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A Note From Your Coordinator

Dr. Richard Siciliano

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The 19th annual AFACCT Conference held this past January 8 and 9 at Anne Arundel Community College in Arnold, Maryland, was a rousing success. That conclusion is the summary of the evaluations submitted by the hundreds of faculty who attended. Our site coordinator, Dr. Suzanne Spoor, Professor of Women's Studies at AACC, saw to it that everything ran smoothly, from the registration, to room arrangements, to the food service.

The conference attracted a total of 327 faculty members and educational professionals from the 16-member community college system of Maryland and from several other colleges and universities in the region. Thursday's keynote speaker was Dr. Dena Beeghly, formerly a faculty member at Maryland's Cecil College and now a professor in the Department of Literacy at West Chester University in Pennsylvania. Dr. Beeghly addressed the conference's theme, "Living and Learning: The Dynamic Interplay Between Life Experience and Learning," by recounting her personal experiences as an educator. She went on to discuss her recent research on how electronic discussion enhanced her teaching and learning in her classroom.

On day two of the conference, the keynote speaker was Dr. Ray Johns, retired Professor of Economics from Hagerstown Community College. He spoke about how his experiences as a farmer in Western Maryland helped shape his later academic career. Dr. Johns' passion for both world travel and teaching led him



Richard Siciliano

last winter to the Ukraine, where he taught university courses in Environmental Economics, Research Methods, and American Cultural History. His experiences were recounted in his "Letters from Ukraine," published in the May and September issues of *Communitas*, the newsletter of AFACCT. Videos of both keynote addresses can be seen as part of the 2009 Conference Proceedings, available at the AFACCT website: <www.afacct.csmd.edu>. Along with these featured speakers, more than 95 peer presentations were given, and several meetings were held, among them the Developmental Education Association of Maryland (DEAM), the Maryland Mathematics Association of Two-Year Colleges (MMATYC), and the Maryland Council of Community College Chief Academic Officers (M4CAO).

The entire AFACCT Board of Representatives is grateful to Suzanne Spoor, coordinator of the two-day conference and to the staff and faculty of Anne Arundel Community College for their hospitality and assistance in making the event run smoothly. I am most grateful also to each of the presenters who gave informative, creative, and entertaining presentations. To read abstracts and view PowerPoint shows of some of those presentations, log on to the [AFACCT Proceedings 2009](#).

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We invite you to submit articles on your classroom teaching/learning successes, current educational topics that you want to share, and your professional achievements. Send photos related to your article and one of yourself for publication. We invite articles from all disciplines.

“A Note From Your Coordinator”

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A note of gratitude also goes to all the AFACCT representatives who promoted the conference to their faculty colleagues, worked the registration desk, answered questions, and simply did what had to be done to make the Conference '09 a success. Lastly, thanks must certainly go to each of the Chief Academic Officers of Maryland Community Colleges (M4CAO). Without the support AFACCT receives from them, the annual AFACCT conference would not be possible.

Next year’s AFACCT 2010 conference is something special. Not only does it mark a new decade, the event is also the 20th annual conference since the organization began in 1984. The host college will be The College of Southern Maryland at the La Plata campus. Scheduled for Thursday and Friday, January 7 and 8, 2010, the conference will focus on probably the most ambitious and comprehensive theme AFACCT has ever attempted: “The Role of Community College Faculty in Achieving the Goals of the Maryland State Plan for Higher Education.” Proposals are now being accepted online for presentations, workshops, and poster sessions related to issues posed by the five goals of the updated State Plan for Higher Education, as explained below. Check out the *Call for Proposals*.

- Goal 1: Quality and Effectiveness. How can community college faculty members, both full- and adjunct faculty, help our colleges strengthen their reputations academic excellence and effectiveness

in fulfilling the educational needs of students, the state, and the nation? Maryland now ranks third among all states in the degree to which it has transformed from an industry/service economy to a knowledge economy. As faculty, particularly those teaching at community colleges, how can we ensure that Maryland maintains that preeminence?

