MCCC enrollment down by 16%
What will that mean for spring semester?

By Serena Bolitho
Senior Reporter

Student enrollment at MCCC is down 16% this fall, putting the college’s financial stability into question for the long term, particularly when state funding to community colleges is not being provided.

Based on student preferences, revealed through data gathered in a survey last May, it’s possible that offering more face to face classes could help stop the enrollment free fall. For the 111 students surveyed who said they had decided not to come back to MCCC this fall, 55% said the reason was that they didn’t want to do mostly online learning.

Out of the 573 students who said they were planning to return to MCCC this fall, 54% said their preference for instructional style was face-to-face (including hybrid) even if that meant they might have to go back to fully remote instruction if the state went back into lockdown.

At the moment, MCCC is offering 10-15% of classes at least partly in person, in particular when state funding to community colleges is not being provided.

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Some people prefer the drop box because they are worried about problems with the US mail service that developed over the summer. Although every registered vote in NJ will be receiving mail-in ballots, there will still be some polling locations available for those who would rather vote in-person, but in person votes will only be “provisional” meaning they will not be counted automatically the way they normally are if you vote at a polling place. They have to go through an additional layer of verification after the polls close that can delay them being counted.

Chelsea Colavita, 23, is a recent MCCC graduate who will be working the polls this election day, November 3. That means she will be at a polling station throughout the day, organizing people as they arrive, sending them to the right booths and so on. Often senior citizens sign up to be poll workers. Colavita says she has registered to be a poll worker less for the pay and more to keep the older generations from being exposed to Covid-19. Colavita says that “New Jersey is one of the states that has made voting easier for all by doing mail-in ballots. A lot of other states are seeing problems.”

Mandy Ortiz, a Trenton resident, says she votes “to represent groups of people, ethnically who can’t vote,” she adds that as a woman she sees voting as even more important “because it’s a right women didn’t always have.”

For many young adults there is motivation to vote from their peers as well as celebrities and influencers on social media. Davon Parker, 20, a MCCC Fashion major had been heavily influenced through social media to vote for the first time in this election. He says, “Instagram, where I spend a lot of my time, has educated me and has made me become more aware about voting.”

Ballot drop boxes are a safe way for NJ residents to submit their votes this fall.

Photo | Alessandro Rivero

With the 2020 presidential election being affected by covid-19, first-time voters are taking on a new responsibility.

Unlike normal circumstances, New Jersey is automatically sending out mail-in ballots to all New Jersey residents who are registered and able to vote. These have already been sent out and can be filled out and mailed back before election day.

Another option for voters is to fill out the ballot they get in the mail and then put them in official, tamper-proof, drop boxes around their country. This is the link for finding the one closest to you: https://nj.gov/state/elections/vote-security-drop-boxes.shtml

Election 2020 - Students gear up to vote despite covid-19

By Natalie Tellez
Reporter

The student press of Mercer County Community College since 1968

GOT A NEWS TIP?
Contact us at mcccnewsroom@gmail.com
We keep your information confidential!
Golf tournament raises $25k for scholarships

By Elliot Smith

The college raised more than $25,000 for scholarships at the twenty-ninth annual MCCC Foundation Golf Outing played on October 5 at the Trenton Country Club in West Trenton. The Foundation oversees the college’s finances playing a role in college’s decision to add more face-to-face or hybrid classes in the spring.

“Mercer’s athletics program has taken the MCCC athletic program to the next level,” MCCC President Dr. Jianping Wang says. “We under stand and hear you [students] loud and clear that you would love to have more in-person contact with your instructors…On one hand students want more in-person time with faculty, but on the other, in no way shape or form is this pandemic going to be (“We understand and hear you [students] loud and clear that you would love to have more in-person contact with your instructors…On one hand students want more in-person time with faculty, but on the other, in no way shape or form is this pandemic going to be, but on the other, in no way shape or form is this pandemic going to be, but on the other, in no way shape or form is this pandemic going to be, but on the other, in no way shape or form is this pandemic going to be”) pandemic drying down. We are trying to balance these two: the need to be in person, [and] the need to protect your safety and the instructors’ safety.”

-MCCC President Dr. Jianping Wang

“Mercer has not had to lock down, but the college notified staff on October 12 that “a member of the campus community tested positive for COVID-19.” The email added that “the individual’s last visit to campus was on October 2, 2020,” and said that contact tracing was in progress.

