have a conversation with them. He was a down to earth person. When I finally met him, I had to talk to him, and we just started talking business.

When we were done talking, he said, "Young man, you have what it takes. Go make it happen." That was validating for me. That's why I only have a two-year degree and didn't go on to UMass.

When I started Stinky Cakes, I wrote Mr. Kittredge a letter, asking him what he thought about my business idea. It was two or three years after I'd met him. I didn't even know if he was going to remember me. He sent me a letter back. I still have it. I was blown away. I read the letter, and, I promise you, that letter is like my MBA. I could read that letter right now and still learn something.

Being a young entrepreneur with crazy ideas, you go talk to your family and friends, and they're like, you're crazy, and then you go talk to a guy who sold his business for \$500 million, and he says, No, that's great. Here's how I would do it. That's the kind of advice every hungry entrepreneur should have access to.

How Mike was with me, how he was willing to teach me, that inspired me to teach. I have to share what I've learned. After his death, I promised that for the rest of my life I would always share his story because he means so much to me.

Mychal Connolly '04 is co-founder of the Stinky Cakes newborn baby gift company, chief brand ambassador of StandOutTruck.com, an offshoot of his business, Launch and Stand Out, a Springfield-based advertising and marketing agency.

Mychal Connolly '04

**this
is where
you
belong**



Irma Medina '97



When I was a student at HCC, all I knew about Elaine Marieb was that her name was on the side of a building. Years later I met her as coordinator of Pathways. I remember the marathon meetings we had in preparation for her visit, getting the whole rundown on who she is, why she was important, and why she was coming.

She was interested in making a donation to support programs like New Directions and Pathways that help non-traditional students continue their educations. They told me she was someone who doesn't mince words – if she asks a question, answer directly, and don't be long-winded. It struck me like, *Wow, this is a big deal. Don't mess this up.* I was excited, but nervous.

At the time, we didn't have a space for our students, other than general meeting rooms or public areas like the cafeteria. Elaine had been a non-traditional student herself and valued the support she had received. She felt it was important to set aside a dedicated space where non-traditional students, specifically women, would feel welcome and part of the college community, so they would know we value them.

Knowing many non-traditional students, single mothers like myself who went back to school, we usually have to carve out a space somewhere to study, like at the kitchen table or on top of the washing machine, or wherever. I learned a lot from her and her story and how similar it was to all of ours, all of the non-traditional students wanting to learn. She had multiple degrees and got her associate degree in nursing from HCC while she was teaching here. She was a lifelong learner. It was clear that she valued education.

That resonated so strongly with me, the idea that anything is possible through education, that it offers such life-changing possibilities. She cared a lot about who was heading the efforts and wanted to make sure

they held similar values and that these vital programs she supported would be sustained. She really believed in the values HCC stands for: access, opportunity, support. I definitely feel humbled to be able to continue her legacy through the work we do in the Elaine Marieb Center.

Other colleges don't have a space like this, a lounge, study area, and computer room, where we also serve coffee, tea, and treats. We try to give students all the supports plus the comforts of home because we know they're going to be spending a lot of time with us and we want them to stay.

After the center opened, Elaine would sometimes come to visit. She was quiet, smart, gracious. She would mostly sit and listen, even though we all felt she was the rock star.

She always wanted to hear directly from students, and they made such an effort to be here to express their appreciation. They would say, "this is the place where I feel I can rest, where I can do homework and connect with other women like myself, not feel so alone or crazy for doing this" – because the ones with children, they always feel that mother's guilt, you know? *I shouldn't be here, I should be at home, or I should be at work.*

Elaine Marieb's gifts to the college send the message that it's OK to dream big; it's gonna be a long road, but you're on the right path. This is your space, and this is where you belong.

Irma Medina '97 is the coordinator of HCC's Pathways program.

SUCCESS

PATHWAYS TO

When I started working in HCC's Gateway to College program in 2010, I was so excited to be hired because I did not have a college degree. I had taken a few classes at HCC after high school, but I had to leave school and work to support my newborn daughter.

I showed up at HCC ready to prove that taking a chance on me had been worth it. I am grateful that my supervisor, Vivian Ostrowski, saw something more in me than I saw in myself. She encouraged me to go back to college and introduced me to Irma Medina, coordinator of the Pathways Program. I had no idea then how much that would change my life.

I was 30 years old and the thought of earning my associate degree felt like a long-lost dream. To Irma, though, that was just the beginning. She introduced me to elite schools like Smith College. She advised me, encouraged me, pushed me, and listened when my fears threatened to stop my progress. Eventually, I realized Smith was the place I was meant to be. Can you imagine the audacity? I didn't know if I was smart enough, how I would afford it, or even how to apply. Irma knew. As a single mother herself and a graduate of Mount Holyoke College who had started at HCC, she had walked this journey and dedicated herself to showing others the path and making us believe that we deserved it too.

When I graduated from Smith, I felt the same impulse to reach back and pull others along. In Gateway, we do exactly that. Our students are working on their high school diplomas at HCC. They have all had their educations interrupted, whether it's because of work, or a sick parent, or they have children themselves. I recognize in their stories this interruption but I also see in them this desire to do more, to do better, to continue and not give up. I think so often people get lost in the story of their dropping out of school and forget to see that they possess so many valuable skills and so many wonderful gifts. What they all have is a desire to finish in spite of the stuff that's gotten in their way, and so we try to find new ways for them to continue their dreams in the same way I was able to continue mine.

We don't just look at them in an academic sense; we see them as whole people, with whole life stories. It's not just about whether or not they passed English or science. It's about who they are as individuals, what they have for their dreams, who their families are, what communities they come from, and how we can help them find a pathway to success.

Julissa Colón is the special programs coordinator for HCC's Gateway to College program. She holds a bachelor's degree in Latin American Studies and History from Smith College. Her daughter, Jayda Aponte, graduated from HCC in 2021.



I WAS 30 YEARS OLD AND THE THOUGHT OF EARNING MY ASSOCIATE DEGREE FELT LIKE A LONG-LOST DREAM.

TO IRMA, THOUGH, THAT WAS JUST THE BEGINNING.

Julissa Colón '13

THANKS TO THE EDUCATION I GOT AT HOLYOKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE I GOT MYSELF A GOOD JOB.

IN THE NIGHT KITCHEN



Mark Pronovost '81

My dad worked 42 years at a paper company in Holyoke called National Blank Book – 42 years inside the same four walls in the same basement with the same three guys on the same printing press and hated every day of it. I couldn't see myself doing that.