- Goal 2: Access and Affordability. Community colleges are in the forefront of all segments of higher education in promoting and ensuring accessibility and affordability for all Marylanders in their pursuit of higher education. What is our role in helping our students realize their college dreams? What are our challenges?
- Goal 3: Diversity. The Maryland State Plan maintains that our state’s greatest resource is its diverse citizenry. Accordingly, Maryland is committed to ensuring equal access to high-quality postsecondary education for all, regardless of characteristics that have historically limited access. What are the challenges that we as community college faculty face in helping an increasingly more diverse student population achieve their personal educational goals?
- Goal 4: Student-Centered Learning. Community colleges have been instrumental in building a system of postsecondary education that promotes student-centered learning. The significant role of two-year faculty in successfully employing this approach to meet the needs of all Marylanders cannot be underestimated. What are our successes and our challenges? How important are faculty professional development, the enhancement of teaching methods within all disciplines, and the improvement of teaching methods in achieving this goal?
- Goal 5: Workforce Development. Most importantly, community college faculty

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members, full-time and adjunct, play an essential role in preparing students for initial employment, career advancement, and career changes. The expansion of a highly trained workforce is fundamental to Maryland's economic vitality, especially in times of economic and environmental change, such as we now face. As faculty, what is our role in addressing the educational and training needs of Maryland's rapidly changing demographic makeup?

How do we help the state meet the demands brought about by the impact of these shifts on workforce needs?

Faculty members, both full-time and adjunct, are invited to propose 50-minute presentations on any topic related to one or more of these goals. Or, you may propose a longer workshop on any relevant topic. Consider the conference as a forum to share your ideas with colleagues from around the state. Alternatively, you may also propose a Website/Poster display, a format that does not require a 50-minute presentation. Or, if your faculty organization or affinity group wants to reach a statewide audience, plan on holding your regular meeting during the conference, and let us schedule that meeting so it does not conflict with presentations within your discipline. And, of course, your organization will be listed in the *AFACCT Conference 2010* program.

As the site coordinator of next year's conference, I am eager to help answer questions you may have. The *AFACCT Conference 2010* program will be featured in the November 2009 issue of *Communitas* and in the months ahead. AFACCT representative will be sharing information about the conference, the call for proposals, and registration. Please plan to join us January 7 and 8, 2010, at the College of Southern Maryland.



AFACCT Communitas

Our Community Supports AFACCT With Door Prizes

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Every year AFACCT's conference is supported by the generous contributions from multiple businesses, theatres, museums, golf courses, and, of course, Maryland's great community colleges. This year AFACCT was extremely fortunate to receive more than 50 "door prizes" to be distributed at our annual celebration of community college teaching. Among the donations were stays at Ocean City and metropolitan hotels, tickets to live theatre productions in the Washington, D.C./Baltimore area, valued specialty books, and other gifts—all to winners of our Giveaway.

Annually, we have acknowledged the donors of these generous gifts on our AFACCT website at <http://www.afacct.csmd.edu/conference19/donors09.htm>. We also wish to thank our donors by name and list a few of the generous donations in this issue of *Communitas*.

The Dunes Manor Hotel and the Holiday Inn Select at the Chantilly-Dulles ExpoCenter donated a two-night stay and weekend stay, respectively, for two people. The first was won by Joseph Mason from Hagerstown Community College. Chesapeake Heritage Conservatory, Havre de Grace, MD, contributed an evening cruise on the Skipjack *Martha Lewis*. McDonald's LPGA Championship in Havre de Grace, MD donated a season pass to 2009 tournament, and the Manor



Orlando Correa

Country Golf Course, Rockville, MD, gave two rounds of golf. Giovanni Restaurant in Edgewood, MD, contributed a gift certificate.

The following local and college theatres generously donated complimentary tickets for their spring and summer productions: Folger Theatre, CenterStage, REP Stage Theatre Project, Pascal Center at Anne Arundel Community College, REP Stage at Howard Community College, College of Southern Maryland's Jazz Festival and Ballet Project, and Montgomery College's Summer Theatre.