“Communication Professor Mitch Canter who teaches radio classes as well as public speaking said that being online for the fall has been “very rewarding,” in terms of the public speaking class. However, he says, his technical classes are another story. “I’ve been making instructional videos in advance for these lessons so instead of just meeting and having a discussion and listening to instructions, it has been a lot of extra work... but if I have to do this again in the spring at least all these videos and projects are created already.”

Colleen Heffernan, a second year biology major said, “I would prefer in person class one hand students want more in-person time with faculty, but on the other, in no way shape or form is this pandemic drying down. We are trying to balance these two: the need to be in person, [and] the need to protect your safety and the instructors’ safety.”
Covid-19’s impact on local dining

By Ken Fantry
Reporter

Many MCCC students work in food service and since stay at home orders were put in place in March they have been fighting to keep their jobs while local restaurant owners have been fighting to keep their businesses afloat.

In addition to delivery and curbside pick-up as options for diners, restaurants have also turned to outdoor dining to increase their revenue. As more has been learned about Covid-19, it has become clear that being outdoors, in well ventilated areas and at a distance, is less risky than social gatherings of other kinds.

With that in mind, New Jersey’s Governor Phil Murphy allowed restaurants to open for outdoor dining back in mid-June, albeit with many safety precautions in place. Then, with constant pressure from bar and restaurant owners, especially ones at the Jersey Shore, Murphy opened up indoor dining just before Labor Day.

Samantha Campisi, a student at Washington University at St. Louis who is from Princeton and is taking classes at MCCC, has been working as a server at a restaurant at Princeton’s historic pub the Alchemist and Barrister since before Covid and is back there now.

She says they were fortunate to already feature outdoor dining on their covered patio, but nonetheless, it has made many changes necessary. Indoor seating is capped at 25%, and customers indoors must be masked unless seated at the socially distanced table. No touch hand sanitizer dispensers are now at both entrances.

Many of the resulting differences are by now, expected. According to Campisi, previously the restaurant and its tw bars were “a much more crowded environment. Now we try to distance the tables as much as possible, and seat fewer of them. So obviously we have fewer people in the restaurant in general.” And, of course, “sanitization has definitely ramped up” she says.

In terms of her personal safety Campisi says, “I feel safe, the staff is always wearing their masks, we try our best to make sure we are washing our hands as often as we get the chance. The people who are working there are taking as many precautions as possible.”

Are the customers complying with restrictions? “According to Campisi it depends. “Some customers are extremely cautious, they put their masks on as soon as the server comes up to the table, just to be extra protective. Other customers, not so much. Some customers come in and walk up to the bar, and might not have their mask on, and we need to tell them to put in on. The best thing we can do is having a great time standing in line, who appeared to be extremely tired since they had all day a few weeks prior to waiting in line in Hamilton, New Jersey. People here were shorter. “His lines here were shorter. His coworkers in line fared, but the line was quite a few laughs.

The government did not actually think this was such a bad idea at one point in time. In 1995 the state did, in fact, privatize what was then called the DMV, or Department of Motor Vehicles. However, in 2002, a state legislative report said that the privatization resulted in poor and inconsistent service as well as “poorly paid employees who have received inadequate training, resulting in a high turnover rate at DMV agencies.” The DMV was returned to NJ state control in 2003.

Five hours in line and he had emerged triumphant and “ready to mount a victory parade down Route 206” he said.

I asked him how his comrades in line fared, but the news was dismal. One man, who Adam referred to as his new best friend, finally got into the building where he said “the scary lady at the window [told] him there was a mistake in his paperwork and [that] he’ll need to come back.”

Check out the NJMVC website, www.state.nj.us/merc/FAQ page information about extensions, changes to the law about online renewals, and much more, as well as some of the rules around why you may be having issues performing MVC tasks through the website. There is a lot of information that might very well save you a trip to the MVC and hours of waiting in line.

If, after all else, you must go in person, be sure to arrive prepared with all the correct paperwork, IDs, pins, actuated credit cards, a checkbook incase of bad card reads, and whatever else you can think of. The more prepared you are before leaving for the MVC, the less of a chance you’ll have of needing to return another day.
Princeton’s Art & About brings color to the streets

By Jason Norton

The Arts Council of Princeton held a free pop-up event called Chalk Murals on the streets of Princeton on October 3. It is one in a series of live interactive arts events taking place on weekend dates ending October 24.

