



President Wang's message to students



PHOTO | ALEXI GUIDUCCI

President Wang busy at work in her office in the Administration building.

By Alexia Guiducci
&
Ousman Joof

On July 1st, 2015 Dr. Jianping Wang began her journey as the sixth president of Mercer County Community College.

For the past 9 months, President Wang has become involved in the Mercer County Community, has made significant organizational changes, and has directed her time in serving the students of Mercer County Community College.

"I'm someone who wants to serve, and being the president only allows me to serve better and more people and who I am defines how I lead," Wang told The VOICE.

President Wang has spent her past year challenging employees to become part of a culture that promotes service and accountability. She hopes to form and shape students in a way that allows them to be distinguished

as graduates of Mercer.

However, for students to be able to achieve their goals, there has to be some changes. Dr. Wang states: "Don't serve the students the way we've always been serving them. Serve them the way they want to be served."

In order for this to happen students and everyone who works on campus has to make it happen.

Many students feel that the student services are getting better. For example, the phone calls are getting answered better than in prior years.

When asked if she noticed these changes, Ivett Figueroa, an Education major, said "My first year on campus I didn't find the students services very helpful and didn't use it much but, this year I found the student services to be very beneficial."

Currently, Dr. Wang is attempting to reduce the lines and confusion by online e-scheduling and e-advicing as well as through e-appointments. However,

that requires more changes and updating the current system. Once in place, students will get accustomed to receiving information through text messages.

"That is why I'm working very hard to bring in text messaging services to students so that students will get a text message alert to remind you your payments are due." Dr. Wang told The VOICE.

In response to this plan, Simran Chadha, Business Administration major, stated "I believe receiving text messaging instead of a emails will be a lot better and quicker to access."

"I believe she is on the right track but, a long term solution would be to develop an app that allows students to use blackboard over their phones and access their Mercer portal. This way students can receive notifications when there are any announcements" stated Otoniel "Jun" Del Valle, Digital Media Arts major.

CONT'D ON PAGE 8

Dean of Liberal Arts retires after 43 years of service at MCCC

By Ousman Joof
Senior Reporter

Mercer's Dean of Liberal Arts, Dr. Robin Schore, is retiring at the end of this year after already have been a teacher or administer on campus since 1973. He says after working 43 years, it was time to retire.

Before becoming a dean of the Liberal Arts Division in 2005, Dr. Schore was an English professor for 32 years. Throughout his time at Mercer, he has always kept an open door policy for his colleagues and students. If you were a Liberal Arts student who needed help in your classes, with a schedule, or anything in general, Dean Schore was the person to go see.

However, Dean Schore is not all work and no fun. In his spare time, he plays the guitar, tennis, and enjoys riding his bike. Yet despite his outgoing nature, he does not have a Facebook account nor has he ever tweeted.

In a recent interview with The VOICE, Dean Schore said his most memorable moments would be his entire time spent at Mercer because there was not one moment he found to be the most memorable during his time here.

When asked what his thoughts were of Dean Schore's contributions as Dean of Liberal Arts, Dr. Leonard R. Winogora, the William Paterson University on-site coordinator told the VOICE:

"Dean Schore was a valuable asset to the growth of Mercer and the Liberal Arts Division. His long service to the school, his experience, and his common sense has guided our college through good and bad times."

Steve Richman, Professor of Foreign Languages added his own thoughts, saying "I believe [Dean Schore] has done a great job as the Dean and was a big advocate for the students."

The person who has perhaps worked most closely with Dean Schore these past

10 years is Debra Stotland, his Executive Assistant. She said "I will miss his quirky sense of humor" and that she hopes in retirement that he also "enjoy[s] that grandson and many sunny days on the beach."

"I will miss his sense of humor, his open door policy, his pre-semester messages when he would keep everyone engaged and make little jokes. I'm shocked to see that he's leaving and he will be missed," said Guy Derosa, Professor of Political Science.

Donald Reichman, Coordinator of Computer Science & Division of Business and Technology said "He's a good friend of mine so, I will miss the professional friendship we have but I'm sure we will still see each other off campus. We both kind of grew up here together." After chuckling a little, he added "Congratulations! You probably should have retired a long time ago but, you finally got around to it and you will certainly be missed."

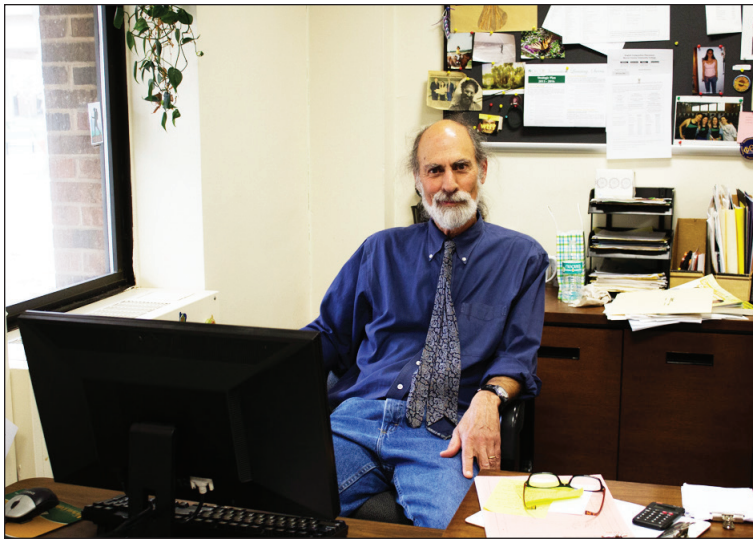


PHOTO | IVANA AIRO

Dean Robin Schore in his office in the Liberal Arts building.

When asked what advice he has for the next Dean of Liberal Arts, Dean Schore jokingly stated he would advise him or her to: "Keep your hands on your wallet and back against the wall. Speak softly and carry a big stick."

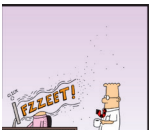
As for who will be selected to be the next Dean of the Liberal Arts Division, the selection process, which has recently begun, is being done

internally rather than having it outsourced to a third party.

The search committee has been put together with various faculty and staff members. The Co- Chairs of the committee are Professors Kathryn Paluscio and Andrea Lynch. The committee will be reviewing resumes of possible candidates and a selection should be made in May.



CAMPUS EVENTS:
MCCC plans to increase
tuition | PG. 2

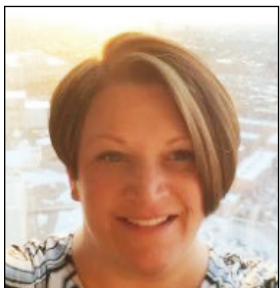


GAMES & CARTOONS:
Horoscopes, Sudoku, Dilbert
& Fuzzy | PG. 12

INDEX:
Campus Events2
Local News3
Entertainment.....4

Sports5
Viewpoints9

The Faculty Corner



Dr. Karen Bearce

Dr. Bearce and her team assisted MCCC in successfully passing Middle States this year. In July, she plans to return to her faculty position in Psychology.