During high school at Holyoke Catholic, in between sports, I started at Jake's Restaurant in Chicopee as a short order cook, sometimes working Friday and Saturday nights til three o'clock in the morning, flipping eggs, burgers and stuff like that. And I just loved the cooking. I loved the food. I loved working with people.

Right out of high school, I was working 60-70 hours a week in restaurants. The pay was not that great. To get a decent salary in the food service industry you had to have an associate degree.

Thank God for HCC to give me that.

At the time, I couldn't afford anything, and my parents couldn't afford anything. To get better in a business that I wanted to be in I needed HCC. I started night school in 1976.

When I came here it was only four buildings. Donahue, Frost, FPA, Marieb. But back then they were just called A, B, C, and D. Bartley Center wasn't here. Campus Center wasn't built yet. Kittredge wasn't here. At the end of the hallway of the first floor of Frost there was a little luncheonette that the culinary program ran for students who were going to school here during the day. At night, the only places to get food were the vending machines.

Terry Grinnen was the head of the department of hospitality and food service. Franz Stegbuchner was an absolutely incredible chef, and he was a great, great professor and teacher. I learned a lot from them.

Some classes were incredibly boring to me, like accounting and English. But when it got to the food service end of it, aww, I loved that stuff. Tuesdays were lecture nights; we learned how to do recipes and create

AT NIGHT, THE ONLY PLACES TO GET FOOD WERE THE VENDING MACHINES.

menus. On Thursdays, we went into the kitchen and produced meals.

It was tough, though. It took me five years to get my associate degree. There were days I'd put in 10 hours at the restaurant then be sitting here trying to listen to the professor and falling asleep at seven o'clock at night. But it was well worth it because once you got hired, an associate degree put you on a better level.

After HCC, I started working for ARA food services, which is now Aramark, first at Pratt & Whitney, then the University of Hartford, and finally back here at HCC.

I've really enjoyed the food service business. Meeting new people on a regular basis was always something different. And, of course, during this whole time here I am having a nice family life with my wife Debbie and both my daughters. Thanks to the education I got at Holyoke Community College I got myself a good job. Both my girls graduated from college; Erin and Sheila are doing absolutely great. I'm a grandfather now. My wife and I love to travel. We live a great family life.

Thank God HCC was a school I could afford that gave me the opportunity to work at the same time. Otherwise, who knows what I would have done?

Mark Pronovost '81 is the retired director of Aramark/HCC Dining Services.



Family Challenge



Gertrude 'Trudy' Monson '97

After high school, I worked at New England Telephone and took a couple of night classes for a few years. Then, I got married and started a family. When my daughters, Kim '01 and Sarah '03, were at Holyoke High School, I kept telling them to push themselves even if their classes were hard. Finally, they challenged me to go back to HCC to finish my degree. The challenge was that I had to get my degree before they both graduated from high school. Let me tell you, it was very hard, but I did it. Most nights, we were all doing homework and sometimes my daughters had to help me with my assignments.

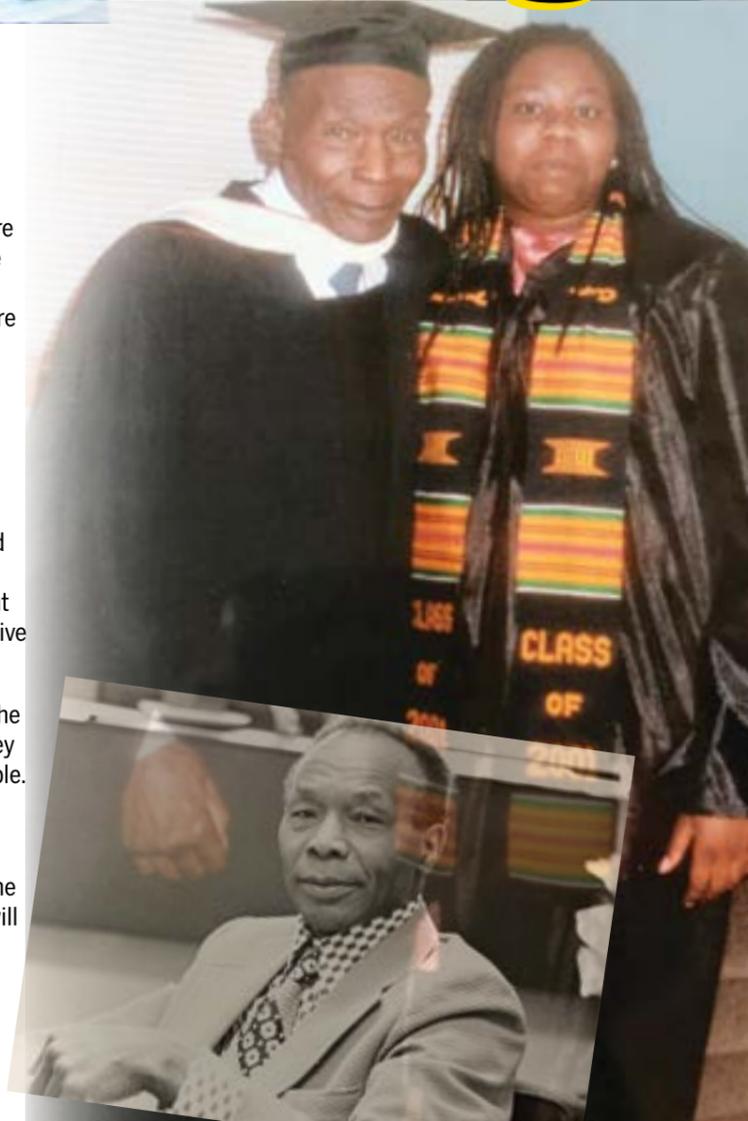
Sarah graduated from Holyoke High in 1996. I graduated from HCC in 1997. Kim graduated from Holyoke High in 1998.

My father, Robert E. Evans, Jr. '50, had been an HCC counselor and professor, and the college's first Affirmative Action officer. He received the Distinguished Service Award from HCC at Commencement in 2001. That was the same year Kim received her associate degree. My dad always said, "My proudest moment at HCC was to be on the stage and watch my granddaughter walk up and receive her diploma." He died a year later, before Sarah graduated from HCC in 2003.

My fondest memories of HCC are of my classmates. Being older, I thought the other students would make fun of me, but it was the complete opposite. They were willing to help me study before class and made me feel very comfortable. I loved that both day and night students graduated together.

One more thing: On the last day of third grade – "Represent Your Culture Day" – my granddaughter, Alivia Rivera (Sarah's daughter), chose to wear the African-American stole I had worn for my graduation in 1997. Maybe Alivia will be the next one to carry on our family legacy at HCC.