These publishers graciously donated books and sponsorship to our conference: Prentice Hall, A Pearson Education Co., and McGraw Hill Higher Education.

Other donors included the following community colleges and/or their representatives: Anne Arundel Community College, Cecil College, Chesapeake College, College of Southern Maryland, Hagerstown Community College Harford Community College, Howard Community College, Prince George's Community College, and Wor-Wic Community College.

We at AFACCT are grateful to all these generous donors for their contributions to our annual conference.



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Meet the Newest AFACCT Rep



Dr. Gretchen Mester

Dr. Gretchen Mester received her Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Oregon in 2004 and has been teaching economics at Anne Arundel Community College since 2003. Her dissertation, entitled “An Empirical Assessment of Entry into the Green Power Market,” employs econometric modeling techniques to examine research data on the electricity industry, state regulations, consumer income, and environmental sentiment and ways these forces influence firms’ decisions to enter the renewable energy (green power) market. It also considers and evaluates factors influencing the level of firm investment as well as firm product pricing structures. She has taught Introduction to Economics, Principles of Macroeconomics and Microeconomics, Economic Issues and Public Policy, Environmental Economics, and Business Statistics. Gretchen is currently Chair of the Economics Department at AACC.



Calling as Career: The Intersection of Life and Learning in the Performing Arts

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In the twenty-first century, a professional life in the performing arts requires not only excellent discipline training but also an accurate perception of oneself as a person, foundational knowledge of related disciplines, and practical skills for self-promotion and theatrical production. Calling as Career encourages a pro-active approach to bringing individual gifts to the marketplace, creating, not just seeking employment opportunities. I integrate my own personal and professional experiences as performer, choreographer, director, and arts administrator as a teaching tool throughout the practical course material.

My experiences as a professional artist have informed my work as an educator in terms of style, curricula, and program development. Conversely, stories and input from the students continue to inform my own pedagogy and contribute to having a learning relationship that is rich and reciprocal.

Storytelling is an integral part of my work as an educator. Hearing how their instructors handled a range of situations in their professional lives is invaluable to student learning as it deepens their awareness in a personal and immediate way. Stories teach resilience and cultivate students’ ability to “leave their life in the dressing room,” underscoring the importance of consistency in attaining professional status.



Janaea Rose Lyn

Theory

Calling as Career is an on-going process of developing a pedagogy that creates a framework based upon a practical understanding of what is involved in building a career in the arts. Students learn related arts, pedagogy, production, and administration so they are able to assist other artists and organizations with their artistic, promotional, and administrative work, even as they develop their own careers. They become versed in the skills required to write a proper biography, resume, promotional materials, marketing grant writing, and event planning. A deeper understanding of the vagaries of the marketplaces coupled with a creative approach enables artists to present themselves effectively when meeting with potential employers or funders in a range of class and power circles.

This comprehensive and foundational approach provides skills that will serve the budding artists in their chosen careers, but also introduces students to areas they may find additional interest in and can provide alternate means for supporting themselves in a parallel yet related arts field. While technical theatre can be an area that many students will have some

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Calling as Career

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exposure to that may serve as a parallel source of income, arts administration, marketing and promotion are other parallel areas often overlooked in traditional arts curricula. Exposure to all aspects of a life in the performing arts through the lens of faculty experiences as professional artists provides potent insight to these emerging artists. These classroom processes strengthen self-esteem, enabling students to understand themselves more fully and able to make considered choices to shape their artistic and personal lives.

Pedagogical Strategies

Because of the inclusive nature of the community college mission to reach a broad spectrum of their community's educational needs, performing arts students in a single course are often admitted without an audition and have a range of training, class, and cultural backgrounds. Such a complex student body requires a broad pedagogical palette, allowing for innovative programming and educational approaches, such as blending work-force development with the primary skills of technique and performance.

