

Mesa Community College partners with College of St. Scholastica

By **Brianna Cossavella**

Special to the Independent

Mesa Community College has partnered with The College of St. Scholastica in Minnesota and is now offering a program for students to receive a Bachelor of Arts in social work.

The program's courses began on Tuesday, Sept. 8. MCC announced the partnership during the summer of 2015.

In the past, students could only graduate with an associate degree after completing the MCC social work program. If students wanted to continue their education, they would have to transfer to Arizona State University School of Social Work, Northern Arizona University or another undergraduate college. This is no longer the case.

"Although there are many quality four-year institutions in the Valley, I believe that giving students more choices is a good thing," President of MCC Shouan Pan said.

Dori DiPietro, director of the MCC social work program, said students have the option to complete the MCC transferable program or the St. Scholastica program to achieve a bachelor's degree. For the St. Scholastica program, students will do 82 credit hours through MCC and the rest through St. Scholastica. Their courses are taken on the MCC campus and

taught by St. Scholastica professors.

"Our goal at MCC is to make higher education affordable and accessible for the greatest amount of people," Ms. DiPietro said. "We are about creating opportunities and social justice in our world."

MCC officials are confident this program will enhance the amount of students who choose to continue their education and get a bachelor's degree, she said. Plus, MCC officials are delighted to keep their students on their campus for a longer period of time.

St. Scholastica officials approached MCC during the summer of 2014 to discuss collaboration, Ms. DiPietro said.

"We are able to meet the needs of students who would be looking for a four-year institute but are intimidated by the transfer process," St. Scholastica Arizona Regional Director Maria Laughner said.

Students no longer have to enter a new environment with different advisors and peers. Ms. Laughner said the St. Scholastica program is more comfortable and convenient.

In 2000, St. Scholastica began embedding its social work program into community colleges, Ms. Laughner said. St. Scholastica specifically partners with community colleges because its program only offers the third and fourth year of

college.

The St. Scholastica main campus is in Duluth, Minnesota, where it has been hosting common undergraduate programs for 103 years.

As of late, St. Scholastica only offers its social work program outside of their central campus. The program is offered in eight various community colleges in Minnesota and this is the first in Mesa, Ms. Laughner said.

Students need a wide social network to be successful and Mesa has the necessary environment for the program to thrive, she said.

The price to complete the program is \$25,100 with a fee of \$150 per semester. St. Scholastica is offering a 15 percent discount for the first year. This price does not include general requirements.

"In our minds universities charge so much to attain a degree for a job that probably won't pay an extensive amount of money, specifically social work," she said. "We bring down the cost, and do not discourage students by making them transfer."

Editor's note: Brianna Cossavella is a journalism student at the Arizona State University Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and wrote the article as a class assignment.

SCHOOL News

Red Mountain "Road to College Night"

Red Mountain will be hosting the "Road to College Night" at 6:30 p.m. on Sept. 23 in the RMHS auditorium.

Parents and students may leave this event with valuable information about the admissions process, programs of study and cost of attendance. Presentations include:

- Freshmen and sophomores - the process of becoming college-ready.
- Juniors - important steps to take during the college-planning year.
- Seniors - what they should be doing month by month this year to ensure they're college admitted and college ready.
- Beating the cost of college - learn about college costs, navigating the FAFSA/ financial aid process, and how to pay for college.
- Scholarships - understand the different types of scholarships and how to access them.
- Out-of-state and selective universities - learn how to explore colleges outside of Arizona and gain knowledge about admissions requirements

The event will also feature admission representatives from Arizona State University, University of Arizona, Northern Arizona University, Grand Canyon University and Mesa Community College

Road to College Night is facilitated by Red Mountain's student advisors department. Call 480-472-8030 for more information.

MCC invites public to tour new student success center

The public is invited to tour the recently completed Mesa Community College Enrollment and Student Success Centers from 10 a.m. to noon on Sept. 29. Following an opening ceremony attendees may tour, activities and food, according to a press release.

"MCC is proud to offer the public an opportunity to view the dramatic changes to our campus," said Dr. Shouan Pan, MCC president said, in the release. "These changes reflect one of our core values, that of student success. We are dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of our students and our community."

Designed to centralize enrollment services and specialized student support services, the project consists of a new 17,000-square-foot enrollment center and the extensive remodeling of existing adjacent buildings. The project was funded through the bond initiative approved by Maricopa County voters in 2004.

In the newly constructed enrollment center, students have easy access to admissions, records and advisement, registration, financial aid, and cashier's services all under one roof. The center includes a new Quick Advisement area that assists students who have general academic questions.

The Student Success Center houses a number of student services including multicultural services, career services, counseling, disability resources and more. The Kirk Stu-

dent Center, originally built in the '60s, houses updated Student Government offices, Student Life and Leadership and the cafeteria.

Mountain View ranked top 10 school in Arizona

U.S. News and World Report ranked high schools nationwide and named Mountain View, 2700 E. Brown Road, No. 10 in Arizona.

Mountain View won a silver medal from U.S. News and World Report in its 2015 Best High Schools Rankings. The study, which included 519 Arizona high schools, was conducted by RTI International.

According to a press release, schools must pass a rigorous analysis to earn a ranking or medal. The three-step evaluation was based on:

- whether each school's students were performing better than statistically expected for students in their state,
- whether their disadvantaged students – black, Hispanic and low-income – were outperforming disadvantaged students in the state, and on
- college-readiness performance – using Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate test data as the benchmarks for success, depending on which program was largest at the school.

"The U.S. News and World Report rankings reward schools that outperform expectations and demonstrate the best college-level achievement for the highest percentages

of their students. I am proud of the Mountain View students and staff for their dedication to academic success. While numbers can never tell the whole story, this analysis supports what I see happening in the classroom every day – students and teachers engaged in meaningful learning experiences," said Greg Milbrandt, principal.

EVIT's The Pulse expands radio airwave reach

A Top 40 dance station is operated by Radio/Audio Production students at EVIT. A new signal is expanding the reach of the student-run radio station, The Pulse, across the Phoenix metropolitan area, according to a press release.

Hitting the airwaves on Aug. 11, 88.7FM The Pulse, is covering more area with a much clearer signal than its previous stations, 90.7FM and 92.7FM. The new tower, located in Maricopa, broadcasts 15,000 watts on 88.7, compared to 2,000 watts that the previous stations played.

About 100 high school students and young adults from the East Valley are enrolled in the Radio/Audio Production program at EVIT, a career and technical education school. EVIT offers more than 40 occupational training programs. For more information about the Radio/Audio Production program and EVIT, visit www.evit.com. The Pulse operates from EVIT's Dr. A. Keith Crandell (Main) Campus, 1601 W. Main St., Mesa. For more information about The Pulse, visit PulseRadio.FM.