Dr. Leonard Winogora

Assistant professor at MCCC and the Onsite Coordinator for William Paterson University, Dr. Winogora delivered a paper at Wadham College, Oxford University last month. The title of his paper was "The Environment: An Individual Ethical Perspective."



Professor Amy Ricco

Program Coordinator for Horticulture and Plant Science, Professor Ricco and her students competed last month at the Philadelphia Flower Show. They earned a Silver Award in the Education Category for their NJ Coastal Trail, which features a 22-foot lighthouse, a boardwalk surrounded by dunes, and animal topiaries.



Professor Lucas Kelly

Professor of Visual Arts, Kelly has recently displayed a couple of new pieces of art that he is currently working on. Check out his work online: <http://lucaskelly.com/home.html>

Campus Events

MCCC raises tuition costs by 6.5%

By Brodie Catherina
Reporter

On Tuesday, February 17, there was a meeting held at MCCC to discuss the annual increase in tuition. The meeting informed students and parents about the tuition increase in place for next year.

Mercer County Community College has had an annual tuition increase since 2014. The Mercer County Community College Board agreed to increase tuition this semester by 6.5 percent.

The reason for this is simply to generate more revenue for the college. For the 2016 semester, tuition will be increased again.

Last year's spring semester tuition for in-state students at Mercer County Community College was roughly \$3,400. Compare that to this year's tuition of roughly \$3,700, for students who are taking 12 credits per semester.

Mercer has been hiking up tuition by nearly \$300, each year, for a number of years now. Between 2000 to 2002, Mercer County Community College did not increase tuition at all.

Between 2004 to 2006 there was an increase in tuition by 4 percent. After 2006, tuition jumped 8.2 percent, and in 2009 it rose a remarkable 9.5 percent. Over the last couple of years tuition increases at Mercer have become a major priority.

There were a total of 25 students, parents, and faculty members at the meeting on Tuesday to discuss the tuition increase.

"Mercer County Community College tuition increase is based on the long term benefits," stated Christine Reid, from the MCCC Bursar's Office. She added, "A tuition increase at this university will mainly benefit the overall credibility of this school."

The new revenue should eventually help generate more faculty, more facilities, and eventually more students. When surveyed, all but one of the attendees at the February 17th meeting disagreed with this tuition increase. Most of the people in the survey were outraged.

MCCC student Alec Bruns expressed his support for the tuition increase: "We need to make this school larger, and create better facilities. The only way to do that is to increase tuition."

Bruns continued to reference some of the underdeveloped sections of Mercer, such as the cafeteria. The increase in tuition at Mercer could benefit the development of certain areas at Mercer.

MCCC is not the only college that has increased tuition this semester. The Rutgers Board of Governors voted to raise tuition at the New Brunswick campus. Rutgers University has increased tuition for the 2015-2016



school year as well. Currently it is around a 2.5 percent increase, or roughly \$300.

Rutgers students will pay roughly \$13,000, and students who live on campus will pay \$24,000 to room and board. The Rutgers Board of Governors also recently approved a \$3.8 billion budget for the upcoming semester.

Last spring, prior to the tuition increase, students gathered to protest a veto of the bill passed which increased tuition at the university.

At Seton Hall University, tuition rose 3.8 percent. Students attending Seton Hall will have to pay \$34,750 for tuition and fees alone.

The private university does have a program in place for incoming freshman who placed in the top 10 of their high school class based on

SAT scores. Because of this program, those students will be able to pay the tuition and fees assessed with the Rutgers University.

Whether someone believes that collegiate tuition should be increased or decreased is a matter of opinion. There are many responses and counterarguments on this topic. If you do not agree with the tuition increase, it is important to know that most universities have plans in place that will benefit the schools in the near future.

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Mercer works toward complying with federal law

By Christine Villafuerte
Reporter

Information is being sent out and displayed for students and staff of Mercer County Community College to reach the requirements of Title IX.

The staff at MCCC is taking measures to comply with Title IX. Several regulatory deficiencies were found on campus after a federal Department of Education investigation concerning sexual discrimination complaints.

The Department of Education received and investigated a complaint that MCCC did not publish grievance procedures for the proper resolution of Title IX complaints alleging discrimination.

Public Relations manager, Jim Gardner confirmed that "the Office of Civil Rights issued communication of findings and recommendations sometime in early Fall 2015 semester. ... They wanted the college to do a more effective

job of communicating to students, faculty, and staff Title IX and the grievance procedure if you have a Title IX-related complaint."

Title IX is a federal law that prohibits discrimination of sex in federally funded programs. Title IX states: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

To comply with the all that is set forth, plans have been set into action. All students, faculty and staff, have been provided the contact information for Title IX Coordinator Jose Fernandez, through broadcast emails and postings for both non-discrimination notice and procedures.

The staff at Mercer County Community College has revised procedures for Title IX. Accordingly, the Office of Civil Rights has approved revised procedures. The MCCC's Non-Discrimination Notice and procedure has

been sent to all students and employees via broadcast emails.

It is also being posted on employer's bulletin boards, MCCC's E-Newsletter, the admissions website, the human resource's website and employee application. A placeholder for the notice has been provided for the next college catalog, the next student handbook and on student applications.

Concerning training, key staff members received comprehensive Title IX training this semester and will continue training over the summer of 2016. Online Title IX training is being provided to all MCCC students, faculty, and staff. An information pamphlet regarding Title IX is in production for June 2016.

"It certainly is something very important, it's something that the college takes very seriously, and that's why we were happy to work with the department of education to make sure we are fully in compliance with everything that is set forth in Title IX," Gardner explained.

A student conducted

survey found that 55% of 20 students did not know what Title IX was and 62% were not aware of the grievance procedure. Currently, the grievance procedure is on page 65 in the student handbook and this will be expanded to include much more in depth information.

The grievance procedure states that there are two types of complaints - formal and informal complaints. This is all explained in the student handbook.

Jose Fernandez, the Executive Director of Compliance and Human Resources, is the college staff member to whom students should register complaints. There are also a number of counselors and other individuals available if the student just wants to talk.

"Again it could be an informal complaint, where the student simply wants it resolved or it can be a formal complaint which can include hearings for the alleged offender and possible disciplinary action if there's a finding that things weren't done in accordance with Title 9" states Gardner.

Local News

Homelessness in Mercer County

4 - 4 - 16



By John Flanagan
Reporter

On March 2, Mercer County Department of Human Services Director Marygrace Billek presented a lecture on campus regarding the County's aggressive effort to end chronic homelessness. Her presentation was part of the Mercer County Community College Lecture Series, entitled "The Journey to End Homelessness in Mercer County."

In her talk, Billek discussed how this seven year government project has cultivated a broad range of partnerships, and the successful housing of more than 400 families and individuals. As a result of these efforts, Mercer County's work to end chronic homelessness has been nationally recognized.

As part of the presentation, Billek gave a little background regarding the community-wide strategy employed by the Mercer County Board of Social Services, the Mercer Alliance to End Homelessness, the City of Trenton, and other community partners to end homelessness.