Cecil College's associate's degree program was designed to serve as a blue print to provide a unified approach to prepare students for a life in the performing arts. This is accomplished generally through the overall program design and more in depth in a course entitled Performance Skills. The program as a whole reflects the core standards and structure of any liberal arts institution's performing arts program—quality training in technique and mentored performing opportunities balanced with general education courses. By utilizing an interdisciplinary approach to the student

performing company, Station Players, students learn basic skills in related arts fields, perform together, and also received mentored training in creating collaborative work.

Performance Skills provides all third semester majors with a course that is part self analysis and part practical career skills designed to provide personal and pragmatic tools which can be reviewed at different life/career stages. I incorporate stories from each juncture of my career to illustrate the self-awareness and discipline I am trying to instill and to make concrete and personal the complex choices that all artists must make throughout their lives and careers. Sharing my own experiences in areas such as handling rejection, overcoming adversity, and promoting the view that “the show must go on” also serves as an invitation for the students to feel more comfortable with sharing and valuing their own experiences as teaching tools.

The course begins by defining and distinguishing a “calling” from a “career.” Empowered with ways to address thoughtfully their very real and personal need to be in the arts, or the “calling” of being an artist, students are then ready to tackle the “career” aspect. A clear perception of themselves and of ways others see them is the next area of exploration, as students choose from a range of adjectives and descriptors which they feel best describe their aesthetic, their personality, and their work. They write three statements, distilling their personal definitions of vision, mission, and success. The vision statement is for their grand artistic aspirations. Having the fullest possible dream and naming it are vital to their making a commitment to themselves. The mission statement defines short term goals as steps that move towards that vision. The notions of success require students to clarify the elements that are important to



Liz Malloy (dancer), **David Hardison** (actor), and **Danny Weaver** (guitarist)

their personal, emotional, and psychological well being. It is here that the issues of relationships, family, environment, financial stability, travel, fame, solitude, social relevance, life style, work habits, and personal idiosyncrasies all come into the mix in a more specific way. Put together, these statements serve the student as a way to craft a conscious life as a person and an artist.

The conceptual aspects of self-identity and an assessment of strengths and weaknesses provide the building blocks from which students create promotional kits complete with their own letterhead, cards, biography, resume, headshot, supplemental materials, and letters of recommendation. They additionally gain knowledge of techniques for networking and researching employment opportunities and funding, how to create press and marketing materials for their student productions, production schedules, budgets, contracts, and objective critical written and spoken language skills. The course culminates in a mock audition in preparation for a specific school or opportunity which the student has researched and is intending to audition

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Calling as Career

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for. They concurrently serve as adjudicators for each other's auditions and give constructive feedback afterwards. Providing young artists with the opportunity to audition and to serve as adjudicators is both informative and empowering.

Outcomes

With knowledge of self, the related arts, and an understanding of promotion, production, and finance, the emerging artist will be more skillful and effective in communicating with others in a range of work related situations and in navigating successfully through the important aspects of administrating, promoting, and producing their career.

Coupled with knowledge of the technologically and globally changing marketplace, students will better understand how to present themselves skillfully in competitive and critical situations, think proactively and create opportunities. The ability to assess and make selective career choices enables artists to craft a balance of calling and career that is right for them at each stage of life.

[Janaea Rose Lyn is currently working on the book, Calling as Career: A Blueprint for Emerging Performing Artists, intended as a resource for students and emerging artists and as a teaching tool for educators and professional artists.]



Chesapeake College's Faculty Development Center

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It's a typical weekday morning early in the semester at Chesapeake College, and the Faculty Development Center's large bright office is a busy place. At workstations in the open bays around the walls, a student gets help with a question about her online course, a sociology instructor works with an instructional designer to develop a new gerontology course, the learning management system administrator applies and updates, and a math instructor seeks advice on a project that will help developmental students. For almost a decade, the Faculty Development Center (FDC) has been providing the College community with instructional design and technology expertise and hands-on help for face-to-face and online classes. The FDC evolved from a grant-based institute originally funded by The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) in 2000. With four other Eastern Shore colleges (Washington College, Wor-Wic Community College, University of Maryland Eastern Shore, and Salisbury University), the grant enabled Chesapeake to set up an institute to provide a collaborative network of instructional design, development, assessment, research, and support services. As project administrator, Douglass Gray, Chesapeake's Vice-President for Technology and Academic Support, hired professional staff members, including Dr. Cynthia France. After the original 18-month grant, Chesapeake received an