Trudy Monson lives in Holyoke and is vice president of HCC's Alumni Council.



AT THE TIME, I COULDN'T AFFORD ANYTHING, AND MY PARENTS COULDN'T AFFORD ANYTHING. TO GET BETTER IN A BUSINESS THAT I WANTED TO BE IN I NEEDED HCC. I STARTED NIGHT SCHOOL IN 1976.

A Love of Theater

A conversation with Peter Hicks '80 and Laura Hicks '81



I WAS LIKE, I'M NOT PLAYING LINUS! AND THEY HAD CAST A GIRL AS SNOOPY. I WAS MIFFED. MIFFED!

PETER:

Full 1979 was my second year, and Laura's first. I was a music major. She was psychology. We hadn't met yet. Dan and Judy Overholtzer, who ran the Music Department along with Sidney Smith, decided to put on a dinner theater production of "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown" as a collaboration between the music, theater, and culinary arts programs. There was a little pit band, and we did the show in one of the rehearsal rooms of C building (Fine & Performing Arts), and they served dinner. They had tables like a café. It was really wonderful, and the food was very good. People loved it.

I was used to getting leads in HCC shows. I had wanted to play either Charlie Brown or Snoopy. After auditions, they posted the cast list, and it said, "Peter Hicks: Linus." And I

was like, I'm not playing Linus! And they had cast a girl as Snoopy. I was miffed. Miffed!

LAURA: I knew the Overholtzers because they lived in Belchertown, where I grew up. I was walking down the hallway one day. Judy Overholtzer saw me. She said, "Laura, why don't you try out for the play?" I had no intention of trying out, but I did. I got the part of Snoopy.

PETER: As it turned out, I loved playing Linus. It was so much fun. As I look back their casting was perfect. Laura was a great Snoopy.

LAURA: We did the play, and I had a crush on him. But all my classes were in Donahue. I had no reason to go to C building, but that's where the music majors were. As head of the music club, Peter ran a coffee shop on the first floor

where the musicians would hang out. I made sure to walk past so I could say hi.

PETER: The first time I ever saw her was before Christmas when we had our first read-through for the show. She was very unusual. She was wearing like this grey Pope's hat and a grey cape. Right away I could see she marched to the beat of a different drummer. My first thought was, *wouldn't it be funny if this was a woman I'd marry someday.* Sure enough, that's how it ended up.

LAURA: After graduating from HCC, he went to Hartt School of Music in Hartford. I graduated a year later and went to Mount Holyoke College. We both ended up graduating in 1983 and got married that summer.

PETER: We had both come from big families. Six kids in mine. Five in hers. Neither of our families were well off. I wouldn't use the word poor, but we didn't have a lot of money. HCC was perfect for us financially. I had just started looking toward music as a life. I wasn't really trained in it, so I thought HCC would be a good fit. I liked being home. I wanted to be near my family.

LAURA: I grew up on a farm. I was an above average student but terrible at the SATs, and I did not like the huge class sizes at UMass, so I picked HCC. I was the co-salutatorian of my class, and received the Harriet Newhall Scholarship to Mount Holyoke, so my tuition was free. HCC gave me the potential to bloom. I played on the basketball team. I didn't know I was going to do theater. The professors were very attentive. I think the quality is fantastic.

PETER: Our experience with HCC was wonderful, and all five of our children went to HCC. It's our family school.

LAURA: It's been not only a great education for them, but it has saved us thousands of dollars.

PETER: Music's been our lives, really, but when we were raising our kids we weren't doing musical theater. For 35 years, I was a music director of our church. Laura and I have an act, "Musically Married." We sing out. I've written a lot of music.

LAURA: He's written Christmas cantatas and Easter cantatas. He has two CDs of original Christian music, and we have toured around New England churches, singing.

PETER: In 2013, we both auditioned for parts in *Les Misérables* at Exit 7 Theater in Ludlow, and we both got parts in the cast. I got bitten again by the theater bug. I've played *Scrooge* four times – that's kind of my role. I was Fagan in "Oliver." Exit 7 just did a "Scrooge" musical



AS I LOOK BACK THEIR CASTING WAS PERFECT. LAURA WAS A GREAT SNOOPY.

that I wrote. I've been able to make a career of community theater.

LAURA: Which goes back to our roots, meeting here.

PETER: HCC really did set us on a direction. It's a great part of our life.

Peter Hicks is the retired manager of Eddie's Furniture in Holyoke, the Hicks family business. Laura Hicks runs Merciful Management, a property company owned by her and her husband. They are the proud parents of five HCC graduates: Samuel '11, Abigail '12, Julia '15, Angela '17, and Rebecca '20.

A SPACE FOR EVERYONE



Pat Sandoval '84

When I first started at HCC, I was not sure exactly what I wanted to study so I decided to take classes that interested me. One of them was Introduction to Theater with Professor Leslie Phillips. I remember how excited she was about theater and how welcoming to the students in the room. Her enthusiasm was so profound it just pulled you in.

Following that, I signed up for her Modern Drama class. By then, she was directing a play by Sam Shepard, "Buried Child." What she did for me, and what I learned from her, was that she simply asked me to be part of the production staff, to work on publicity, and that invitation was so important. It got me working with the cast and crew. I remember vividly how it made me feel, and so I do that today with my students. I just ask them, "Would you like to be part of the production? Do you want to audition? Would you like to learn how to do costumes? Would you like to work on lights? Would you like to help build the set?"

She was the model for what I do now. When you ask people to join in, they're usually thrilled because they want to be a part of something larger than themselves. Fortunately, we've all got a home here in the Leslie Phillips Theater, on stage, backstage, and in the booth. There is a space for everyone to be creative and develop projects and come up with new ideas.

Over the years, it's amazing how many people have been impacted by what Leslie Phillips started and what Jeanne Hatch, Roy Faudree, and Tom Shielding continued. All those people taught and mentored me. To this day, what Tim Cochran, Matt Whiton and I try to do is help students find a home, a place where they can create art, teach the community something about society, and do work that reflects society while representing the HCC community.

I have a wonderful memory of Leslie. I was going through some difficulty, and one day I was not able to make it to class on time. I debated whether to go in late, but I decided that even if she got upset with me, it was worth that to get her discussing theater for another 45 minutes rather than to miss out entirely. So, I walked in half an hour late. I apologized, and, she said to me, "Oh, Pat, I am so glad you're here. I was going to start talking about this modern theater production, and I knew you would be interested in it."

That act of kindness and understanding stayed with me. It meant the world to me then. Now, as a teacher, I always try to think of students' lives and what might be going on that keeps them from making it to class.