At the Murals event the Paul Robeson Center for the Arts was the central hub. Artist Andre’s Duque was there creating a combination of contemporary and classical artwork. He worked from photos of masters from the Renaissance period such as Michelangelo, Botticelli and Da Vinci, Duque and mixed these classical images with some famous Princeton faces such as Einstein and Paul Robeson himself.

Robeson, who died in 1976, was a Princeton native and Black man, famous as Broadway singer and actor. He was also a college football player at Rutgers inducted into the hall of fame, and later became a civil rights activist. Duque says Robeson is inspiring to him for his leadership and fight for civil rights, being a philanthropist and having the community at the center of everything he did.

Up the street from Duque’s mural Susan DeConcini, who has been a scenic artist for the McCarter Theater in Princeton since 2006 worked on her own mural. She used a piece of charcoal tied to the end of a bamboo stick to form an outline which she then filled in with a leaf mural in bright chalk colors.

DeConcini said events like the Chalk Mural benefit “People who have been starved of live visual art” due to the ongoing pandemic.

She added that “it is a good way to teach kids to appreciate the arts and the little freedoms available we can partake in together as a community!”

Around the corner, in front of Princeton Garden Theater, Rashad Davis was sprawled out on all fours working on a mural creation of a character from Nickelodeon’s animated series Avatar: The Last Airbender.

Davis is a published author and illustrator of children’s picture books. He says he strives to “Give children of color a safe place between the pages of his books.” He was inspired to do this after the death of Tamir Rice, a 12-year-old Black boy who was shot by a white police officer in Cleveland, Ohio in 2014.

He feels these events are important since “We can connect through art.”

Another artist at the event, Marlon Davila aka “Love Child” was working on a mural. Davila is a MCCC Alumn in Fine Arts is a muralist and painter.

Although he was initially interested in Graphic Design a professor nudged him toward painting and he fell in love with it and has been painting ever since. Davila says events like Chalk Murals “Are extremely important because art is not only self-healing, but it has the power to bring people together from all walks of life.”

Maria Evans, Artistic Director at Arts Council for the last ten years said the new pop-up events “Are a way to reinvent things with the arts and community.”

The remaining events include Plein Air Paint Out, Pop-Up Poetry, and Princeton Makes Art. To learn more visit: arts council of princeton.org/calendar/.
Trenton’s Punk Rock Flea Market overcomes covid

Jen Tracy, artist and podcaster, sells horror themed watercolor paintings at the Trenton Punk Rock Flea Market.

By Elijah Parkman-Williams

Trenton, once known for the drudges of workers who flocked to the iron and steel factories, is now often regarded as a high crime city left impoverished when the industrial jobs moved out in the 1980s. But a variety of artists have been working steadily over the past decade to revive and reinvent the city’s image by bringing culture back to Trenton.

One event that happens multiple times per year and which didn’t get canceled this October, despite covid-19, is the Trenton Punk Rock Flea Market (TPRFM) with the theme Halloween Market. It was held on October 10 and 11 at Cure Insurance Arena and featured a food, culture, and creative fest, that prompted Kuzemka to start the flea market back in 2013. He says he wanted to focus on the arts and promoting small businesses of which there were plenty at the Halloween Market.

It was his work with Art All Night, another Trenton culture fest, that prompted Kuzemka to start the flea market back in 2013. He says he wanted to focus on the arts and promoting small businesses of which there were plenty at the Halloween Market.

Jen Tracy an artist and podcaster for the No Sleep Podcast, was there selling her horror themed watercolor paintings when two visitors passed by, saying, “I wish I had more money to shop.” She sells her works throughout New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

Another vendor that stood out was Secret Squirrel Cookies. Michael Lipka and founder Paula Lopez started the business as a passion project during the COVID-19 lockdown. Up and coming new business Secret Squirrel Cookies founders Michael Lipka and Paula Lopez started the business as a passion project during the covid-19 lockdown.

Lopez said, “We wanted to get out and during covid it’s really hard to find outlets for being in the public.” She went on to explain, “Cookies are one of those things you need to see and touch and feel.”