In 2008, Mercer Alliance engaged its government

partners to conduct a year-long study. Dennis Culhane, a professor and researcher on family shelter utilization, developed best practices around Rapid Rehousing. This approach was then applied to Mercer's situation.

Previously, the old system kept people homeless and its cost to shelter a person was astronomical. Also, there was no front end assessment to help identify and prioritize families with the highest needs and those who could be rapidly rehoused. People were staying in transitional housing too long, and were not exiting to permanent housing.

Overall, the system was not ending homelessness and cost \$10M from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program alone. The average length of homelessness was 337 days. This period included: going to a shelter, proceeding from there to transitional housing, before finally managing permanent housing.

The strategy was then to find funding for a Rapid Rehousing model. One approach was to align all local funders (county, city, and county welfare agency) in one system.

This approach reflected

President Obama's bill, the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009. The HEARTH Act amended and reauthorized the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act with substantial changes, which included as a goal shortening the length of time a person is homeless. It also created the program for Rapid Rehousing that would combine rental assistance and case management.

Almost half of the residents in Mercer have household incomes below \$20,000; and 33 percent live below the federal poverty line. There are currently 26,000 poor in Trenton.

Two years ago the police cleared out some train station campers because they posed a health and safety risk. The state's decision to clear out the encampments offered an opportunity to steer homeless people to social service programs, jobs, and permanent housing. For example, Monarch Housing Consultants as a founding member of the New Jersey Advocacy Network to End Homelessness, has been an advocate to enact state legislation which would allow individual counties to set up

Homeless Trust Funds. These trust funds would serve as a valuable source of funding for supportive services, operating rental assistance, and/or capital funding to create new permanent housing for the homeless across the state.

Mercer Alliance is a leader in efforts across the country to end homelessness.

Mercer County has learned how to move people rapidly out of homelessness and into homes through our Housing First and Rapid Rehousing programs. Mercer County leads the state in ending homeless. Only 6.4% of families reported being homeless for over a year. 70.2% had been homeless for less than 3 months. Only 4% of families re-entered homelessness after being permanently housed.

By creating a System to End Homelessness for Singles, the Mercer Alliance convened a committee to begin developing a new system. Through the analysis of HMIS data on singles the Alliance found: 1,463 persons entered shelters in 2012. Sixty percent exited after 1-3 stays and did not return to homelessness. Forty percent were chronic users of the shelter system, with half possessing disabilities. This is the population most in need

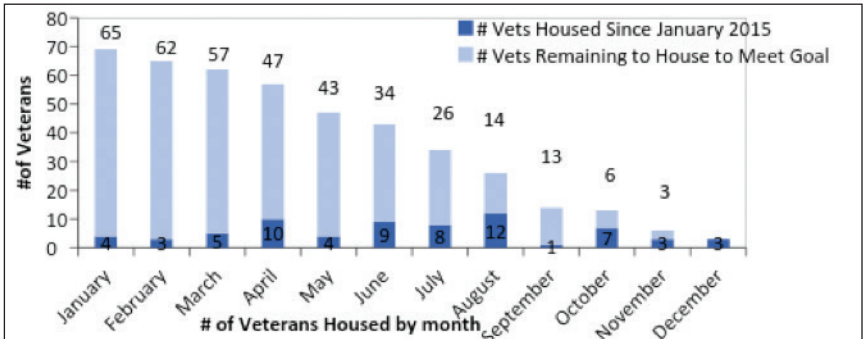
of housing in our community. Two very crucial operations mentioned were a Coordinated Entry & Assessment System (CEAS) which is being created for individuals who are homeless in the Trenton/Mercer community. This system will screen and assess the needs of the homeless, provide them with needed health and social services, and move them as quickly as possible to permanent housing. (See chart below).

The other group that the program focuses on assisting is Veterans who need assistance. The pilot program has done well but currently it is unclear whether there will be enough funding to continue in the long term. The goal is to build the capacity of the programs to quickly house individuals who are displaced from their homes.

The programs are looking into developing lasting strategies to address homelessness among the mentally ill, drug addicted, and otherwise compromised.

Marygrace Billek's slogan offers promise to the continued success of the program: "We can; We must; and, We will!"

COORDINATED ENTRY & ASSESSMENT SYSTEM (CEAS)	
SYSTEM COMPONENTS	FUNCTION
CEAS Center Operated by the City of Trenton Dept. of Health & Human Services	Screening & Assessment to determine the level of permanent housing and services needed by individuals who are sheltered and unsheltered Coordination of community services and resources to support the goal of permanent housing Mobile Outreach to engage the street homeless
Emergency Shelter Operated by the Rescue Mission of Trenton	Overnight shelter while permanent housing is being secured
Day Center Operated by the Rescue Mission of Trenton	Safe place to congregate where CEAS staff can engage the individuals in Services and provide transportation when needed.
Emergency Assistance Operated by Mercer County Board of Social Services	Provision of Emergency Assistance including General Assistance, temporary Rental assistance, emergency shelter and transitional housing.



Illegal immigrants arrested in Princeton by Federal Agents

By Maria Mora
Junior Reporter

On February 11, two men were arrested by Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers (ICE), on Wiggins St. in Princeton, NJ. It is said that they had been in the Deportation list since 2014 and that one of the individuals had a drunk driving conviction.

Normally we do not hear about ICE deporting fellow residents on a daily basis. Often we are blind to the struggles of Immigrants from all over the world trying to live a normal life, and work to make their dreams come true.

But unlike legal citizens and residents, illegal immigrants must live in fear

of being deported.

Ever since the events in Princeton happened, more illegal immigrants have started looking for ways to protect themselves if they ever find themselves face to face with ICE officials, as well as ways to exercise their rights if they are actually going to be detained.

In 2007, it was determined that New Jersey was the fifth state with the most immigrants, behind New York, Florida, Texas, and California. Since then, the numbers have only grown.

Currently, communities have started putting together pamphlets and handing them out so that immigrants know their legal rights. These pamphlets are written in both Spanish and English and lists the rights provided to everyone

while living in the United States. For example, everyone has the right to remain silent, the right to an attorney, and the right to not sign any papers without speaking with an attorney before hand.

These pamphlets are being made to educate individuals on what they can do to protect themselves from unfavorable situations.

An anonymous source who resides in Mercer County confirmed these fears. They said, "I come here to work and live the life I was given. I think I have the right to provide for my family, and give them a better life than I had growing up in my Country. I don't seek problems, I get up everyday to go to work. I don't wanna be afraid to be deported back to my country every time I step out of my home."

Another Mercer County resident opposed those thoughts and said, "I believe that people who come here illegally should be held accountable for breaking the law. You break the law, its eventually gonna catch up with you."

Immigration Laws and Reforms are constantly being discussed among government officials. One of the successful laws that was passed in the past couple of years was DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals). DACA allows kids over the age of 15, who have continuously resided in The United States, and are enrolled in school or have already obtained a High School Diploma or GED to gain a two year residency without fear of deportation.

Those who apply and

are accepted can also apply for a Social Security, and a Drivers License. Other guidelines and rules apply to this reform, which can be found in the Official Website of the Department of Homeland Security.