Professor Patricia Sandoval '84 teaches theater and public speaking at HCC. Leslie Phillips, founder of HCC's theater program, died in 1988.

Community CONNECTIONS

In my first semester at HCC, I started an internship at WGBY, now NEPM. I was part of their Latino Youth Media Institute. I haven't really left the station since that first semester.

I've worked in a lot of different departments inside WGBY, starting in production. I learned everything behind the cameras, how to work the equipment, and things like that. Once that year-long internship finished I started working in community engagement on "Presencia," what was then a new local bilingual series at WGBY. The idea was to create a program that could serve as a gateway for Latinos in the area who were interested in media, to help them gain experience in broadcast television and create a pipeline for careers.

It works. Two years ago, I joined the "Connecting Point" team as a host and reporter. Last year I was promoted to main host.

I had always known that I would go to HCC right after high school. I didn't look anywhere else. I was born and raised in Holyoke. I still live in Holyoke today. It was a natural transition, and it made sense. It was still home, it felt right, and turned out to be one of my most amazing experiences. If I could I would have stayed there for four years. I was so sad to leave. It was just such a good community, a very welcoming environment. I finished up at Westfield State University. That was a super easy transition.

At HCC, I took some communications and media-related classes, journalism, writing, and public speaking. I am a naturally shy, reserved person. Those courses pushed me out of my comfort zone and prepared me for this role.

The biggest thing that I hope anybody else who's Latino-Latina-Latinx and from Holyoke learns from my experience is that you can get a position like this and you don't have to go to an expensive, four-year college far away. I got this education literally in my backyard. It was super affordable. I didn't have to move away.

People have said to me, "Go to New York, go to

"IF I COULD I WOULD HAVE STAYED THERE FOR FOUR YEARS."

Zydalis (Zayas) Bauer '09

I had always known that I would go to HCC right after high school. I didn't look anywhere else. I was born and raised in Holyoke. I still live in Holyoke today.

Boston or some bigger city." No. I'm working right here in Springfield, doing the job that I always dreamed about with my community, telling their stories on the air. That's one thing I offer that they didn't have before – a door to this community. They trust me, because I'm part of their community. And I genuinely care and want to share their stories because I understand their stories. And I went to a community college. I think that's the coolest part.

Zydalis Bauer '09 is the host of "Connecting Point" on New England Public Media. 📺

“EVERYONE WOULD SHOW THEIR LOVE BY FEED-
ING EACH OTHER ...



“I THINK THAT’S SOME-
THING THAT ALWAYS
RESONATED
WITH HIM”

FIND- ING A WAY THROUGH THE [PAIN]

By DOUG SCANLON

On Nov. 22, 2019 — pre-pandemic times — several dozen friends, family members, and supporters gathered inside Nosh Café and Restaurant in Springfield, Mass., to celebrate something called “Timsgiving.”

To understand Timsgiving, one must first appreciate the significance of rosemary mashed potatoes. That was the signature dish of Timothy “Timmy” Thompson ’00, one that he picked up as a culinary arts student at HCC and introduced to his family more than 20 years ago, before his tragic death from opioid overdose in 2004, just weeks after his 24th birthday.

In fact, the roots of Timsgiving go back even further than that. Timmy was the second child of three. His father, Robert ’73, was one of nine siblings, his mother, Kathleen ’72, one of seven. During his youth, Timmy, his sister Kara ’04, brother Chris, and all of their aunts, uncles, and cousins would bond by cooking together at family gatherings.

“Everyone would show their love by feeding each other, and I think that’s something that always resonated with him,” said Kara.

As Timmy matured, so did his interest in food, a hobby that grew toward a career.

“It was a natural progression when Tim decided to study culinary arts at HCC,” said Kathleen. “He had always been a hands-on type of learner, so the program was perfect for him.”

Soon Timmy was trying out new recipes at home. The rosemary mashed potatoes became a staple of Thanksgiving in the Thompson home, a tradition that continues to this day.

After his passing, Timmy’s family started exploring ways to honor his memory. Kara contacted the HCC Foundation. Amanda Sbriscia, vice president of Institutional Advancement, then invited Kara and her parents to tour the HCC MGM Culinary Arts Institute, and they began to talk about setting up a scholarship in Timmy’s name.

“It felt like things were finally in motion, like we finally had a plan to help us through the pain of losing a brother, losing a son, and keeping that alive while making a difference for someone else,” Kara said.

To promote the scholarship, and bring together family and friends, Kara and her parents came up with the idea of TimmyGives, the organizing entity for Timsgiving and other fundraising platforms that honor Timmy.

Timsgiving was meant to build upon the tradition of sharing good food among family and friends while also raising money for the Timothy “Timmy” M. Thompson Memorial Scholarship, which will provide tuition assistance to a deserving student enrolled in the college’s culinary arts or hospitality management programs. (Additionally, Timsgiving raised funds for the Community Music School of Springfield — Timmy was also a drummer — and Baystate Health Foundation.)

“It was an honor to be present at that inaugural Timsgiving,” said Sbriscia. “Kara and her family created an atmosphere filled with joy and hope with amazing food and music — all the things Timmy loved. The scholarship they have established at HCC will not only create opportunities for future generations of culinary arts students, it will enable those students to learn about Timmy and carry his memory forward.”

The evening was such a success the family decided to make it an annual event. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, they decided to put Timsgiving on pause. But that didn’t mean supporting a great cause had to wait.

Last fall, Peg ’58 and Gary Wendlandt issued a donor challenge that included a \$5,000 contribution for gifts of \$1,000 or more to any existing HCC fund, including Timmy’s scholarship. With the Wendlandts’ matching gift,

and another generous donation from Kara, the scholarship is close to being endowed. The Thompsons are excited about the possibilities.

“We hope to help financially challenged students who share Tim’s passion for food and cooking,” said Kathleen. “We know he would be proud of this award in his name, and it brings us great joy and pride to fund it. It keeps him ever present to us, to know he is helping others.”

Adds Kara: “This whole process has brought my family a lot of joy, a lot of closure, and helped ease some pain that we were hanging on to.”

If you are interested in contributing to the Timothy “Timmy” M. Thompson Memorial Scholarship or establishing a scholarship to honor someone else, please contact HCC’s office of Institutional Advancement at 413.552.2746.



Sláinte!