The market was full of people young and old from every walk of life, each sporting their personal punk rock anthem in their attire. Friends talked about their favorite DC or Marvel prints. Families devoured buns besides the food trucks. A herd of nerds waited around an open spot at an antiquities stand.

It was dangerous for everyone to come to the flea market hungry.

The heavy scent of Kielbasa from Cas’ Pieregi & Kielbasa lingered in the air. People inhaled lobster rolls from Cousins Maine Lobster in mere seconds. The heavy scent of Kielbasa lingered in the air. People inhaled lobster rolls from Cousins Maine Lobster in mere seconds. People inhaled lobster rolls from Cousins Maine Lobster in mere seconds. People inhaled lobster rolls from Cousins Maine Lobster in mere seconds. People inhaled lobster rolls from Cousins Maine Lobster in mere seconds. People inhaled lobster rolls from Cousins Maine Lobster in mere seconds.

As the night wore on, people brought in their personal punk rock music to de-stress, safely.

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Kuzemka said, “By taking the artists and the makers we have here in Trenton and bringing in artists from out of town we wanted to create a really positive synergy that can impact the city.”

Interested in TPRFM? The next big event is Trenton Wreck The Hall’s Flea Market coming this December. Learn more on their Facebook page at: facebook.com/TrentonPunkRockFlea-Market.
FACING

Masks are now part of our lives.

Irma Vallieres - Queens, NY
“I’m a New Yorker, I love New York. I’m loving Jersey a little, certain things, but I miss my hometown. My heart is in New York but my body is in Princeton.”

Richard and Joan Druckman - Princeton Junction
“Somebody sent them to us from Florida. There is an artist who’s name is Britto and he has very unusual art. They made these masks and they sent them to us.”

Ali McTar - Princeton, NJ
“My ex-girlfriend and I stitched this mask as a part of a campaign in town to make masks back in March or April when things were really bad. I like wearing it because it isn’t as sterile or as medical looking as other masks. I love the floral print.”

Sagi Mathew - Woodbridge, NJ
“We had been using the surgical masks for sometime but we had to buy a lot and they weren’t getting here on time so we decided to make our own. My wife sewed them for us. It’s much easier because we can wash them and reuse them again.”

Tracy Tewksbury - Newtown, Pennsylvania
“I’m a french teacher. All my masks are french themed or, thanks to my daughter-in-law, garden themed.”

Cathy Oldakowski - Clinton, NJ
“Someone gave me this mask, I’m starting to collect them as my friends buy me masks. This one I wore because I had a black shirt on.”

Merri Field - Bucks County, PA
“Obviously I’m heavily supporting everything that RBG did. She’s a superhero and this was a gift from my mother who is a very liberal democrat. Together we’re continuing to fight and be as loud as we can now.”

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REALITY

What do they reveal about us?

FACING REALITY

Masks are now part of our lives. What do they reveal about us?

Lisa Maul - Clinton, NJ
“I like this mask because it is fun with flow-
ers and I was wearing a green sweater and
the greens matched. I like to match what I’m
wearing with my mask. I go to a store and buy
masks everywhere. I’m a little obsessed with
masks right now.”

Lisa Verniero - Clinton, NJ
“This mask is from a dear friend, we are both
cancer survivors, and a friend was selling
them as a fundraiser so she bought me one.
This is a gift and I wear it proudly.”

Linda Lauchaire - Clinton, NJ
“I tried some beautiful masks that were made
for me but I could not tolerate the tightness
behind my ears so I have just now settled for
the dollar-a-piece throw away ones and that
works really well. So I’m not too fashionable,
or fashionable at all, but that’s my MO.”

Jordan Volpe - Washington, D.C.
“I just needed a mask so I went to Dick’s sport-
ing goods and these were the ones they had so
I just got it. I’m not really a wizards fan.”

Kathleen Deangelis - Clinton, NJ
“I bought this myself because I thought it was
pretty and then Kate Middleton had almost
the exact same mask the week after I bought it,
and then they all sold out. So I was so pleased
with myself. I only wear it on special occa-
sions, this is my special occasions mask.”

Harley - Princeton, NJ
“If my mom can get me to wear a mask, you
can wear one too!”

Hannah Moskowitz - Washington, DC
“I got my mask as a gift for our microwedding.
My husband’s sister sent masks for all of us to
match.”