Many Mercer County Community College students who are currently studying have been able to enroll due to this Deferred Action.

Everyone knows that the United States is the "Land of the Free," but for a high percentage of those who reside in this country, there is no freedom.

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The Celebrity Scoop



Ivanka Trump

Ivanka Trump gave birth a week ago to her third child, Theodore James, on March 27. Both baby and mother are healthy and happy.



Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice

Despite mixed reviews from critics, the newest DC Comics film shattered box office records last week and grossed \$166 million in North America on its opening weekend. The film had a worldwide opening of \$422.5 million which makes it the biggest opening for a superhero film.



Lilly Wachowski

Director, writer, and producer of such films like *The Matrix*, *V for Vendetta*, and *Cloud Atlas*, Lilly Wachowski made her first public appearance after coming out as transgender while attending this year's GLAAD Media Awards show in Beverly Hills, CA. She took the stage to accept an award for outstanding drama series, *Sense8*.



Women's Soccer Team

Five members of the U. S. women's national soccer team have filed a wage-discrimination action against the U. S. Soccer Federation with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

ISO presents cultural fashion show

By Onika George
Reporter

The International Student Organization is known for promoting diversity and enjoying different cultures on campus. The organization is open to anyone of any color, race, ethnicity and nationality.

Every year around the spring term, the club embraces their name by having the Cultural fashion show which allows different people to either walk down the aisle, do a little cultural piece, or even both. Although the organization is small, they are a very active group. Last year, the fashion show was located in the cafeteria of Mercer Community College.

According to secretary of the ISO, Peppina Dmehyo, "Last year as well as this year, students of MCCC are representing a country of their choice while being dressed in an outfit of the country. Music was played in accordance to their culture as they walked and announcers briefly talked about their outfits as they walked. Students who participate usually range from about fifteen to twenty people. It is a fun and educational event for all to learn and enjoy."

The last fashion show presented countries like Thailand, China, Japan, United States, Malaysia, Haiti, Puerto Rico, Ghana, Liberia, and South Korea. This year were Haiti, Guatemala, India, Japan, Gambia, Philippines, Italy, America, Philippines, Thailand, Morocco, Vietnam, Liberia,

Cuba, and Korea participated.

This year was full of "zazz." Models like Obidiah and his partner, Roberta Peters, stole the show with their Liberian dance. Their music also got the crowd dancing themselves!

Miss Haiti, Astride Josil, strutted the cafeteria runway showing off her blue and red outfit. Mr. Cuba, Richard Ward, also stole the show with his dancing and flinging of his hat and his jacket as he also grabbed Miss Haiti who was dancing beautifully in tune with him.

Ousman Joof, who did Gambia danced all the way from the catwalk to the stage and back, got the audience's attention as well. Seongyu Lim, who represented his country of South Korea did a demonstration of the martial art of his country, Taekwondo and was very skillful in his acts.

According to Silpa Joseph, Miss India, "I think



PHOTO | ONIKA GEORGE

The entire fashion show team representing multiple countries and cultures from around the world.



PHOTO | ONIKA GEORGE

Astride Josil representing Miss Haiti at the ISO fashion show.



PHOTO | ONIKA GEORGE

Students representing Miss India and Miss Guatemala before the show started.

this year was so lively and I hope that next year more persons come to enjoy what we enjoyed next year. The experience was wonderful and it felt really cultural, it was a lot of fun being part of it and the audience had a really nice vibe."

The International Student Organization, encourages everyone who is a student at MCCC to be a part of this diverse, fun club and hopefully next time you will be part of the fashion show and other events that the club hosts.

The truth behind April Fool's Day: Are Pranks going too far?

By Robby Rowley
Reporter

For those of you who do not already know, April fool's day takes place on the first day of April every year. It is customary to play pranks or jokes on unsuspecting victims, then shout the phrase "April fools!" after the gag is complete.

This is not technically a public holiday, but it is celebrated internationally as if it was one already. Due to being well-known internationally, the holiday goes by many names: Day of Hilaria, All Fool's day, spring Holi festival, and of course, the Feast of Fools.

With all the formalities in check, it is time to get down to the real question at hand: are pranks going too far? We can all agree that some pranks are pretty hilarious and a lot of people really work hard to take the idea of pranking to the "next level."

How far can pranks go before they are either not

funny or someone winds up hurt? You have probably seen some hysterical internet videos featuring pranks pulled in different ways.

Even the TruTV show "Impractical Jokers" features a lot of outstanding comedic pranks. But do you, the readers, know the main reason why all these tricks are funny? The answer is because it is not on you! If you were pranked, your opinion might change.

Certain people simply cannot take a joke, even in the best situations. Those types of people we like to refer to as "party poopers."

In many cases, plenty of people around you are good sports when it comes to pranking. They enjoy a hilarious practical joke as much as the next person. Other people can be comedic hypocrites; meaning they can dish out pranks, but not take them lightly.

However, a lot of jokes can go too far. Here at MCCC, both students and a few faculty members enjoy the fun and

hilarity that comes with April fool's day, but even they have to understand how far a prank can go.

"April fools day is great

because I always get my mom good, but I'd never really take it too far, she's getting old" said MCCC student Sarah Cronin.



Dare to Dream comes to MCCC

By Rashida Diwan
&
Kristen Robinson

Dare to Dream is a conference that occurs in different counties across the state of New Jersey. The conference is developed and produced by the State Department of Education and the Office of Special Education.

Dare to Dream brings together students from different high schools who have the same issues and concerns about where to go after graduation.

The DREAM Program at Mercer County Community College participates in the conference every year. The DREAM Program provides students who would like to attend college with supports such as peer mentors, tutoring, and classroom accommodations.

Students from the program attend the conference and explain the options of what you can do after high school. DREAM students create a panel and discuss the process of applying to the program and what it is like to attend college.

A keynote speaker is chosen by the DREAM Program faculty to describe life at Mercer and what their personal experience has been in college. Dr. Sue Onaitis, the Director of the DREAM Program, Tiffany Willner, DREAM Program professor, and Kristen Robinson, Keynote Speaker, spoke with The College Voice about this year's Dare to Dream conference that takes place on April 29 at 9am on-campus at the

Conference Center.

What inspired you to become the leader of the DREAM Program?

Dr. Onaitis: In the years before the DREAM program started, we met students each year who wanted a college experience but needed extra supports to have the experience be successful. So we had a dream or a vision, that we could have a way to put these supports into place so that college would be an option for more students.

In 2005 we heard about an opportunity to apply for a grant through the National Down Syndrome Society to develop a program, which turned out to be the DREAM Program, which would provide the extra support, such as peer mentors, and staff to make college a possibility for students who could benefit from those supports. With the support of our college administration we applied for and were awarded a three-year grant.

We started out the program with nine students and we currently have 30 students. Each year more students joined us while other students completed their goals and moved on. We have worked with about 120 students in our ten years of operation.

What is the Dare to Dream Conference about?

