



**M  
CC**

Inspiring every day.

**Diversity and Inclusion**

April 2017

*As a community of global learners, Monroe Community College affirms and celebrates the rich diversity that exists on its campuses and throughout the world. MCC comprises individuals who reflect differences in culture, ethnicity, religion, race, skill, physical ability, and sexual orientation. Students and faculty are deeply committed to growing as an inclusive, welcoming and empowering academic community.*

## New Multicultural Center Reflects the “Light of Diversity” at MCC

MCC’s new PRISM Multicultural Center is already impacting cross-cultural communications and fostering the exchange of diverse perspectives and ideas. According to Vice President of Student Services Lloyd A. Holmes, Ph.D., who helped open the center in September 2016, “PRISM stands for People Respecting Individuals while Supporting Multiculturalism. The center reflects the light of diversity at the college.”

The diversity of MCC students and alumni is incorporated into the space. The center’s tables feature portraits of recognized social reformers such

as Susan B. Anthony and Frederick Douglass, painted by MCC commercial illustration students. Alumni artists recently completed a mural outside the center’s entrance.

Among the variety of events planned this spring, the center is hosting a Religious Diversity Series to prompt conversations on faith and expand student and faculty awareness of diverse religious traditions. The series, hosted in partnership with MCC’s Global Education & International Services Office, will conclude with a “diversity bus tour” and visits to local religious centers such as the Hindu Temple of



*In February, MCC students Selime Bilgic (left) and Nevriye Meral helped kick off MCC’s Religious Diversity Series with a discussion about why they choose to wear hijab and its significance within the Muslim faith.*

Rochester and the Hamidiye Mosque & Islamic Culture Center of Rochester.

“This center is inspired by the people who matter most: our students,” said MCC President Anne M. Kress.

## Despite Physical Limitations, Marc Buchholz ’16 Triumphs

Like his favorite baseball team the Chicago Cubs, Marc Buchholz ’16 overcame the odds and became a champion in 2016. Marc is quadriplegic and ventilator-dependent due to a spinal cord injury. He is also a career-minded, college graduate, having earned his associate in science degree in liberal arts-general studies with distinction from MCC in December.

“When I first applied, I didn’t know how far I was going to go,” Marc said, remembering the hospital stays and surgeries that occurred along the way.



*Marc Buchholz celebrates his degree with his mother, Donna Buchholz (pictured left), and MCC Counselor Donna Burke.*

in two MCC courses at a time. His educational journey was a blend of classroom and online learning, complemented by private nursing care and tutoring support.

“There’s great assistive technology out there and it’s gotten better over the years,” Marc said as he demonstrated

“MCC does the best it can to help people with special needs. Earning a degree does feel rewarding.”

Following his success as a Fairport High School graduate, Marc enrolled

how voice-activated software helps him use his laptop to write papers, navigate email, and research topics on the internet. Even when hospitalized for two months in 2011, Marc continued his studies.

Counselor Donna Burke from MCC’s Services for Students with Disabilities Office encouraged Marc from the start. “We approached things one semester at a time. When we reached a new challenge, we worked with Marc’s professors to figure out a way to make it work. It’s been a learning experience for me, too,” she said.

Marc plans to continue his education and continue to serve others in our community.



**Monroe Community College**

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

## Timothy Gaura '12 Embraces Diversity in Academic Environments

Fulbright Fellow Timothy Gaura '12 began his MCC journey taking classes at the Damon City Campus (DCC). He credits the experience for helping him negotiate boundaries and explore the world.

At DCC, Timothy served as a peer leader and helped students navigate college life. He brought inner-city youth to the campus to inspire them to pursue higher education.

"There are so many different voices at MCC," Timothy noted. "Professors like Bill Dunning and Tokeya Graham and many others hear these voices every day. They create safe spaces and help students learn how to find and speak their voice."

After graduating from MCC with distinction and receiving national honors, Timothy spent time abroad and then pursued a bachelor of arts degree



*Timothy Gaura '12 strives to live life authentically and challenge social boundaries.*

in anthropology at Amherst College. Today, Timothy is simultaneously pursuing a master of social work degree at the University of Connecticut and a master of divinity degree at Yale Divinity School. In December 2016, Timothy reunited with his MCC professors and advisors before heading to Chung Chi Divinity College at the Chinese University in Hong Kong. He is the first Yale Divinity School student to go on exchange to Hong Kong.

Timothy is queer (not fitting into traditional, mainstream identities particularly, though not exclusively, gender or sexual identities) and strives to live life authentically. A lifelong learner, he hopes to continue to challenge boundaries and stand up against inequality and oppression.

## Student Trustee Omran Omar Adds Perspective to MCC's Board

It was MCC's 2+2 dual admission agreement with the University of Rochester for chemical engineering that attracted Omran Omar to MCC in 2015. As he prepares to transfer this year, he appreciates the variety of career options the engineering field offers and the experience he gained as a student leader and college trustee.



*Student Trustee Omran Omar also serves as president of the Engineering Leadership Council.*

Originally from Iraq and multilingual, Omran brings a unique perspective to the MCC Board of Trustees. "It's a totally different approach to have a

student try to influence policy," said Omran. "Plus, I am someone who is not from this country—that adds a new dynamic and perspective."

Omran approaches issues from the student perspective. "Having diverse faculty and administrators will affect me later in life—in my decision-making and understanding of other peoples' points of view."

Promoting diversity is a college priority, he said. "President Kress makes it clear that our faculty need to represent the students we serve. We value that. It helps the college connect to students and understand their issues."

Omran's family left Iraq due to war and political reasons in 2006 and spent two years in Jordan before coming to the U.S.

According to Omran, "If you create an environment that is really welcoming, you can draw the talent out of a refugee. It is important to be respectful. We need to be welcoming instead of alienating."



In Fall 2016, 731 immigrant and refugee students from 84 countries attended MCC. Immigrant and refugee students intend to stay in the U.S. following graduation.

### Contact MCC

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