Lisa D’ambrogio - Princeton, NJ
“Math Adjunct Professor at MCCC
This was a fundraiser for Fair Fight, I believe
that is the name of the organization. It’s Stacy
Abrahms’s organization and she was selling
these as a fundraiser.”

Amelia Disanto - Princeton, NJ
“I’m a quilter and this is a piece of fabric I had
left over from a quilt I made.”

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Drake Baer - Princeton, NJ
“The Summer and fall of Covid have made 2020 the
first year in over 30 that my husband and I haven’t
fled Princeton for a few months. This scarf is from
Edinburgh, where the annual Fringe Festival was
virtual for the first time, like our summer and fall
abroad.”
QUIZ: What podcast should you listen to next?

Take the quiz below to find the right bingeable audio show for you.

By Ashley Jackson

QUESTIONS

How often do you listen to podcasts?
A. Never, this would be my first.
B. Occasionally, if they fit my niche interests.
C. Pretty regularly, I already have some favorites.
D. All the time. I'm a podcast devotee.

What's your favorite TV genre?
A. Reality TV, I love pop culture.
B. ESPN, I'm always watching the game.
C. True Crime, I have a morbid sense of curiosity.
D. The News, I want to stay up-to-date.

When do you want to listen?
A. While I'm cleaning, or hanging around the house.
B. During my workouts to keep my energy up.
C. On my commute, or on long car drives.
D. In the shower, as I get ready for the day.

What vibe are you looking for?
A. Like my friends and I are together chilling.
B. Total chaos, an unpredictable wild time.
C. Scary campfire stories, but they're all real.
D. Informational and quick. I need to know while on the go.

How do you like to unwind?
A. Scrolling through TikTok.
B. Playing catch or frisbee.
C. Binge watching my favorite cold case documentaries.
D. Reading the newspaper.

ANSWERS

MOSTLY A's
You should check out VIEWS! TikTok Star David Dobrik and YouTuber Jason Nash offer a behind-the-scenes look at creating their vlogs. Perfect for fans of pop culture, celebrity gossip, and internet drama.

MOSTLY B's
You should check out Pardon My Take! This Barstool's commentary is about getting loud, wild, and hype about the latest sports takes. Perfect for sport fanatics and lovers of the air horn.

MOSTLY C's
You should check out Crime Junkie! The ultimate deep dive into bone chilling cases with hosts Ashley and Britt. Perfect for true crime lovers, cold case obsessors, and whodunit headscratchers.

MOSTLY D's
You should check out NPR News Now! Get your news in 5 minutes or less every Monday - Friday. NPR's News Now mixes breaking headlines, special interest pieces, and pop culture and sports updates to keep you in the know.

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Three stories of covid-19 survival

Brian Amighi

I never expected I would get the virus. So I had just spent the two weeks holed up in a socially reclusive bubble recovering from bronchitis.

Unfortunately for me, the other members of my household are essential workers, so I quickly traded one ill- ness for another. I remember the first day of symptoms vividly. At first, it was just mild fatigue, but it had blossomed into an inability to keep my eyes open by the end of the day.

My body felt like it had been boiled from the inside out and I had a temperature of 102°F to prove it. I feared the worst was yet to come, only it never did.

I woke up the next day to find my temperature had lowered to 100°F, and although I had expected my breathing to feel more labored by the end of the day.

However, I’ve spoken with people whose experiences were more akin to sprinting across a field that never ends, and by that, I mean, intense periods of feeling on the verge of death, gasping for breath, wishing for it to all be over.

Two people I talked to are Cody and Jasmin. They asked that their real names not be used because of fear of the stigma still associated with the virus. Here are their stories.

Cody’s feeling of invincibility was his downfall. He never took the virus seriously until it forced him to. It began with a slight cough, but by day four he was barely able to leave his room.

The fatigue he endured was so great that it took all of his energy just to get up to go to the bathroom.

His family brought him food, but he refused. “I was unable to taste anything so I rarely ate what they brought.”

By week two, he was considering going into the emergency room because it was becoming more strenuous to breathe, with no signs of stopping.

Still, he says, “I didn’t want to worry my family.” So he stayed home to fight on his own.

Thankfully he made it through, but the virus didn’t leave empty-handed. It took 15 lbs away from his body and three weeks away from his life before it began to fade away.