Dr. Onaitis: Dare to Dream is a conference that actually happens in many different counties across the state of New Jersey, produced and developed by the State Department



PHOTO | COLLEGE VOICE

Reporters Rshida Diwan and Kristen Robinson with Dr. Sue Onaitis and Professor Tiffany Wilner

of Education and Office of Special Education. The goal of the conference is to inspire and motivate and bring together high school students who have unique learning differences to help them to prepare to transition to life after high school.

How do you pick the keynote speaker?

Dr. Onaitis: That is always a challenge because all of our DREAM students have so many talents and so much to say! We would like to give everyone the chance to do it, but we can only choose one. We look for a student who has worked really hard to achieve his or her goals, who feels comfortable giving a speech to an audience of over 200 students and professionals and that can speak honestly about what the college experience is all about.

Why is being an advocate for your students so important?

Dr. Onaitis: My goal in being an advocate for our students is two-fold. First, we want to model and teach advocacy skills to our students so they can speak

up for themselves and have the supports that not only help them to be independent but also help them feel good about the lives they create for themselves. Self-advocacy leads to making things happen according to your needs and wants. Secondly, advocating for students and teaching them self-advocacy skills creates an awareness in the broader community that we are all have rights to create the lives we want, and not the lives that others have chosen for us.

How were you chosen to be our keynote? In your own words, how would you describe the DREAM Program to incoming students?

Kristen Robinson: It will be hard at first but then it gets easier as time goes by and the longer you are in the DREAM Program.

What inspired you to work as a professor with the DREAM Program?

Professor Willner: I heard through a friend that I worked with [who was a tutor in the Learning Center] that there was going

to be a job opening here and she thought I would be a perfect fit.

How did you become involved with the Dare to Dream conference speaker?

Kristen Robinson: Dr. Onaitis said I was a hardworking student and she thought I would be a perfect candidate, especially because I'm taking public speaking this semester.

What will your speech be about?

Kristen Robinson: It will be about myself and my accomplishments, what I was like as a child.

How do you feel about talking as our keynote?

Professor Willner: The Dare to Dream conference has been going on for longer than I've been employed at Mercer County Community College. It had already been established and the program was already involved in the Dare to Dream conference. Since I teach the Career and Life Skills course for the program it was just natural that I worked with the students that presented at the Dare to Dream conference.

What is the best advice you could give to your students speaker?

Kristen Robinson: I'm excited and pumped up! I'm ready to get people's attention.

What has your experience been like at Mercer?

Kristen Robinson: It's been stressful at times but

CONT'D ON PAGE 8

March Madness basketball is back and bigger then ever

By Alexia Guiducci
Reporter

March is here and that means March Madness. This year, the men's college basketball first round of started on March 17.

Interestingly, the term "March Madness" was first mentioned in 1908 in Illinois when an 8-team high school basketball tournament took place.

Originally, only eight teams participated in the tournament. This number increased in 2001 when the NCAA introduced a 65-team tournament.

This year, 68 teams entered the tournament with 8 teams competing in a head-to-head competition where they battle for the 16th seed spot in each of the four regions.

The current 2016 NCAA March Madness tournament marks the 78th edition of the widely popular sporting event.

The four first-seeded

teams of the current tournament were Kansas, North Carolina, Oregon, and Virginia. The Kansas Jayhawks led by coach Bill Self are constant tournament title contender with 44 total appearances, 14 Final Four appearances, and 3 National Championship titles.

Currently, the North Carolina Tar Heels led by coach Roy Williams are heading into the finals on April 4. They appear as a strong title contender with 46 tournament appearances, 18 Final Four appearances, and 5 National Championship titles.

To have a decent bracket this year would take a miracle. Multiple upsets happening in this year's tournament lead to brackets being destroyed.

Everyone loves a Cinderella team upsetting a top ranked team but not when it comes to destroying brackets. "I love a good game but not if it means destroying my bracket in the process" explains MCCC student Michael Naples.

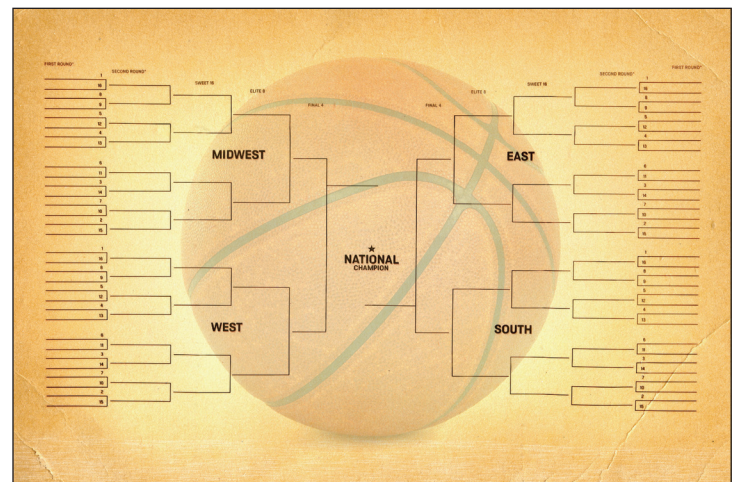
For instance, fifteenth seeded Middle Tennessee Blue Raiders beat the second seeded Michigan State Spartans in the first round was one of the biggest upsets thus far.

Another upset was Hawaii's dominant showing against Cal with multiple defensive stops and great plays on the offensive side to stun the Cal Golden Bears.

The eleventh seeded Panthers of Northern Iowa upset the sixth seeded Longhorns of Texas as senior Paul Jespersen hit a buzzer beating half-court bank shot to send his team into the round of 32.

"I'm really excited to see who ends up in the Final Four my family and I watch the games every year" states Jessica Mayer, second year student at MCCC.

This weekend is the Final Four, the last four teams will battle it out to see who advances to the National Championship Game on Monday. The matchup features the



Wildcats of Villanova versus the Sooners of Oklahoma. The Wildcats are on a hot streak with their shooting, defensive pressure and rebounding throughout the tournament.

The following game is between the North Carolina Tar Heels verse the Syracuse Orange. Syracuse is coming of a remarkable 2nd half performance lead by true freshmen forward Malachi Richardson who scored 21 of his 23 points in the

second half to defeat the 1 seeded Virginia Cavaliers.

UNC however is mostly known for getting out and pushing the ball and getting the ball inside to their lead scorer and their best player Brice Johnson. Tune into TBS at 6:09 and 8:49 to catch the Final Four action on April 2.

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Understanding the

Election 2016: Why is it important?

By Pablo Araya-Chacon
Senior Reporter

Every four years in the United States, there is a Presidential Election so that the American people can select their future president into office. This year is no different from previous elections. However, knowing how the process works towards being nominated may help to understand how one becomes president.

In an election year we have candidates from both parties either Democrat or Republican running for the highest office of the land. This year we started with a total of five Democratic Candidates and seventeen Republican Candidates. Currently, we only have two Democratic Candidates who are Hillary R. Clinton and Bernie Sanders, while the Republican Party has three remaining candidates: Donald J. Trump, Ted Cruz and John Kasich. These candidates have remained in the race to become President, because of the amount of delegates that they have.