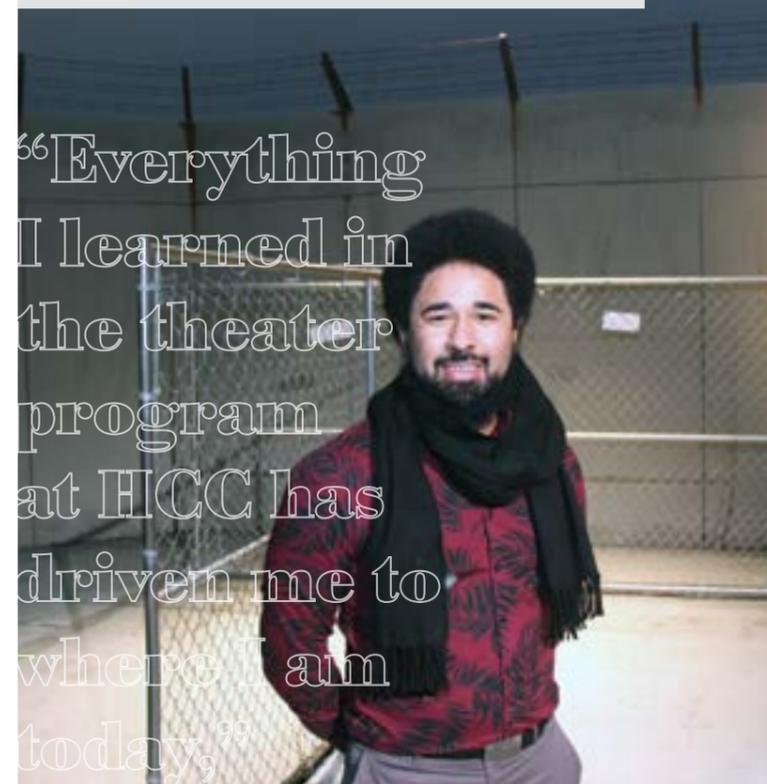
When Mark Pronovost '81 started working at HCC in 2010 as director of Aramark dining services, the only place on campus to get a hot meal or beverage was in the old cafeteria, where you pulled your tray along stainless-steel rails, conveyor-belt style, past the a la carte offerings under the heat lamps. Over the years, Pronovost shepherded major changes in food service delivery at HCC, such as adding Subway and Grille Works options. "We changed the concept from a cafeteria to a food court," he said last fall, not long after hanging up his apron and retiring from Aramark after 48 years in the food service business, his last 11 at HCC, where he earned an associate degree in hospitality management. Pronovost was also responsible for launching the P.O.D. (Provisions on Demand) in the Donahue building and the Forum Café outside the Leslie Phillips Theater, as well as providing catering services for countless campus events. "It's been a complete enjoyment being here, especially being an alum, knowing everybody and seeing the changes that we've made," he said. In retirement, Pronovost plans to concentrate on the "Three Gs – Granddaughter, Golf & Guinness," he wrote in a farewell message to friends and colleagues. "Outstanding Ride! Sláinte, Mark."

^ Mark Pronovost '81 in the HCC Food Court shortly before his retirement as director of HCC dining services.

HCC built me

The fall 2021 production of "Jesus Hopped the A Train" marked a return to the stage for HCC's theater program after one cancelled season and two semesters of pandemic-friendly, virtual, live-streamed performances. The show also marked a return to the HCC stage for theater alum Axel Cruz '11, the play's guest director. "It's nice to come back to the place where I started and do something that I love to do," said Cruz, who hails from Chicopee, teaches fine arts at Holyoke's Metcalf Elementary School, and sits on the board of Holyoke's Enchanted Circle Theater, where he also directs. After HCC, Cruz went on to study theater at the University of Massachusetts. "Everything I learned in the theater program at HCC has driven me to where I am today," said Cruz. "I've always said, HCC built me, and UMass shaped me. HCC produces amazing students and amazing work. I'm so excited and proud to be among the HCC theater alumni, which is a pretty close network."

✓ Director Axel Cruz '11 on the set of "Jesus Hopped the A Train," HCC's fall 2021 theater production.