The effects of the virus lingered for another month before he felt normal again,” he says. But he was just grateful to have gotten through it.

For Jasmin it started with an innocent nosebleed in April, but by May she was hit with a full range of symptoms. She developed a fever and nausea. Vomiting became unavoidable.

Like me, she was also robbed of her sense of taste and smell, but that was the least of it.

A week after she developed a fever, she was admitted to the emergency room.

It was there that they hooked her up to oxygen, and it was there that she lived for the next month.

Her first few days at the hospital were plagued with nightmares of drowning, and panic attacks, but because of the medication and oxygen administered, she was able to calm down and survive.

Survive, not recover. That process would take much longer. After she left the hospital, everything from her chest up was in pain, sleeping became difficult, and the virus left her body functions feeling, “blocked up.”

Her experience with the virus was a lengthy one and at the end of it she had this message to share: listen to federal and state officials about wearing masks and wash your hands. Prevention is the best way to deal with the virus.

Anecdotal stories aside, how deadly is Covid-19? As of October 9, 2020, the European CDC marks the American death rate of those infected with the virus at 2.8%.

This number doesn’t initially seem high compared with pandemics of the past like the black death, the smallpox pandemic, or the Spanish flu, but that’s what makes it so terrifying. It makes it easy to downplay the severity of the virus.

It makes it easy to take on a lax attitude with measures utilized to control the virus, and it makes it easy to have the in- vincible mindset that leads to infection and death.

I’ll leave you all with a question, one my friend asked that helped me put things into perspective: If you were offered a bowl with 100 pieces of your favorite candy in it and told that three would kill you, would you have a piece?

For artists looking for Inktober inspiration, we’ve got ideas

By Kristina Hontz
Senior Artist

Each year during the month of October, artists around the world get excited for the popular art prompt list called Inktober. The goal is for artists to build consistency and community by using a common prompt each day to inspire an image no matter how small or sketchy.

The central premise was to share a goal and to have freedom in the concept in any prompt in the attempt.

However, over the past year, the creator of Inktober, Jake Parker, has taken that sense of freedom away. Parker has dashed on artists for using digital ink tools instead of traditional ones on multiple occasions. Recently he has been attempting to brand Inktober, which has taken away the sense of a shared community from many artists. He has also alleg-edly plagiarized another artist’s book for his own Inktober book, an action that has cut into Ink- tober’s popularity.

The VOICE’s Senior Artist, Kristina Hontz, is providing an alternative, a spooky prompt list to inspire the many artists in our community. There are no rules and no pressure, just take a word off the list and make art in any way you desire.
For students like me, physical disabilities make college even harder during the pandemic

PERSPECTIVES

Alex Gonzalez

College is stressful, but for some students, like me, the stress is increased by having a physical disability. Because at-home learning seems like it would make things easier for people with mobility issues, there isn’t much discussion about how the changes in how education is provided can make it even harder for us to succeed.

I have a medical condition called Spina Bifida where the spinal cord fails to develop properly in utero. Most people with this condition are in a wheelchair for life, they cannot feed themselves or take care of other basic needs.

I have been blessed by God because I am able to feed myself. I am able to walk, though I do use forearm crutches to support myself because of issues with balance. And my mom always stays with me to look after me in case I fall or to carry anything that I can’t.

A year ago I was on the front page of The College VOICE because my mom and I went to the college Board of Trustees to ask for the elevators, which were frequently broken, to be fixed since she was having to carry me to my classrooms on the third floor of the BS building multiple times per week for weeks on end. I explained that plenty of people have mobility issues, whether they are short or long term, that the problem is bigger than just me. There has been improvement with the elevators, but this kind of advocacy takes time and energy.

Now add the challenge of the pandemic and the shifts we’ve all had to make to be in college right now.

This semester, I have two hybrid courses, one online class, and one remote class. The hybrid courses require me to go to campus once a week. The other days are scheduled on Zoom. It’s a tricky schedule, bouncing back and forth between different modes of instruction, and the disability adds a layer of difficulty.

Over the last two years I have been dealing with chronic pain and muscle spasms. With Spina Bifida, it is difficult to exercise. Physical therapists help people like me by giving us things that we can do to get some exercise and I have been consistent about following those protocols including doing stretches to warm up my body.