Republican

Candidates:



Donald J. Trump
Delegates Won- 739



Ted Cruz
Delegates Won-465



John Kasich
Delegates Won-143

Democratic

Candidates:



Hillary R. Clinton
Delegates Won-1243



Bernie Sanders
Delegates Won-975

What are Delegates?

A delegate is a member of the House of Representatives in which they state votes for. In order to win a delegate on the Democratic side the vote. While the Republican side does not have the requirement making it mandatory. This means that if a candidate from either party would receive 40 percent of the delegates from that state. At the end with the majority of delegates are usually elected as the President.

The only difference in the selection process between the Republican delegates called Superdelegates. Superdelegates are not assigned but instead independently choose a candidate. Then at the Democratic Candidate of their choosing.

As the candidates are winning the delegates, many might wonder election year there are primaries and caucuses in which those candidates between a primary and caucus is minimal, but it can make a difference the nomination for president. During a primary, citizens would enter would go vote for their candidate. During the voting process, each

A caucus is a similar, yet different process than a primary. During their designated spots. One room would be democratic and the other room would be divided into the number of candidates in each party a side to demonstrate who they want as their candidate. If a group the requirements for a delegate, then voters for the other candidate candidate that has a majority.

Both primaries and caucuses are either open or closed elections. for either party and vote for the candidate that they want to see a independent and nonpartisan voters to go because an open election opposite party. For example, a democratic voter can go and vote

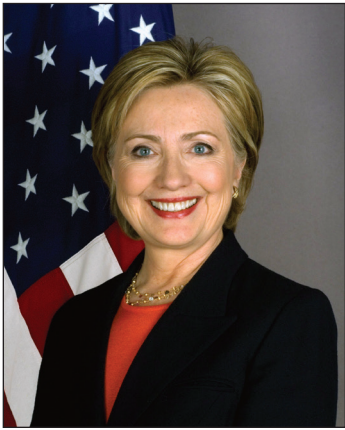
A closed primary or caucus is different from an open primary or caucus voters have to vote for those in their political party. Closed election nonpartisan voters. During a closed election voters vote for the candidate



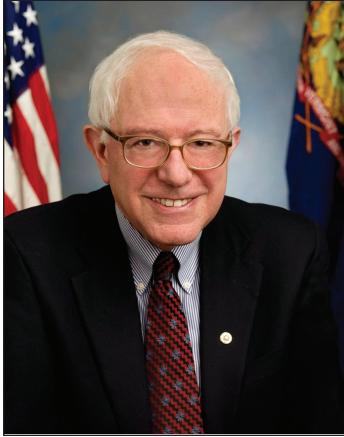
the US Primaries

Pablo Araya-Chacon
Senior Reporter

General Election: Possible Outcomes



Hillary R. Clinton



Bernie Sanders

es in which they are pledged to represent the candidate that the Democratic side, the candidate must win 15 percent or more of ve the requirement to win a total of delegates, some states are ate from either party had a 40 percent votes in favor of them they hat state. At the end of the primaries and caucuses the candidate d as the Presidential nominee.

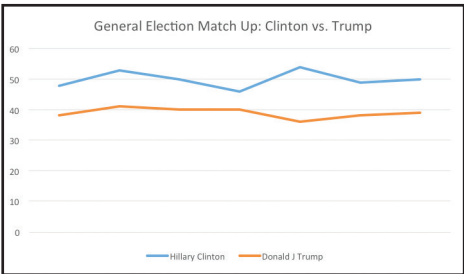
ween the Republicans and Democrats is that Democrats also have es are not assigned to a candidate by the number of state votes, hen at the Democratic National Convention, they vote for the

any might wonder how the voting system works. During the n which those candidates receive their votes. The difference can make a difference between winning the nomination or losing itizens would enter designated areas in their town in which they ing process, each voter has to be registered.

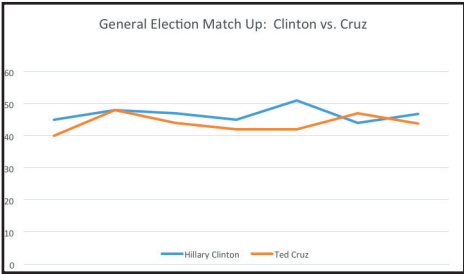
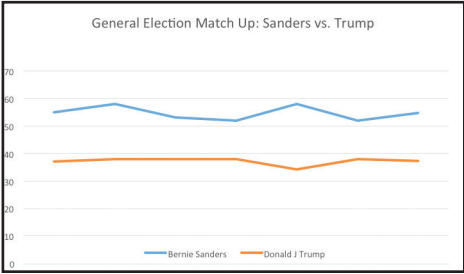
a primary. During a caucus voters for each party would go to ocratic and the other would be republican. During this event the dates in each party. From there, the voters would have to choose ndidate. If a group for a candidate is small and does not meet he other candidates must persuade those voters to vote for the

closed elections. During an open primary or caucus, voters can go ey want to see as the nominee. Open elections usually favor more ise an open election allows them to vote for candidates on the can go and vote for a republican candidate or vice versa.

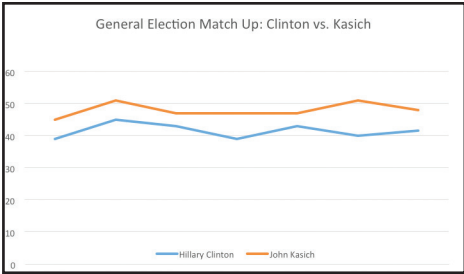
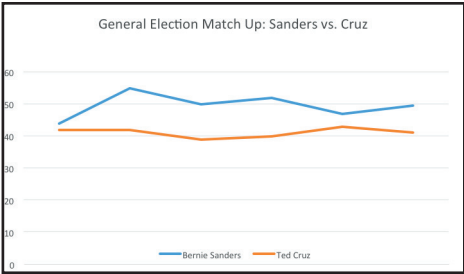
open primary or caucus. During a closed primary or caucus, ty. Closed elections favor partisan voters and not independent or ers vote for the candidate in there designated voting preferences.



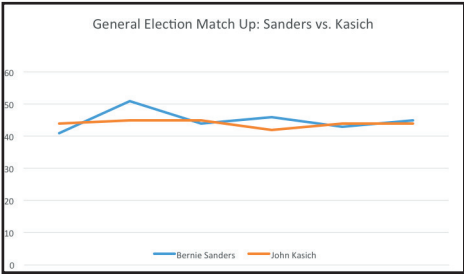
Donald J. Trump



Ted Cruz



John Kasich



So Why are elections important?

Elections are important because they are the ones that determine who would represent the country or state. Elections help us vote into office new presidents, governors, senators, and congressmen/women. Elections help us, the people of the United States, vote for the right person.

Many people do not vote, and so many times you hear someone say why was that person elected. If just everyone went and voted we could have the right person in office. The ones that could offer a change and the ones that could make a difference to this nation.

CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

Dr. Wang has faced some difficulties throughout the year. Change has been one of the biggest difficulties she has had to overcome. "People are often reluctant to change some people are downright not willing to change."