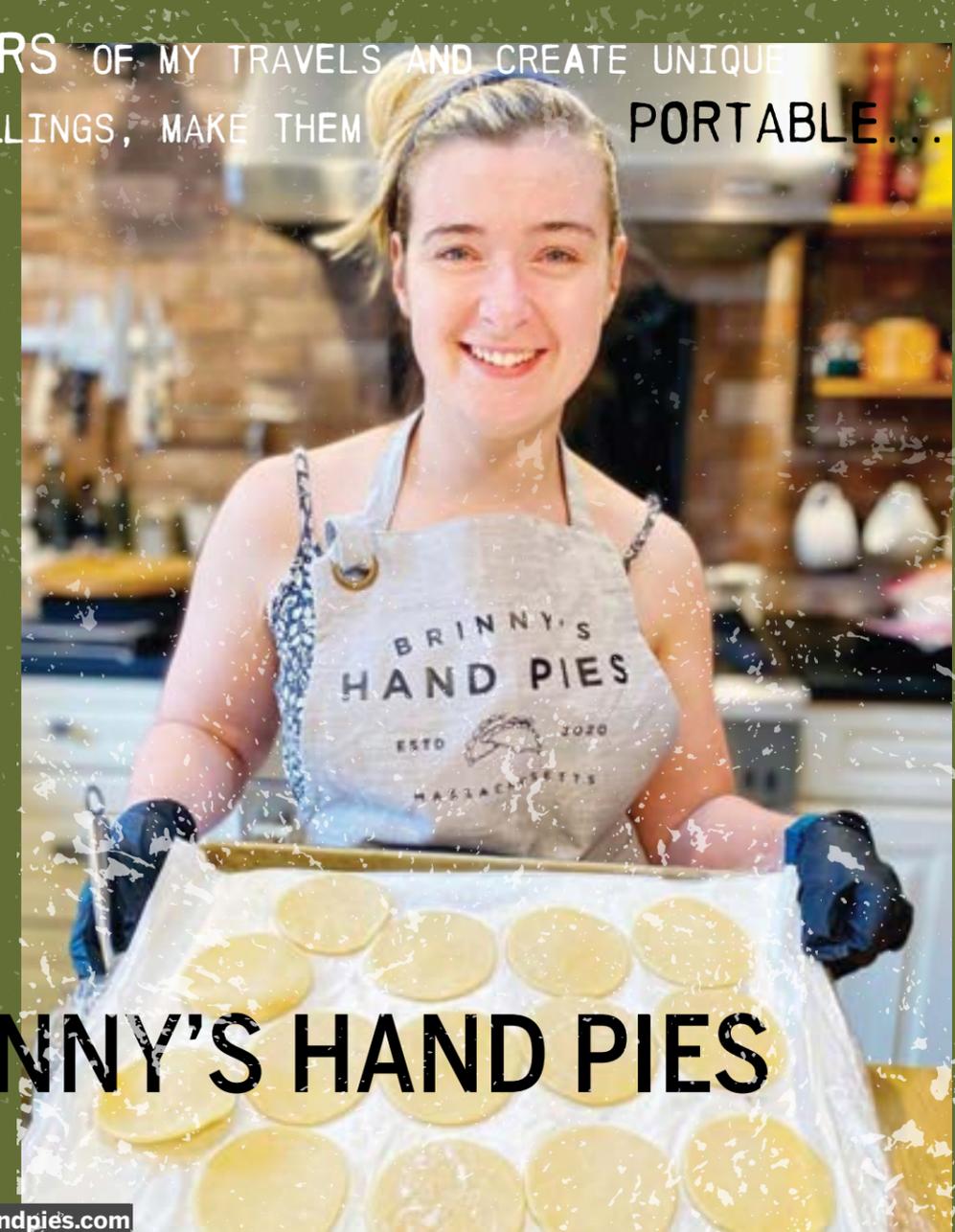


"Everything I learned in the theater program at HCC has driven me to where I am today."

Alumni ... Out & About

...TAKE THE FLAVORS OF MY TRAVELS AND CREATE UNIQUE FILLINGS, MAKE THEM PORTABLE...

In the midst of the pandemic, Brianna "Brinny" Couture '21 opened a new business – "Brinny's Hand Pies," an online pickup and delivery food service company based in Agawam, Mass. As a student in HCC's culinary arts program, Couture found a passion for hand pies as she learned that successful chefs had a focus that drove their restaurants and menus. "But I loved everything," said Couture, a 2021 National Restaurant Association Scholarship recipient. "I couldn't decide what my focus was. I knew I would have to create something different for myself." She finally found inspiration from Latin street food expert and food historian Sandra Gutierrez and became intrigued by hand pies. Her mind raced with all the possibilities. "I couldn't sleep. This was it," she knew. "I could take the flavors of my travels and create unique fillings, make them portable because they'd be wrapped in pastry. I thought maybe people like me, who like to travel through food, would like hand pies too?" She went to work on her own creations – Chicken Tarragon Pot Pie, The Argentinian, Mushroom and Leek, and one of her favorites, Banana and Dulce de Leche. "What could be better?" Enjoy Brinny's creations at brinnysandpies.com



BRINNY'S HAND PIES

FLYING HIGHER



On January 1, Linda Markham '83 assumed the position of CEO of Cape Air, making her one of the few female CEOs in the world to run an airline company and the only one at a major or regional airline in the U.S. "It's the right time for the organization and for Linda," retiring CEO and company founder Dan Wolf told the *Cape Cod Times*. "She's just a wonderful person and leader." Growing up in Westfield, the youngest of six children, Markham majored in business and retail management at HCC. "There were students from all over Massachusetts of all different ages," Markham told the Alumni Connection in 2017. "It was diverse. People wanted to help each other." She joined Cape Air in 2002 as vice president when Wolf hired her to build a human resources department at the Hyannis-based business. She was named chief administrative officer in 2004 and president in 2013. "I look forward to assuming my new role and helping Cape Air soar to new heights," Markham said in a press release. "I am humbled by the opportunity to lead such an outstanding organization." << Linda Markham, at the Hyannis Airport

Alumni ... Out & About

Not A SIDE- LINES GUY

As a young father, Steve Richter '75 famously founded a medical testing company in the attic of his Feeding Hills home while working full time and going to graduate school. Microtest Labs would eventually employ some 100 microbiologists, chemists, product safety analysts and support staff at a 50,000-square foot facility in Agawam, where they tested medical devices and pharmaceuticals for bacterial contamination. Richter, the president and CEO, sold Microtest in 2014. Since then, he has been enjoying his grandchildren and "retirement" but has not been idle. Richter now runs a consulting business called RichCo Laboratories as its senior scientist. "I'm not a sidelines guy," he said in October during a visit to HCC's Center for Life Sciences, where he was testing Thor, a mobile device

that uses ultraviolet light to sterilize enclosed spaces such as operating rooms. Richter said he could think of no better place to do that than HCC's biotechnology cleanroom, which he had a hand in planning. "There's not too many facilities like this around here," he said. "It's great for students. You put down cleanroom training on your resume and there's a lot of job opportunities out there."

Steve Richter '75 stands outside the cleanroom in HCC's Center for Life Sciences while Thor goes to work cleaning up.

ON THE AIR



Zydalis (Zayas) Bauer '09 was in her first semester at HCC when she began a year-long internship at WGBY, the public television station in Springfield, now New England Public Media. As part of its

Latino Youth Media Institute, she started in production, learning to operate cameras, soundboards and all the other equipment required to put on a broadcast. Later, she was part of the team that created the local bilingual series "Presencia." Two years ago, she joined the team at "Connecting Point," the station's cultural affairs program, as a reporter and host. Last year, NEPM promoted her to main host. "I haven't really left since my first semester at HCC," she said. "It's surreal to literally work your way up from the bottom to be the host of a show." Naturally shy but with a lifelong interest in media, Bauer, a liberal arts major, took a few communications and media-related classes at HCC, including public speaking. "Those courses pushed me out of my comfort zone and really helped prepare me for this role," she said. Check out the show on your local PBS station, Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. << **Zydalis (Zayas) Bauer '09 is host of NEPM's "Connecting Point."**

Class Notes

1974

Gayle Rud Smith has stepped down as president of Middlebridge Marketing in Lincoln, R.I. Smith will continue with Middlebridge as a consultant and chief marketing officer until her planned retirement in January 2025. Gayle and her husband, Ray, reside in Cape Coral, Florida.

1976

After retiring from the workforce on Dec. 31, 2019 and surviving the COVID year of 2020, **Jon Roe** resumed his acting career in Los Angeles while enjoying his hobbies of traveling and camping, mostly in the deserts of the western U.S. He just completed a trip to Flagstaff, Arizona, to see the Meteor Crater, the Petrified Forest, and a day trip into the spectacular town of Sedona.

1986

Mike Farrell is the chief of staff at The Military Order of the World Wars in Alexandria, Virginia. MOWW is a veterans service organization founded in 1919 to promote good citizenship, patriotic education, and military and public service. Farrell was the commanding officer with the Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 262 in Okinawa, Japan, from 2006 to 2008. In addition, he served as director of operations and chief of staff for the U.S. Marine Corp Forces South, stationed in Germany and later in Florida. After completing his associate degree in business administration at HCC, he earned his bachelor's degree in business administration from Western New England University and his MBA from Boston University. He attended the Naval War College, studying national security and strategic studies, and the United States Army Way College, earning a master's degree in strategic studies.

