



President's Brownbag Notes

Dr. Curt Freed, President

February 22, 2024, 12:00 p.m. via WebEx

- 1) **Participants:** 34
- 2) Curt Freed welcomed **new MCC employees** who started since January 1.
 - a) Monica Castro, Health Sciences Clinical & Compliance Coordinator
 - b) Tahais Guerrero-Rocha, STEM Outreach Coordinator
 - c) Allyson (Ally) Jones, Librarian
 - d) Dr. Erik Richter, Dean of Workforce Development
 - e) Nancy Ruhl, Human Resources Coordinator
 - f) Lady Trejo, Testing Coordinator
 - g) Eric Walek, Mechatronics Faculty
 - h) Sara Watkins, GED Faculty
 - i) Rebeca (Becky) Watson, Student Life Coordinator
 - j) In addition, Cora Rhode was promoted to the Director of the Title V MI CASA grant.
- 3) **Dahms-Talton Center** for Skilled Trades & Technology Construction Update: Concrete is being poured for the building's foundation. The target for completion is October 2024.
- 4) **Sidewalk Project Update:** A sidewalk and gutter is being installed along Barlow Road. MCC received permission from the state to use excess funds from the campus sprinkler project (a Controlled Maintenance project funded by the State of Colorado) to pay for the sidewalk and gutter project.
- 5) **Wray Property Update:** MCC closed on the purchase of a former Texaco station property in Wray on December 19, 2023. A team from MCC visited the property on February 12 to plan next steps for transforming the "minimart" building into a new Wray Center. A floor plan is being developed, and staff is identifying potential contractors. One of the first steps will be to remove the canopies where the gas pumps once stood. Signage will be updated, including adding a digital sign. Holly noted that the Wray community is very excited about the project and stakeholders are interested in partnering with MCC. The new property is much more visible than where the previous leased Wray Center was located.
- 6) An **MCC Childcare Taskforce** has been created, with Jamie Hochanadel as the Chair. Additional taskforce members are welcome, and interested individuals should contact Jamie. The taskforce will be exploring creative ways to promote a better childcare ecosystem in the community and enhance resources for students and staff. Curt noted that MCC has limited initial resources to use for the initiative. Dianne Purves suggested providing scholarships for students to go through the Multicultural Entrepreneurship Program to develop childcare businesses. Curt shared the concept of how construction trades training could be combined with early childhood training and entrepreneurship training to help create more childcare options in the community.

- 7) **Budget Update:** Tracy Schneider shared that most budget requests have been turned in to supervisors. Supervisors will review them and then submit them to their Vice President. Tracy has been working on course fee requests.

- 8) **Fundraising/Grant Update:**
 - a) The MCC Foundation received \$1,000,000 from the Gene Doty estate to use for a Health Scholarships and Programs endowment.
 - b) Another endowment that will be over \$300,000 is in progress and will be designated for trades programs and scholarships.
 - c) MCC was designated to receive \$112,500 for the Opportunity Next Colorado (formerly called the Universal High School Scholarship) Program. This funding will provide scholarships for 2024 high school graduates.
 - d) The college received a \$25,000 grant from the Lumina Foundation to support Weekend College efforts. Leftover funding will be used to stock the student food pantry. Becky Watson (Student Life Coordinator) is exploring best practices for operating MCC's food pantry.
 - e) The 25th MCC Foundation Gala is happening February 23 at the REA.

- 9) **Congratulations:**
 - a) Seven Collision Repair students competed at a regional competition and qualified for state competition in April.
 - b) HOSA students did very well at their state competition.
 - c) Amanda Czuprynski won first place out of over 200 submissions to the Broadcast Education Association (BEA) research paper competition. The BEA will publish Amanda's research on nonverbal Zoom behaviors in Zoom classrooms and meetings. She has also been invited to present her research at the BEA convention in Las Vegas in April 2024.
 - d) Gavin Fitzgerald became a new dad!