Dr. Juliet Smith

MHEC award as well as a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Post-secondary Education (FIPSE). Following that, Chesapeake was granted funding from Verizon. In 2007, Chesapeake decided to support technology development with its own monies, bringing the institute in-house and renaming it the Faculty Development Center. Today, Dr. France serves as the Director of the FDC and supervises a staff of three. France shares that she and her staff spend a good portion of their time in the "online world," especially now that Chesapeake offers business administration and liberal arts degrees entirely online. Whether advising students who have technical difficulties, helping faculty create a hybrid version of their face-to-face classes, or ensuring that operational systems are running smoothly, the FDC staff are crucial in keeping this increasingly-popular educational opportunity viable. In 1999, the first year an online course was offered at Chesapeake, four students enrolled. By 2009, there were nearly two thousand students taking classes online. John Haas, Associate Professor of History frequently teaches online courses. He notes, "My online students write constantly and are in many ways 'teaching me' what they've learned. There is no better way to promote comprehension and analysis." Chesapeake students agree. Students who complete

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Faculty Development Center

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Jamie Gunsallus, *Instructional Technology Specialist, helps student.*

online courses at Chesapeake report that they learn as much or more online as they do in a traditional classroom. Online classes take about the same amount of time as face-to-face classes, but often require more reading and writing. The FDC provides training to faculty on how to develop and deliver online and hybrid classes and keeps the College's learning management system up-to-date and functioning properly. Dr. France, who holds a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, enjoys working directly with faculty to help solve issues within the classroom. "I love learning theory and thinking about the intellectual process," enthuses Dr. France. Thus, for instance, when a faculty member recently came to her to discuss better ways to assess his students, Dr. France was able to help him design application-based assessments in lieu of the typical multiple-choice tests.

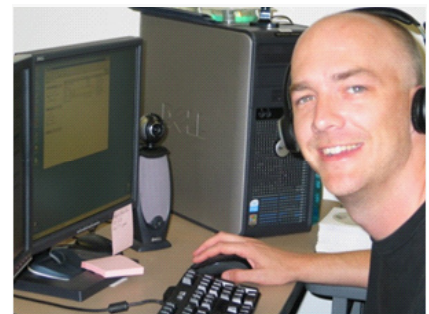
She and her staff also enjoy working with faculty fellows. Each year, Chesapeake selects one or two faculty fellow positions, typically one in the fall and one in the spring. These faculty members spend a semester working on a project that enhances their teaching. "I ask them to think of an instructional problem," explains Dr. France. "For instance, Linda

Earls, Associate Professor of English, who teaches an African-American literature course, wanted her students to have a better understanding of the slave experience." Towards that end, Earls worked with FDC to develop an interactive program entitled, "Master of My World: From African to Emancipation." The CD, complete with interactive quizzes, photos, video clips, audio of some contemporary authors and students alike, slave spirituals, jazz, and so much more, makes the literature come to life. "This project has enhanced my literature courses and my students' learning in countless ways," comments Earls. Other Fellows' projects have included: "Songs of War," that brings popular songs of wartime from the Revolutionary to the Gulf war into the American History online and face-to-face classrooms; a graphing calculator video tutorial for absolute beginners, an introduction and training program



Cindy Gower, *Instructional Designer, in consultation with Dr. Cynthia France, Director of the FDC*

for employees using the campus fitness center, "Sheeps's Brain" and "Cow's Eyeball," two video dissection demonstrations, and an online instructional materials repository for the science department. Future plans for the FDC include a focus on innovative uses of technology to enhance student learning, continued growth and improvement of online and hybrid courses and programs



Jeff Mills, *Multimedia Specialist, editing audio*

to meet the needs of Eastern Shore residents, and expanded training for faculty on pedagogical issues.