However, I woke up one day after working out with severe pain in my left leg. I went to the hospital to see what was going on. The doctors sent me for X-Rays, noted that I had strained my left quad muscle and gave me muscle relaxants to minimize the pain and reduce muscle spasms. Then there was more physical therapy. I did everything I was told, all the stretches, but it didn’t help.

Do you have something to say? The College VOICE accepts letters to the editor. Submissions should be no more than 300 words, longer submissions may be shortened. Submit materials in electronic format, and include your name and status at Mercer (major and year, faculty or staff position or alumni). All materials submitted become the property of The College VOICE, which reserves the right to reject or edit material based on length, tone or clarity.

Write to The College VOICE!

Editorial Policy
The College VOICE is written and edited by students of Mercer County Community College and published every 3-4 weeks under the guidance of faculty advisers. The material printed in The College VOICE, be it articles, advertisements or opinion pieces, does not necessarily represent the views of the editors, the faculty, staff, administration or the board of trustees of Mercer County Community College.

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For the past month, waiting to get the results of the MRI. When I finally got them on October 5, the doctor said that I have a tethered spinal cord which is when the spinal cord is pulled down and gets stuck in the spinal canal. This is what is causing the pain and spasms in my leg. It’s a condition that can only be fixed with surgery.

I am scheduled to see the neurosurgeon later this month, and after two years, we will go over what can be done to fix the tethered cord.

Now consider that the National Center for Education Statistics says that of students with disabilities on college campuses. 8% have mobility or orthopedic issues and that 2-year public colleges tend to see more students with disabilities who need care and may not be able to live in dorms away from home. The sad fact is, we are less likely to graduate from college than our able bodied peers. We are already having to fight harder to succeed.

My professors have always been willing to work with me and I know they will continue to do so, but taking time out for appointments and potentially surgery can set a student like me back. And adding the unpredictable element of the pandemic’s impact on education puts students like me at further risk of falling behind or losing the education we need to be successful.

-Alex Gonzalez

The author, Alex Gonzalez, is among many students with mobility issues that compound the difficulties of learning during the covid epidemic.

Strange But True

The title of a newspaper that appears at the top of the front page is called the “flag.” Most papers keep the same flag for decades.

Jounro Lingo

Most students who join the staff of The College VOICE and stick with it see their grades go up over time even though they are busier than the year before.

Strange But True

A faculty media adviser at a community college student newspaper in NJ was fired in the 2000s because of an editorial cartoon spoofing the college’s logo.

FAST JLaw

There is a list of things student reporters can’t do because they are unethical. One is to promise favorable coverage in return for someone giving them info.
Dear VOICE,
How many skulls can you keep on your mantle until it’s considered a “problem”?
-Mulder

Dear Mulder,
If you only have 1, it seems too amateurish, but more than 3 and you may have a serial problem that will require the expertise of a interior design consultant.
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE,
Should I get rid of my entire wardrobe and replace it all with sweatpants since nobody goes out anymore anyway?
-Jammies

Dear Jammies, Sure.
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE,
How do you know if you have COVID or are just hitting the middle of the semester?
-MCCC student

Dear MCCC student, It’s not an either or situation. But yeah, they both feel about the same.
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE,
It’s in a box.
-Si

Dear Si, There are 15 professors in the English department at Mercer. I bet one of them might have a recommendation for you.
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE,
How do you know if you have COVID or are just hitting the middle of the semester?
-MCCC student

Dear MCCC student, It’s not an either or situation. But yeah, they both feel about the same.
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE,
Any updates on what the spring semester will look like in terms of campus access?
-Eager Beaver

Dear Eager Beaver, We suggest you read the front page article again.
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE,
How do you know if you have COVID or are just hitting the middle of the semester?
-MCCC student

Dear MCCC student, It’s not an either or situation. But yeah, they both feel about the same.
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE,
On November 21 the sun will enter Sagittarius’s constellation. The beginning of your season will add lots of energy to your life. Remember to relax, Sagittarius.

Dear VOICE,
It’s a busy month and you will have to rely on your lion-like temperament to keep from getting overwhelmed. Remember you are very brave.

Dear VOICE,
You wish you had more time to spend with your loved ones, and it’s hard to balance with all your work. Don’t worry. You’ll get a break soon.

Dear VOICE,
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