



May 2021 Kudos

Entries are organized into two sections (from students and from [colleagues](#)), and each section is arranged alphabetically by first name/word.

From Students

James Cronmiller [Biology]

“Professor Cronmiller does a fantastic job of challenging his students through his challenging testing which helps those of whom are pursuing careers in the healthcare fields with comprehending useful knowledge that will be implemented throughout their entire career. Also, whether he knows it or not, of the two semesters I had him he gave plenty of speeches that were very inspiring to me and help keep me from giving in to discouragement. Kudos to professor Cronmiller for all the knowledge you share and expecting our best with a sincere desire to help us learn!”

Michael Ofsowitz [Psychology]

“Professor Ofsowitz is not only a great professor, but he is also kind, easy-going, and supportive of his students. He is engaging and interacts with his students in an online format more than any other professor I know of since switching to this learning model. We appreciate you!”

Paul Emerick [Biology]

“Professor Emerick has made a difficult semester (and class) feel more manageable. Throughout the semester, he provided tremendous academic and emotional support to his students. We appreciate what you do for your students!”

Robert Muhlnickel [English & Philosophy]

“Professor Muhlnickel has given his students the tools we need to be better people. The classes he teaches provide us with a different perspective of the world around us. Since taking his class, I have been more involved in charities and my community. While that might be a small

contribution to the world, imagine how many students he has positively impacted throughout his career and the positive changes they have made.”

Thomas Blake [English & Philosophy]

“I appreciate the honest feedback I received on many of my writing assignments when taking his course Philosophy 101 from Dr. Blake. It helped to encourage me to think deeper about what I was writing about and express my thoughts of it on a higher level. This was a first in taking a course like this and was initially intimidating but I felt more comfortable further into the course because of this.”

From Colleagues

Amanda Rampe & Marisa LaSpina [Schools @ MCC & Academic Services]

“I want to thank Amanda Rampe and Marisa LaSpina for organizing and teaching sessions on how to create reports in ARGOS and understanding how to complete Faculty Workload. Their willingness to help and accessibility to answer questions is invaluable.”

Amy Burtner [English/Philosophy and the TCC]

“Thank you to Amy Burtner for taking on the interim leadership role for the Teaching and Creativity Center over the past year. Faculty who take on administrative roles not only give their service but impact those roles in future by bringing their perspective from direct service to students in the classroom. The Teaching and Creativity Center has a long history of faculty who actively engage through the campus based committee to deliver essential support for student learning on campus. After such a trying year it is impressive that Amy will return to her leadership role for the Brighton committee.”

Amy Coon [School of Community Development and Engagement]

“Amy is such a knowledgeable person in several areas of the college. As another School Specialist, she has helped me in so many ways when needed. Since we have been working off campus, if I need assistance with something, I email her and she responds right away with an answer or response such as ‘I will call you’. Her SAP and financial aid knowledge is impeccable, which is additional information she brings to the group. Kudos and appreciation to Amy Coon for her dedication and assistance not only to students, but to me and colleagues also.”

Andrea Gilbert [Instructional Technologies]

Andrea received two (2) submissions!

“ALWAYS responds quickly with a solution! Always at just the right 'sophistication level' to assure I can present the best Blackboard presence for student learning. Her insight to the LMS, best practices, and even my personal approach to teaching, is nothing short of amazing. Let alone - she is just so cool to work with!”

“Many thanks to Andrea for providing the Blackboard support that faculty so badly need, and for creating new Blackboard shells for our Summer Strong Foundations class at the very moment they were requested. We don't know what it would be like without you, and we hope we never have to find out!”

Andy Eggleston and Michael Lane [Learning Resources]

“We are offering our summer Strong Foundations class in the Hyflex format, and that would not be even remotely possible without the help and support of Andy Eggleston and Michael Lane, who equipped the classroom, trained the faculty, and spent a great deal of time helping the faculty trouble-shoot students' network and technology challenges. We could not have done it without you guys and the rest of your team, and we very much appreciate it!”