1994

Nancy Rogers is a CAD designer for The TJX Companies in Framingham, Mass. At TJX, she is responsible for creating artwork for children's apparel, including sweater knit patterns and novelty designs. She holds a certificate in graphic design from HCC and went on to Springfield Technical Community College to earn her associate degree in graphic arts technology with a commercial art option.

2000

Pleasant Mattress has announced the appointment of **Josephine Bass** as director of finance. Prior to this position, Bass served in a number of executive roles for Haskel International, a manufacturer of high-pressure pumps and valves. Along with providing in-depth analysis and progress tracking on operations, supply chain, and

regional goals, Bass managed the reorganization of the layout within Haskell's Burbank plant. Her career also includes finance and production planning positions with Kolmar Laboratories, Harmon Industries, and Am-sign Corp. Bass holds an associate degree in accounting from HCC.

Alan Wishart retired as Granby's chief of police in July 2021. He joined the police department in 1997 and was promoted to sergeant four years later. In 2010, the Select Board promoted Wishart to police chief following the retirement of then chief – and adjunct HCC professor – Louis Barry, his first criminal justice teacher at HCC. "I've admired him from the beginning," Wishart said. "He's been an incredible mentor, chief, and, ultimately, a friend who really piqued my interest in the profession."

2001

Jennifer Carlson, Ph.D. was promoted to a full-time interdisciplinary professor with Anna Maria College in 2021 where she works across the Social Work and Emergency Management departments, teaching master's level classes. After graduating from HCC, Carlson went on to earn a bachelor's degree from Elms College in 2004, a master's degree in advanced standing at the University of Connecticut in 2005, and a Ph.D. in public safety and emergency/disaster management with Capella University in 2015. She is a certified emergency manager and a licensed clinical social worker.

Chrystal Childs is the marketing director at Canna Provisions, an adult use cannabis dispensary headquartered in Lee, Mass. After graduating from HCC with an associate degree in marketing and graphic design, Childs worked for 10 years at Balise Motor



FARRELL



BASS



CARLSON



CHILDS



BENNETT

Sales as strategic marketing coordinator. She then joined Splash Marketing as marketing and creative director. Before Canna Provisions, Childs worked as an independent contractor, which included roles at the DeStefano Group as marketing manager and brand consultant.

2003

Matthew McMahon is a senior manager of cybersecurity with Philips Healthcare, a graduate adjunct professor teaching coursework in cybersecurity and healthcare at Salve Regina University as well as a cybersecurity subject matter expert with MIT Horizon. Prior to Philips, McMahon was a senior manager for the Internet of Medical Things program with Booz Allen Hamilton and acting product security officer for the Europe, Middle East and Africa region with Siemens Healthineers.

2004

Ry Bruscoe joined IBM Software in Washington, D.C., as a cloud engineer working as a member of its IBM Expert Lab Cloud and Cognitive Software team, supporting federal government customers with a focus on software development, cloud engineering, development and operations. Bruscoe studied visual arts at HCC and continued his studies at Springfield Technical Community College (civil engineering), the Founder Institute (entrepreneurial studies), and Boston Architectural College (computer systems and technology).

2010

Kelly Bennett is a park ranger lieutenant working at the Massachusetts State House in Boston. After earning her

associate degree in criminal justice and corrections at HCC, Bennett earned a bachelor's degree from Bay Path University. In addition, she completed a specialized program for aspiring park rangers at UMass Amherst.

Matthew Haley was promoted to leadership giving officer at Mount Holyoke College. Prior to joining Mount Holyoke, Haley served as assistant director of alumni and family relations at Hampshire College and as resource coordinator for the local affiliate of YouthServe AmeriCorps. After earning an associate degree in communication, media and theater arts at HCC, Haley continued his education at Hampshire College, earning a bachelor's degree in theatre, education, and management.

2011

Jonencia Wood has been named the executive director of alumni and family relations at Rhode Island School of Design. For the previous five years Wood served as director of inclusion and alumnae engagement at Mount Holyoke College, where she directed a staff of seven and more than 170 student workers and partnered with members of the president's cabinet to build strategic programs. Wood completed her associate degree in business administration at HCC and earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in management from Cambridge College.

2015

Sasha Toledo manages the scholarships and donor relations program at HCC. Prior to her current role, she worked in Admissions, providing support to prospective students and coordinating tours. Toledo earned her associate degree at HCC in liberal arts and transferred to UMass Amherst for her bachelor's degree in communications and media studies. She is currently seeking her master's degree at Bay Path University in digital marketing.

In Memoriam

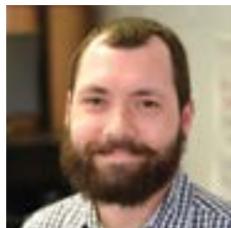
We are saddened to learn of the passing of the following members of the HCC community:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Richard D. Steinbock '65 | Lawrence Molloy '75 |
| William J. Wagner '71 | Michael J. Lap '20 |
| Peter A. Monchamp '77 | Elizabeth A. Smiarowski,
<i>retired staff</i> |
| Barbara A. Hendrickson '88 | Jane P. Hall, <i>retired staff</i> |
| Janice E. Singleton '90 | And longtime friend and supporter: |
| June S. Henneman '91 | Eleanor Messner |
| Maria T. Derouin '95 | |
| Linda A. Lewis '96 | |

To contribute in memory of a classmate, friend or relative, visit hcc.edu/donate or call Patrick Carpenter at 413.552.2746.



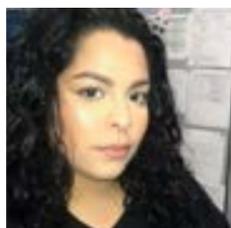
MCMAHON



HALEY



WOOD



TOLDEO

Civic-Minded Anthropology professor **Vanessa Martínez** is the recipient of the 2022 Thomas Ehrlich Civically Engaged Faculty Award from Campus Compact, a national coalition of colleges and universities committed to the public purposes of higher education. The award recognizes senior faculty for teaching and scholarship that inspires students to get involved in their communities. "I have always been someone who believes in leaving the world better than you found it, values instilled by my parents," said Martínez, co-coordinator of HCC's Honors Program and co-founder of the Women of Color Health Equity Collective, a Springfield nonprofit "While I do not do this work for the recognition, I also realize how important these awards are in reminding us that we are seen, valued and respected." *Pictured below, second from left: Prof. Vanessa Martínez.*