Along with technological advancements, money has been invested in a full time security supervisor for the evening and weekends. "We didn't have one before we only had part time security and now we're going to have full time and that gives the college a better protection for all the people here" Dr. Wang tells The VOICE.

Partnerships with other colleges have also been formed to create more opportunities for the students. Recently an agreement had been signed with Fairleigh Dickinson so, that students who graduate from Mercer can attend school at Fairleigh Dickinson and receive a 40% discount there.

"I think the partnership with four-year colleges would be great and the agreement made with Fairleigh Dickerson and hopefully future four-year school will help with the financial many students face" stated Business Administration major Wai-Kit Fung.

As far as future plans Dr. Wang wants to have diversity. The focus is not on ethnic backgrounds but on people who have different life and cultural experiences.

DARE TO DREAM

CONT'D FROM PAGE 5

overall a very interesting experience. I've made so many friends in the DREAM Program. I didn't have any friends in the other schools I went to so it was great to have friends here.

Professor Willner: To be themselves. To build on their strengths and to follow their dreams.

How did you develop the Superhero concept for the Dare to Dream conference?

Professor Willner: I came up with the subject because it was our theme from the fall semester's class and it seemed to suit everyone in the program. Everyone could relate to a superhero whether it was a comic hero or a real live person. I liked how they were able to take their strengths, relate it to a specific superhero, and follow and build on their success similar to the superhero that they admired.

Why is self-advocacy important for students?

Professor Willner: Self-advocacy is very important for not just DREAM students but for all students because they need to be able to speak up for their needs and their wants and use self-discipline to actually reach their career and life goals. Actually being able to voice what they want because if they don't other people are guiding them instead of people guiding themselves.

What does the Dare to Dream conference mean to you personally?

Dr. Onaitis: The day of the Dare to Dream conference is one of my favorite days of the year. I am happy for our DREAM students, who have the opportunity to take leadership roles as they encourage, inspire and guide students in high school who are making important decisions about life after high school. I'm happy for the high school students who have the opportunity to connect with other students and learn about life options. When I'm at the conference I feel so fortunate to be surrounded by people who are really eager and interested in moving forward in the way they feel is best for them. It's so meaningful to me; a beautiful, beautiful experience.

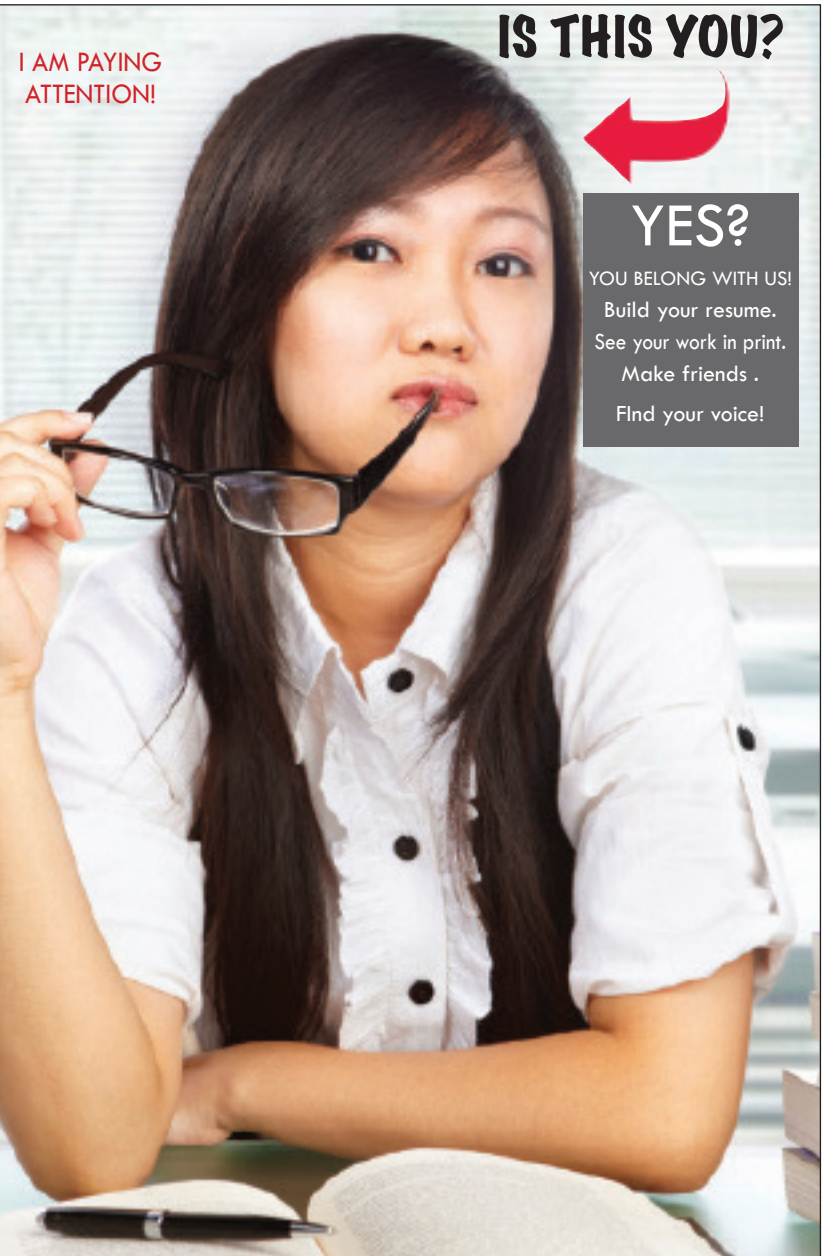
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Does it pay to be a woman?

Exploring the gender pay wage gap

AS I SEE IT**Nick Sieczkowski**

In the past fifty years, women's roles have changed in the current US society. Most women are now working outside of the home and competing with men in the work force for equal pay. However, women are still making less than men in most professions.

According to The Institute for Women's Policy Research, in 2014, women who worked full time were only making 79 cents per dollar compared to a man. This is a gender wage gap of approximately 21 percent. The way the pay gap is calculated is by comparing men's earnings to all women that are working. We see that there is a major wage gap between men and women.

One reason that there is such an inequality of pay is that men and women are not doing the same jobs. Men generally hold higher paying jobs because of the job type, job level, or type of industry. In most cases, women who have the same qualifications doing the same job are not making 21 percent less than their male counterparts. But they are still not making equal pay.

There are many factors

that may affect the gender wage gap. Most of the jobs that are in industry that are higher paid are dominated by men. Women are mostly working in jobs that pay less than jobs that are traditionally done by men.

Women have crossed the job barrier in recent years to move into higher paying jobs. However, women have made very little progress in some male dominated occupations like construction, CEO's of major companies, law enforcement, truck drivers, and politics to just name a few.

The gender wage gap increases as the worker climbs the corporate ladder. Generally, women do not move up as quickly as their male counterparts because they not get promoted as quickly. This is called the "Glass Ceiling" which means that there is an invisible barrier that prevents the qualified woman from advancing to a top position.