Annie Vershay [Academic Services--Dual Enrollment]

“Annie has consistently gone above and beyond to help the Dual Enrollment (DE) office. Annie is determined to help the DE students and parents and will never leave their questions unanswered. Most of the phone calls and emails are from unhappy parents and Annie always shows patience and compassion for each caller. I know that this has been a busy few years in the DE office and they would have been in trouble without Annie being there as such a wonderful team member. Thank you, Annie!!”

Beth Krowl [Global Education & International Services]

“Beth is one of the hardest-working people I know. She is constantly working with our non-English speaking students to ensure that they have a smooth entry into MCC. She is always available for assistance and clarification. In addition, she is simply a kind person who is a joy to work with.”

Bill Archer, Michelle Beechey, Yvonne Betts-Gamble, Cheryl Griggs, Kevin Klapka, Diane Navarro, Mary Slifer, Dennis Woodyard [Library and Learning Resources]

“These Access Services and Learning Resources staff were responsible for front line, in-person staffing at the Library and Learning Commons this year. Through their work we were able to keep these spaces open for the over 1,000 unique MCC students who needed access to technology to successfully complete their academic work. Additionally, they implemented the new reservation system that was used to keep library users safe, the curbside pickup program for library loans, and the laptop loaner program.”

Brenda Klein [Liberty Partnerships Program]

“Brenda is the ‘silent force’ behind the Liberty Partnerships Program- making sure required data is accurately recorded and reported, maintaining systems for tracking students, and keeping the office running in an organized and professional manner. Her thoroughness and attention to detail is admirable and is necessary to ensure all is in order for our funder, the New York State Dept. of Education. I can rely on Brenda to consistently bring her best skills and abilities to work every day. I know I don't tell her often enough how much I appreciate her- so I am now!”

Carmelita Brown-Wallace [Academic Foundations]

“Ms. Brown has empowered me to server the Upward Bound Programs with my technology expertise. We had to make a lot of changes to accommodate our students during the pandemic. Instead of shying away from necessary changes, she leaned into uncomfot. She learned Google Classroom, Zoom, and Naviance to continue to serve students as she has been for over 20 years. She has listened to me. She has encouraged me. She has let me cry on her virtual shoulder.”

Christine Cormack [Visual and Performing Arts]

“Christine provides calm and reliability when dealing with technology issues for our department and our students. She maintains our Macintosh Labs and is there for the students. She answers many emails and texts from me when technology suddenly doesn't work or changes in the network are made and my digital resources are not responding correctly. I've had issues synching calendars and she worked multiple days to figure out the fix and share it with me and she provides valuable support for our students and their Macintosh or Adobe issues.”

The Department Chairpersons [Academic Services and EDIWS]

“Throughout the pandemic, MCC's department chairs have worked tirelessly to support their departments and the college. There were multiple iterations of both the spring and fall 2021 master schedules and the chairs were responsible for overseeing this process as the college pivoted based on COVID-19 trends. Chairs also needed to respond to an increased number of student complaints during the pandemic. There was no shortage of unhappy students and families during the pandemic and handling these situations fell largely on our chairs. The chairs remained unfailingly responsive to these demands and we appreciate all they have done and continue to do for the college!”

Diane Wilson [Secretary, Mathematics]

“Diane has been an extraordinary help to the Mathematics Department this past year, from making campus runs for supplies and delivering them personally to our homes; to teaching herself new technology to create CIS templates for our 32 different course offerings; to learning how to create and manipulate documents and spreadsheets in Microsoft 365 allowing us to collaborate in real time even as we work remotely; to triaging the MANY math placement questions we receive from students, parents, advisors, and faculty. Personally, as the new department chair who took over in the midst of the pandemic from a long-serving member who retired in June, I found Diane's expertise invaluable. If she didn't know an answer to my numerous questions, she either figured it out or found out who to ask. Certainly the Mathematics Department runs as smoothly as it does thanks in large part to her efforts.”

