



May 2017

*Civic engagement is an important part of Monroe Community College’s mission. From improving the local economy through unique workforce initiatives to helping young, at-risk students succeed personally and academically, MCC students, faculty and staff work tirelessly to make the Rochester area a better place to live, work and play for all of our neighbors.*

## English Class Incorporates Life Lessons with Language Skills

For the past three years, social justice has been the theme of faculty member Kathy Buckert’s fall semester English 101 classes. From homelessness and poverty to foster care and gun control, the topics her students delve into include some of our toughest local issues.

For several years, Buckert volunteered for a local ministry to Rochester’s homeless, serving dinner at the Cadillac Hotel. They ventured into the underground subway and along the Genesee River to feed those in need of a meal. “The experience

changed my life,” she said. “It got into my soul. I wanted to do more and my students encouraged me to allow them to help.”

An effort that began with student-collected donations for the House of Mercy has blossomed into a day of community service. Buckert’s classes have worked at Foodlink, House of Mercy, Open Door Mission and other local soup kitchens and written about the experience for class.

“Some of my students said they have it in their blood now too,”



Professor Buckert has been overwhelmed by the compassion of her students. “Sometimes people say this generation is self-entitled,” said Buckert. “They are not. They have extremely generous spirits.”

said Buckert. “They want to continue to volunteer. This was my heart’s desire. I wanted to motivate students to make a difference in the world. Now, they know they can.”


## MCC-Hosted AmeriCorps Strengthens Rochester Through Service

While Peace Corps volunteers serve all over the world, AmeriCorps volunteers—people of all ages, from recent college graduates to retirees—step up to help their fellow Americans here at home.

Since 1994, Rochester AmeriCorps has been hosted by Monroe Community College. Over 23 years, more than 1,300 program members have contributed over 1.7 million hours to improve the academic engagement and college/career readiness of Rochester’s students.

**Rochester AmeriCorps Service Members**

- 30** Members placed in 13 elementary schools and two high schools.
- 11** Members serving in pre-collegiate programs: Upward Bound (MCC), Liberty Partnerships Program (MCC), Upward Bound (University of Rochester)
- 3** Members serving at the Monroe County Department of Human Services in the Parent Engagement program.
- 6** Members serving in community-based education programs at the Center for Youth and Cameron Community Ministries.
- 50** Total members serving in Rochester City schools and youth programs.



AmeriCorps members are mentors and tutors. They provide academic and behavioral support, reach out to parents, and coordinate school

and community events, all while gaining real life experience that is applicable across an array of career fields. According to AmeriCorps volunteer Alexandria Hubbell, working at Rochester’s Lincoln Park School #44 has been an invaluable opportunity. “I want to be a librarian. Working with these students has just solidified that goal. I love what I do.”

Rochester gains the energy, effort, time and support of those dedicated volunteers like Alex who commit to spending a year addressing our community’s most pressing needs and challenges.

## Dental Studies Program Reaches Out to Rochester's Underserved Children

According to the National Children's Oral Health Foundation, children in the United States are estimated to lose 51 million school hours annually due to absences attributed to dental problems. Tooth decay in children and affordable access to dental care are issues MCC's Dental Studies program, the Eastman Institute for Oral Health, and the Rochester City School District are confronting together in an effort to improve the oral health of underserved children in our community. During the fall 2016 semester, more than 400 students in grades pre-K through third were screened. Those without a primary dentist were referred to the Eastman Institute. The work of this innovative partnership will continue through 2017.



MCC dental hygiene students educate children about oral health at six Rochester city elementary schools.

## College Community Dedicates Week to Promote Peace, Reduce Violence

In early April, MCC participated in the national Enough is Enough Campaign to stem societal violence. The campaign's goal was to provide model strategies for broad-based interventions addressing youth violence through innovative partnerships among students, parents, and administrators.

Workshops, displays and seminars on unhealthy relationships, domestic violence, sexual assault services,

self-defense, Qi Gong, and meditation proactively engaged the college community in a wide array of educational opportunities. Students also had a chance to sign a "These Hands Don't Hurt" pledge. "We can only reach our full potential by showing respect for others," said Lloyd Holmes, MCC vice president, Student Services. "This week gave us the chance to reflect on our role in making this world a better place."

**DYK:** Over the last five years, more than 8,500 MCC students have successfully completed 188 service-learning courses tied to English, law and criminal justice, sociology, art and other fields. While fostering an understanding of civic responsibility for our students, these hands-on courses also benefit the Rochester community.

## Center for Outreach and Volunteer Engagement Established at MCC

MCC's new Center for Outreach and Volunteer Engagement (COVE) now serves as the first point of contact for students interested in becoming involved in community outreach, civic engagement, and volunteer programming. The center coordinates & facilitates service opportunities worldwide and acts as a hub for students wanting to track their service hours and build a Service Transcript while enrolled at MCC.

According to Peter Fiannaca, program coordinator, Office of Student Life and Leadership, "COVE allows students to build

communication, collaboration and leadership skills. There's a greater sense of purpose in learning when you're actually contributing to the world around you."

Ten MCC students recently skipped the warm weather and sandy beaches of a traditional spring break for a road trip to Chesterfield, Virginia. Coordinated by COVE, the MCC group completed more than 400 hours of community service at Pocahontas State Park in areas such as ecological conservation, infrastructure development and facilities rehab.

### Contact MCC

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**Anne M. Kress, Ph.D.**

President  
(585) 292-2100

**Clayton W. Jones**

Acting Assistant to the President  
for Government Relations  
(585) 292-2192