Another reason that there is a gender gap is because women have a responsibility at home called the second shift. This means that women have another job when she leaves the work place such as caring for her children and other household responsibilities. Even with the advancements we have made towards equality, the household responsibilities are not shared equally.

The last factor that contributes to the gender wage gap is unconscious and outright discrimination. Sometimes employers have gender bias or prejudice that interferes with the advancement of the employee.

When actually comparing men and women

who have the same education and are doing the same job, there is only a 2.7 percent gap. What this means is that women are making 2.7 percent less than a man is making and they are doing the same thing. The margin is a lot smaller than the 21 percent gender wage gap, but it is still a big problem.

"If a young man and woman fresh out of college with the same degree walk into a large firm, typically, the man can get placed in higher job wage jobs than the woman" says Heidi Hartman, President of the Institute for Women's Policy Research. This is unfair since both candidates are equally qualified.

According to the Chronicle of Higher Education, at Mercer County Community College, there is a large wage gap between men and women. A male professor at the college earns approximately 10 percent more than their female counterparts. As an Associate Professor, a man earns less than one percent more. However, with promotion the discrepancy becomes more pronounced. For example, a male Associate Professor earns 6 percent more than his female colleague. When you look at the statistics for professors with similar experiences and qualifications, the National Center for Education Statistics states that male professors make 3.3 percent more than the female professor.

One professor who asked to be anonymous said "To the best of my knowledge, a gender gap does not exist at Mercer." She continued, "However, I will say that a wage gap exists for part time employees. Full

time employees receive annual increase and all benefits. Part time employees do not receive annual increases (it can be as long as six or seven years for pay scale increases and they are minimal at best).

When asked if he had any knowledge on the gender wage gap at Mercer County Community College, Dr. Mark Jurcisin, Professor of Music, said "If it is true, it is horrible. It surprises me."

"Coming from the public school district, where it is based on seniority, it would seem in this day and age that men and women should be paid equally for the same job" says Deborah Scherholz, former MCCC adjunct Math faculty member. "It surprises me that they are not paid the same."

On Monday, March 14, the New Jersey Assembly passed a bill to close the wage gap between men and women. This bill will make it illegal for employees to pay people of different race and genders different wages for doing the same job. This bill is similar to the "Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act" which is a federal act regarding filing an equal pay lawsuit against your employer for pay discrimination.

The governor has vetoed bills that have crossed his desk in the past that are similar to this one; including one in 2014. Governor Christie has made no comment on this bill, but while campaigning in New Hampshire, he did remark to a woman that her paycheck should be equal to a man's.

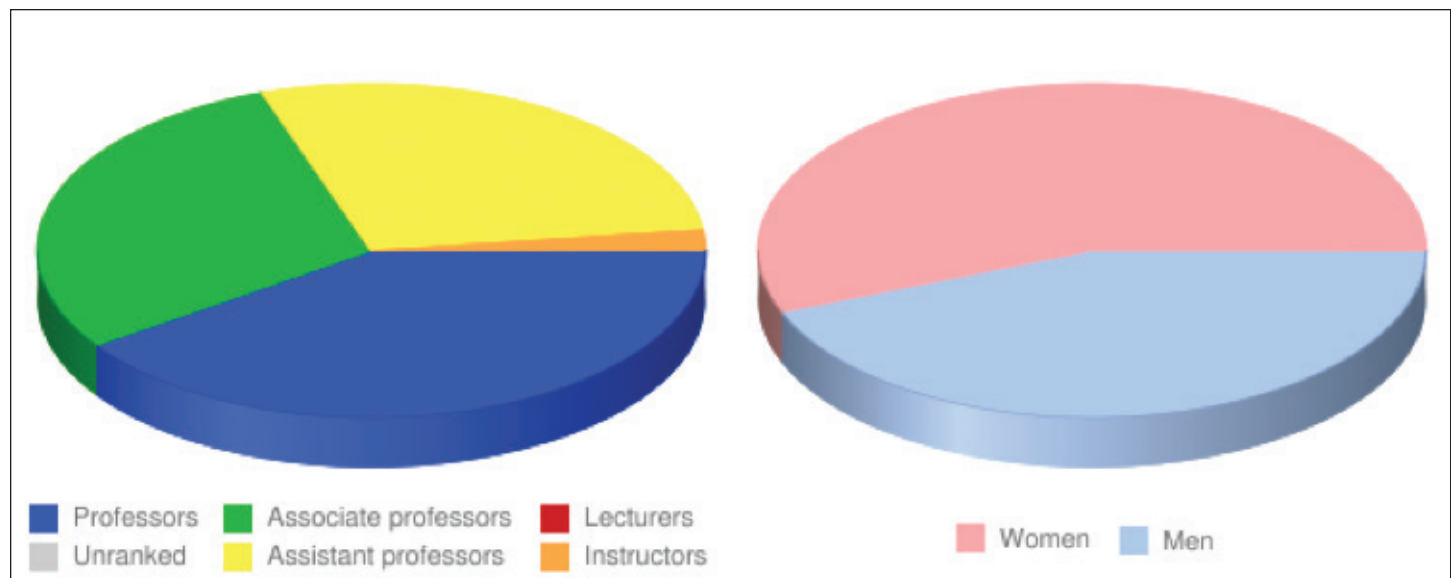
Currently, the bill is still sitting on the governor's desk waiting to be passed or vetoed.

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The chart on the right represents that 48% of the educators are male and 52% percent of all educators at MCCC are female. The chart on the left represents what classifications the educators fall under.

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Capricorn

Dec. 22 - Jan. 19

Keep it up! All the hard work you've been doing on that project will finally pay off this month.



Aquarius

Jan. 20 - Feb. 18

Opportunity will knock on your door this month. Make sure you're ready to answer and leap at the chance.



Pisces

Feb. 19 - Mar. 20

Love is in the air. A secret admirer will make him/herself known to you this month.



Aries

Mar. 21 - Apr. 19

Stressful times lie ahead. Keep your friends close and you'll make it thorough.



Taurus

Apr. 20 - May 20

The spring weather will bring new beginnings and a new friendship for you.



Gemini

May 21 - Jun. 20

You will approach a fork in the road this month. Choose the path you know it right.



Cancer

Jun. 21 - Jul. 22

April showers bring May flowers! Work hard this month and you'll see your rewards bloom next month.



Leo

Jul. 23 - Aug. 22

Fall back, Spring ahead. Now is the time to make that change you've been contemplating.



Virgo

Aug. 23 - Sept. 22

Daylight savings means losing more than just one hour of sleep for you. Stock up on coffee.



Libra

Sept. 23 - Oct. 22

Bzzzzzz. You'll be quite the busy beee this month. Remember to stop and smell the roses.



Scorpio

Oct. 23 - Nov. 21

Out with the old; in with the new. A little Spring cleaning should help you focus on new challenges which lie ahead.



Sagittarius

Nov. 22 - Dec. 21

A friend will call you in need this month. Keep your cell phone charged.

SUDOKU

Difficulty: 2 (of 5)

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HOW TO PLAY:

Each row, column and set of 3-by-3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 through 9 without repetition.

Get Fuzzy