Eileen Radigan [Education and Human Services]

“Eileen always makes time for people. She is a full time professor which is enough work all on its own. Yet, she makes time regularly to serve as a chair to find new employees for the college. She has mentored me professionally and asked good questions that still ring in my head when making decisions about my future. She does the same thing for each student she champions!”

Elizabeth Frizzell [Liberty Partnerships Program]

“Elizabeth always enthusiastically steps up to the plate to coordinate activities for students and readily helps team members with technology-related issues. She consistently accepts challenges placed in her path and offers creative ideas for addressing them. Throughout the pandemic she has helped create structures for delivering services remotely, including tutoring and student leadership activities. She is a tremendous asset to our team and I appreciate all she does for the youth and families we serve!”

Eric Berg [ESOL/Transitional Studies]

“Eric is an exemplary colleague who goes the extra mile for students with grace and humor and authenticity. He works tirelessly on behalf of our most vulnerable students, staying on the cutting edge of innovation, to engage and support student learning. He partners with the TCC for deeply insightful and compassionate conversations that buoy the the faculty around him. Thanks for all you do, Eric.”

Holly Preische [Advising and Transfer Services]

“Holly truly understands the work our office does and the complexity involved. She advocates for her team and for students. She works directly with students and knows what they need. Holly is supportive, kind, and makes herself available for questions. I don't know how she juggles it all!”

Instructional Technologies Staff

"I want to nominate the entire Instructional Technologies staff. They are without a doubt the MVP's of the COVID crisis. Without their knowledge and dedication we would never have made it through this last year. I am sure they are all stressed & overwhelmed. But there is never a time that I go into the FIC Zoom Room & someone isn't there to help me with a smile and a friendly word."

Jason Flack [Visual and Performing Arts]

Jason received three (3) submissions!

“He works effortlessly through difficult tasks, never looking for recognition. Always takes time to help everyone that asks. He is the consummate teacher, colleague and friend. He is always finding new ways to make teaching and working at MCC interesting and challenging. I admire his stamina and good nature. MCC is a better place because of Jason Flack's presence. He has worked tirelessly to improve on the art collection displayed at MCC's Brighton Campus. Once the college opens up again for all students, faculty and staff we will be greeted with the beauty of art throughout the halls.”

“Jason has always been a dedicated Professor and truly cares about all of the students at MCC, not only those in his classes. Over the past year, he has been teaching f2f classes, volunteering to help with the pooled testing, running the Mercer Gallery, creating and posting interesting videos for the [Mercer Art114 YouTube page](#), organizing and producing the student art show, conceived and created Farrell Way in the halls of building 12 as a homage to the pervious

Mercer Gallery Director, Professor Kathleen Farrell and has been decorating the Brighton Campus with more and more student and staff artwork. Those are just a few things he does around here! It's a pleasure to walk down the halls and see all the new additions. I am sure everyone on campus has noticed his handy work and when those of you working remotely return to campus you will see all that he has accomplished."

"The smooth and effective operation of any complex system requires a spirit of collegiality that both reflects and fosters mutual respect among all groups within the system. Collegiality consists of a shared decision-making process and a set of attitudes which cause individuals to regard the members of the various constituencies of the College as responsible for the success of the academic enterprise. Fundamental to this concept is the understanding that our College is a community of scholars who, out of mutual respect for the expertise and contributions of their colleagues, agree that shared decision-making in areas of recognized primary responsibility constitutes the means whereby we best preserves our academic integrity and most effectively attains our educational mission—learning.

"I would like to recognize Jason Flack for his outstanding efforts [in addition to his teaching] in maintaining and curating the Mercer Gallery throughout the pandemic. It takes both a remarkable and selfless person to put in the amount work to strengthen the argument that collegiality matters, not only in making the workplace more pleasant, but also by making it more productive. An integral part of a number of successes, Jason's efforts have not only contributed to the effectiveness of individuals, departments, and the College overall, he stands out as an exemplar of MCC's values.