On Point Biology major **Avery Maltz '22** – STEM scholar, vice president of service for HCC's chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, president and co-founder of the Neurodiversity Club, peer tutor, supplemental instructor, caretaker of the HCC Greenhouse, and one of 28 students nationwide to have their work published in *Nota Bene*, the national literary journal of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society – was awarded a Wells Fargo Scholarship from the Point Foundation, the nation's largest scholarship program for LGBTQ students. Students accepted into the year-long program receive a \$4,800 award, attend workshops, receive ongoing counseling and support, and ultimately become part of the Point Foundation's alumni mentor network. *Pictured below, left: Avery Maltz.*

Top Shelf **HCC's Culinary Arts** program was ranked among the best in the U.S. by Best Choice Schools, an online college resource guide. HCC placed 50th among the Best Culinary Schools in America for 2021, a list that also includes such esteemed schools as the Culinary Institute of America, and third in New England after Johnson & Wales, and Southern Maine Community College. HCC was cited for the quality of its one-year certificate and two-year associate of arts in science degree programs in culinary arts as well as its instructional facility, the HCC MGM Culinary Arts Institute, which opened in downtown Holyoke in 2018. *Pictured, far right: Culinary arts student Julianna Knapczyk.*

Women in Power

HCC was named one of the **"Top 100 Women-Led Businesses in Massachusetts"** for 2021 by the Commonwealth Institute, a nonprofit that supports female business leaders. The Institute's 21st annual rankings were announced Nov. 5 and published in a special "Women and Power" edition of the *Boston Globe Magazine*. President Christina Royal and HCC were ranked at number 50. Also on the list, at number 55: HCC alum Linda Markham '83, CEO and president of Cape Air and Nantucket Airlines, in Hyannis, Mass. *Pictured, second from right: President Christina Royal*

National Cred HCC was named a finalist for a national **Bellwether Award** in recognition of **Jump Start**, the college's job training and placement program for people who receive public assistance. HCC was one of 10 U.S. colleges selected as a finalist by the Bellwether College Consortium in the category of workforce development. For more than 20 years, Jump Start has been creating sustainable career pathways for individuals who were previously unemployed or had limited education and work experience. The program offers workforce training for jobs as culinary workers, nursing assistants, pharmacy technicians, customer service representatives, preschool workers, production technicians, and bus and truck drivers.

Overachievers HCC's **associate degree program in nursing** was ranked the highest in the Pioneer Valley and No. 7 in the state for 2021 by Nursing Schools Almanac, an organization that provides an annual overview of nursing programs across the country. HCC's licensed practical nursing program was ranked the No. 3 LPN program in Massachusetts for 2021 – and best in western Massachusetts – by PracticalNursing.org, another college nursing guide.

Best Again Last fall, HCC was voted the **best two-year college** in the Pioneer Valley by readers of the *Daily Hampshire Gazette* for the eighth year in a row.



What have you been up to since your school days at HCC? Send news of your wedding, retirement, promotion, travels, children/grandchildren, awards, academic achievements, military honors, whatever! Send news and photos to alumni@hcc.edu or to *The Connection*, c/o Alumni Relations, 303 Homestead Ave., Holyoke, MA 01040.

75th Tributes



HCC was my foundation, and I am eternally grateful.

I will be starting my doctorate in October and it is such a blessing to see where my HCC education has allowed me to go.

Nikki Burnett '92, Springfield, Mass.

Dear HCC

HCC gave me the opportunity to have a successful career in business. It was the best decision I made moving forward with my education.

Robert Ciosek '62, Madison, Conn.

A scholarship helped me graduate debt free, and now I'm paying it forward!

Anneliese Burns '15, Arnold, Maryland

I am proud to be first in my family to graduate college. HCC helped me to obtain greater knowledge and curiosity to further my career in the medical field. The HCC fire in 1968 was so devastating, but it opened a new chapter. HCC means local, low-cost opportunity to a quality education. So proud!

Barbara Kusnick '72, Westfield, Mass.

My husband Stanley died on May 12, 2021, at the age of 100. He contributed heavily for many years to student scholarship support – as I will continue to do as I am able. Education is of prime importance to our youth.

Jean Melvin, Friend of HCC, Longmeadow, Mass. ☺

HCC is a jewel in the crown of Holyoke. I have spent much time on the property since the early 1970s when I was very young and construction on the new campus had just begun. My father, William G. Sullivan, graduated in 1950 when it was called Holyoke Junior College.

Glen Sullivan '89, Holyoke, Mass.

Legacy Giving

FOR THE FUTURE



“ I know there are students out there who don’t have the financial resources to afford the rising cost of tuition, so it feels good knowing that I’m able to set up an endowed scholarship that is going to be given, year after year, to a deserving HCC student so they can have the resources and academics that will land them a good job.”

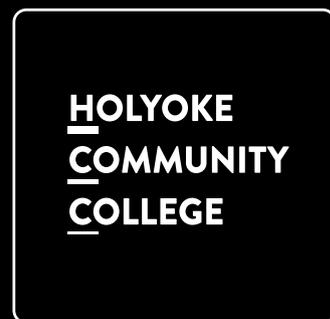
Gail Olesiak '70 came from a large family with two working parents, which meant that she was on her own when it came to paying for college. Fortunately for her, Gail received scholarships and financial aid that made attending college a possibility. Now retired, Gail contacted the HCC Foundation to set up an endowed scholarship by naming HCC as a beneficiary in her estate plans. Once established, the Steve and Gail Olesiak Scholarship will be awarded to students studying accounting, business administration, or liberal arts, ensuring that future students will also have the financial assistance to help them achieve their goals.

There are many ways you can support Holyoke Community College. For many people, establishing a planned gift — naming HCC as a beneficiary of an estate, life insurance plan, IRA, or other similar instrument — can have the most impact.

Giftng a portion or percentage of your estate to HCC, and thus becoming a member of the Frost Society, is a simple process.

To learn more about becoming a member of the Frost Society, or if you already have named HCC in your estate plans, please contact as:

Patrick Carpenter, director of Institutional Advancement, at 413.552.2746 | pcarpenter@hcc.edu



THE CONNECTION

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

NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE PAID
SPRINGFIELD MA
PERMIT NO 228

Upcoming Music and Theater Events



A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

By William Shakespeare, directed by Tim Cochran
April 21-23, Leslie Phillips Theater

HOLYOKE CIVIC SYMPHONY

May 1, 2022, Leslie Phillips Theater

HCC 75TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

May 5, 2022, On campus and Online

75TH ANNUAL COMMENCEMENT

June 4, 2022, MassMutual Center, Springfield

For details, please go to: hcc.edu/events