- 10) A **CAHEC Mental Health Exhibit** is on display in the Spruce Hall atrium until March 11. Curt expressed thanks to April Amack and Ariella Gonzales-Vondy for their help with the project. There are three remaining mental health workshops scheduled with presenters from Centennial Mental Health Workshops. All are at noon:
 - a) February 27: QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) - 3 Simple Steps Help Save A Life
 - b) February 29: What are your sources of strength? Tap into your own sources of strength.
 - c) March 5: COMET Training (Changing Our Mental & Emotional Trajectory)

- 11) **Colorado Online Update:** Deborah Coates shared that there have been some challenges with the CO Online implementation, but she anticipates smoother implementations in summer and fall. She noted that MCC has been assigned a considerable number of CO Online courses for fall 2024, and instructors are being sought. Curt noted that during the recent College Council meeting it was mentioned that some may hold the perception that CCCS or MCC's motivation in implementing CO Online is based on seeking revenue. Curt shared the historical context, noting that the CO Online model was created as a technical fix to an accreditation issue. Previously, the System oversaw CCCOnline courses that were offered to the colleges, but the Higher Learning Commission expressed concern because CCCS is not an accredited college. To meet accreditation standards, CO

- 12) Online was created so that instruction falls under the accreditation of each college offering the courses. Fall semester will be the final transition from CCCOnline to CO Online.
- 13) **Shared Governance policy:** Curt noted that a committee of faculty and administrators from System colleges has worked over the past 1½ years on developing a board policy and system procedure regarding shared governance. The State Board for Community Colleges and Occupation approved the Board Policy (BP) on shared governance at their February meeting. The BP states that the Board and Chancellor value the role of shared governance and that presidents are directed to utilize shared governance at their colleges. The System Procedure (SP) goes into more detail and is still pending approval. Curt noted that the MCC College Council Charter states that the Council was created to serve as a mechanism for shared governance. Curt stated that shared governance takes ongoing effort and involvement at all levels of the institution.
- 14) A **Bring Your Dog to Work Day** will be held February 28. Employees who wish to bring their dogs must have a signed agreement on file with Human Resources.
- 15) **CACE events:**
 - a) February 29 - March 21, "Best of the Best" Student Art Show, CACE Gallery of Fine Art, Fort Morgan
 - b) March 7, 5:30 -7:00 p.m., Open Mic with Community Readings at Books on Main, 302 Main St, Fort Morgan
 - c) Author Talks:
 - i) Be a Kick-Ass Boss Without Losing Your Humanity (author Kim Scott) Feb. 28 at noon.
 - ii) The Power of Friendships (author Nina Totenberg) March 6, 2:00 p.m.
 - iii) 20 Years of Dragon-Riding in YA Fantasy with Author Christopher Paolini, March 14 at 2:00 p.m.
- 16) **Other:**
 - a) April Amack inquired about photos of the construction progress on the Dahms-Talton Center for Skilled Trades and Technology. Curt noted that Bill Miller is taking regular drone photos. Curt is also taking photos around once a week. He will share photos with April for the library archives.
 - b) Dianne Purves asked about the status of the Return to Earn and Finish What You Started programs. Curt noted that Kathy Witwer's position (Director of Student Re-entry) oversees both programs. Each program is grant funded—Finish What You Started by COSI and Return to Earn by a private donor. Kathy shared that one grant ends in spring 2025 and the other in spring 2026. Kathy is continuing to reach out to students who qualify for the programs.
 - c) Ariella Gonzales-Vondy shared that students need to apply to graduate and order regalia by March 15. The College Store will accept late orders for regalia through March 29, but a \$25 late fee will apply. Students can still apply for graduation after March 29, but they will not be able to walk in the commencement ceremony.
 - d) Ariella shared that a Professional Development Day is scheduled for April 12. The main speaker will be a consultant on "Strength Finders." She noted that employees will receive an email with an assessment to complete prior to the Professional Development Day.

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- e) Ariella noted that nominations are being accepted for the employee Guiding Principles Award. The nominations deadline is March 15.
- f) Ariella shared that she recently watched the movie, "Devotion," and noticed in the credits that the film is based on a book by former CACE speaker, Adam Makos.
- g) Jane Fries encouraged employees to nominate students for the Rising Star or Inclusive Excellence Champion awards. The deadline for nominations is March 4.
- h) MCC employees are planning a community cultural fair to be held at MCC on Saturday, March 23.
- i) MCC is offering free Tax Help for individuals making \$64,000 or less. Services will be offered Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2-6 p.m. through March 7 in Cedar Hall. Curt noted that filing a tax return is linked to being able to receive certain Colorado tax benefits.

Notes by: Jane Fries, Assistant to the President