"Thank you Flacko, for all you do."

Jason Parker [Tutoring and Academic Assistance Center]

"Jason and the staff in the TAAC continued to provide quality tutoring services during the pandemic. The quick shift to remote delivery was handled seamlessly and professionally by Jason and the TAAC staff. MCC received many complements about the quality of the tutoring services and providing these services during the pandemic was a huge benefit to our students. Jason's unflagging and positive leadership pushed the office to deliver more and more tutoring hours for our students. While many students would have preferred to meet in-person, the quality of the remote offerings were outstanding. A huge thank you to Jason and the rest of the office!"

Jim Cronmiller [Biology]

“Jim was the lead faculty member for the AAC&U Ensuring Students are Learning grant. He and his colleagues used the TILT framework to design an assignment in support of their course learning outcomes. And then submitted these artifacts for review using the AAC&U VALUE rubric for assessment of critical thinking as well as the effectiveness of the writing intensive high impact practice. Jim is thoughtful and reliable and so open to growth in his last year of full-time service at the college!”

Joel Freeman [Physics/Engineering]

“Joel has helped me immensely this spring with setting up and answering questions about my physics lab. He goes above and beyond to make sure I have everything I need to succeed!”

Kate Sweeney [Visual and Performing Arts/Theater]

“Kate is dedicated to our students our department and MCC as a whole. She has been working full time in a part time position in order to be here for our students. She is a jack of all trades, one has to be in order to run the theater and keep it safe for everyone. She's the lighting and sound expert, carpenter, painter, video editor, photographer, as well as producing the videos and she goes above and beyond what a full timer would do in this position.. To put it simply, without Kate, the show would not go on.”

Kelsey Bright [Academic Services]

“Kelsey Bright is involved in so many things but takes so little credit. She partners with Ryan Messenger on student complaints. She works with chairs, deans and Lyndsey Presutti on master schedule which has been especially challenging in the past year. She is always writing and publicizing the good work of others to the BOT and in other reports. She collaborates with Faculty Senate on Academic Policies. She works tirelessly with grace and a wicked sense of humor.”

Laurie Palmer [Nursing]

"Laurie has been the calm amidst the storm. She has provided guidance, understanding, support and advocated for all faculty and students throughout the pandemic. Her encouragement and tireless work ethic will leave a legacy beyond compare. Thank you fo rall you have done for myself, students, faculty and the MCC Community!"

Lori Laco-Schiano [Health Information Technology Program, Health Professions]

“Lori is a part-time faculty. Throughout her career, and especially this last year, Lori has contributed far beyond her teaching obligations, becoming actively involved in multiple Program administration tasks. Having only 1 other full-time faculty, her contributions have been instrumental in maintaining Program integrity, and student confidence.”

Lou Andolino [Anthropology/History/PoliticalScience/Sociology]

“15 years ago, after a notable career and retirement from RIT, Lou Andolino returned to serve his alma mater, Monroe Community College. It is clear that Lou genuinely cares for students and staff alike. He is a model for listening and supporting difficult conversations about politics and the world. His smile and laugh alone creates a positive environment. He has served as a mentor to so many and his impact will be long lasting.”

Lyndsey Presutti [Registration & Records]

“Lyndsey has worked tirelessly this past year to manage changes to the master schedule. The year was full of uncertainty, delayed deadlines, changes in directions, and tight timeframes. Each delay, tweak, or wholesale change ultimately landed on Lyndsey's shoulders. We cannot thank her enough for her leadership in these efforts!”

Margaret Kaminsky [STEM & Health]

“Margaret was steadfast in her advocacy for the STEM & Health Division. She worked long hours (an understatement) to support the departments during uncertain times. Margaret was able to make the most of difficult situations and find creative solutions that ultimately benefited our students. Behind the scenes, Margaret was instrumental in managing master schedule changes that resulted in opening up campus offerings for our students. I cannot thank her enough for all her dedication and assistance.”

Mary Jo Toepfer [Health Professions]

“Mary Jo holds us up by the bootstraps. Whatever the question; whatever the need; Mary Jo routinely offers (or seeks) workable solutions. We are fortunate to benefit from MJ's familiarity with key staff and which offices are appropriate to collaborate with. Her follow-through, and dedication to assure we have the tools needed to provide a rewarding educational experience to students is steadfast. Students alike find her a very approachable person, and a supportive 'go-to'.”

Maryann Cianciotto [Visual and Performing Arts]

“Maryann is there to assist faculty/staff/students with video needs. She assists in the video labs and provides equipment as available. She is highly competent in her field and takes every opportunity to be part of productions done for MCC. She is often asked for help from all as her office is right off a heavily trafficked hallway and she willingly and quietly assists those who ask. The "Administrative Services Bloopers" video shown at the April Town Hall is a fun example of her work. I, personally, will miss her tremendously as she always has a smile and a kind word when she sees you, her retirement is well-earned and deserved though painful for us!”

Marybeth Donnelly [Curriculum and Program Development]

“Marybeth is amazing! She is calm, kind and patient. Marybeth has done a fantastic job with DegreeWorks (not an easy task to say the least)! Her training sessions are in-depth, understandable, and thorough. She returns emails promptly and is always looking for ways to help our students. We are so very lucky to have her!”

Matthew Fox [Chair of ESOL/Transitional Studies]

“As Chair of ESOL and Transitional Studies, Matt [works with me closely] on a number of collaborative, inter-departmental initiatives. I don't know what I would do without his calm, patient, warm personality. He makes even the dreariest tasks manageable by both keeping a positive attitude and possessing a terrific sense of humor. Matt, my hats off to you!”

The MCC Curriculum Committee

"The last academic year has been extremely challenging for all of us. Many faculty are trying to update curriculum and do what is best for our students. I give much credit to faculty to implement these changes. The curriculum committee has been understaffed after losing several key people within the last year. I have seen the productivity increase however due to the new leadership (**Andy Freeman**) in that office. Many backlogged proposals are moving along in the system to help our students. While this is all happening, part of the CC team is also getting ready to implement a new cataloging system as well (Kuali).

“In my almost nine years working at this college, I love seeing good TEAM work. This department is a true example on how all departments should function at MCC. They keep our students to the core of what they do, but also work with so many different personalities across the entire college to validate academic rigor. The work that they do is extremely thankless and after seeing many of the edits they work on, it is clear they are working well before and after college operation hours. Due to their hard work many of our CTE faculty have become extremely successful accomplishing updates to make curriculum relevant to industry practice.

They have also helped to facilitate cross collaboration between departments like Engineering Technologies and the Math Department to incorporate a new technical math sequence. Their spirit of working together is the true example of cohesion. I would hope you consider giving them KUDOS as they have help our entire faculty get across so many finish lines with courses and academic programs. They truly deserved to be recognized as a great TEAM. I could not function my role without them and their guidance."

Melea Jones [Academic Foundations]

"Melea has had an incredible 'can-do' attitude throughout the entire pandemic. Whatever has needed to be done, she has said yes to. She has made phone calls, texted students relentlessly, and adapted our communication for a digital focused era. She takes the time to truly hear what her students are saying and resources them with what they need. She is patient and will spend hours with students to ensure that they are caught up on homework and have a plan for academic success. She is a gem and I am glad to work with her."

Michael Ofsowitz [Psychology]

"Mike is a pillar holding up a substantial portion of our department. Here's but one example: as our testing coordinator, Mike is the architect and caretaker of the dauntingly complex testing systems for PSY 101. I cannot overstate how vital this difficult work is for the hundreds of students who flow through PSY 101 each semester, and for the dozens of faculty who teach its sections. I am not sure how PSY 101 would have continued to exist without him."

Mike Jacobs [Humanities & Social Science]

"Mike was consistently available to help faculty & staff while remaining positive in spite of the many challenges and changes encountered during the past academic year. Mike also continued with efforts to grow the College's presence on the national level by working with partner groups and agencies. For example, he was appointed to the Modern Language Association's Community College Committee, selected to participate in the American Council of Learned Societies' Design Workshop for the New Academy, and helped orchestrate the Institute for the Humanities spring event, Culture, History, & Memory: Bridging Rochester's Past & Present. A huge thank you to Mike for all of his dedication to MCC, and our faculty, staff, and students."

Pamela Fornieri [ESOL/Transitional Studies]

"As one of the only two full-time ESOL faculty at the college, Pam's responsibilities are varied and numerous, yet you would never know it when you see or talk to her. Pam always has time for others. She is an excellent teacher always requested by students. She is a collaborative,

supportive colleague who mentors ESOL adjuncts and participates in the larger MCC mentoring program. And most importantly, she is a patient, compassionate person who helps any refugee or immigrant student who is confused or overwhelmed by MCC processes. Pam and Don Beech are kindred spirits, and she has spent the last year training with him before he retires. We are lucky to have colleagues like Pam, who work tirelessly to advocate for and support our refugee and immigrant students – the same students who enrich our campus and greatly contribute to our community after earning college degrees. I hear students thank Pam all the time. She deserves a thank you from us, too. Thank you, Pam!”

Pat Hunt, Ekrem Ozcelik and Sarah DeLaus [Public Safety]

“During our orientation sessions for Strong Foundations, our students did their pooled testing for the first time. This was a new and potentially overwhelming experience for them, but Pat, Sarah and Ekrem were so patient and helpful that they put the students at ease, and made them feel welcome and at home at MCC. Thanks Pat, Sarah and Ekrem for being so gracious and helpful to our new students!”

Peter Francione [Law/Criminal Justice]

“Over the last year, Peter has the arduous task of collecting data and preparing several reports regarding the Criminal Justice department's program assessment. This college-wide activity is lengthy in time and requires the energy and thoroughness that Peter has exhibits. He has also attempted to minimize the request of his colleagues and has shouldered most of the work. His work is far from complete but he is greatly appreciated for taking on this endeavor.”

Rebecca Horwitz [Chair, Psychology]

“Rebecca has been the steady hand at the helm that we very much needed over this past year and some. Despite being new to the position, she has been terrific, from day one, under the most adverse of situations. Always kind, measured, thoughtful, and wise, she has quickly become our department's center. She's collaborative, supportive of her colleagues, and a very fine leader, all wrapped up in one person.”

Rebecca Mack [Advising]

“Rebecca has been so helpful when Testing Services merged with Advising. She is always happy to give guidance or an explanation. She truly cares about our students, and is passionate about transfer pathways.”

Sean Scanlon [Learning Resources]

“During a recent webinar, Sean went above and beyond as a facilitator! First, there was an error with the Zoom link and all participants signed in as panelists. Next, the presenter's Zoom settings resulted in an orange box randomly appearing on his slides during his presentation. With both a sense of calm and humor, Sean redirected participants to sign in correctly and managed the presenter's screen. In spite of the snafus, Sean's professionalism and knowledge made the webinar a success. Thank you, Sean!”

Summer Strong Foundations Team [ESOL/Transitional Studies]

“We will be launching our summer cohort of Strong Foundations on Monday, May 10th, and ran successful orientation sessions for the students on Tuesday May 6th and Wednesday May 7th. This would not have been possible without the support and dedication of the following people:

- April Daniels and Eric Berg, our faculty leads.
- Jessica Saltzberg, our student advocate.
- Tony Yiannakos and Elizabeth Oinen, our summer lead teachers.
- Jordy Kelly-Sutliff and Renee Cerretto, our summer teaching assistants.

All these folks worked very hard at a very busy time of the semester to make this happen, and we appreciate them deeply.”