

# MCLA Beacons & Seeds

MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS FALL 2013



**A REMARKABLE  
TRANSFORMATION**

# Beacons & Seeds

MCLA FALL 2013

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**Cover photo:** Many state and local officials offered remarks and stood to cut the ribbon on the Feigenbaum Center for Science and Innovation. Pictured on the cover are (front row) Senator Ben Downing, Governor Deval Patrick, Asia Andrews '14, President Mary Grant, Trustee Tyler Fairbank, (back row) Representative Smitty Pignatelli, Emil George, president of the Feigenbaum Foundation, Commissioner Richard Freeland, Representative Tom Sannicandro, and Mayor Dick Alcombricht. Photo by Greg Nesbit '97.

*This page:* The women's soccer team looks down on the Feigenbaum Center for Science and Innovation ribbon cutting ceremony

## FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Alumni:

When I joined MCLA as president in 2002, the College had established and begun to assert its important role as the Commonwealth's public liberal arts college, but we recognized that we had opportunities available to us to

extend that role and build upon that promise. The institution we are today represents our focused, intentional, and unwavering commitment to our students, this campus, and the community at large. At every step, progress has been made thanks to the hard work, dedication, investment, and support of faculty, staff, students, trustees, Foundation directors, members of the alumni board, friends, and colleagues in the community and at the state level.

We have a great story to tell about the work in progress that is MCLA. It is a story deeply rooted in our history, as evidenced by the example of treasured alumni and good friends like Alma Benedetti '37 (see page 16), and it is ultimately a story of transformation. You can see this powerfully demonstrated in the physical transformation of the campus, and the renovation of teaching, learning, and living spaces. We renovated and reopened Murdock Hall, the oldest academic building on campus, and made the case for the Center for Science and Innovation, our newest academic building. We had a spectacular ribbon cutting celebration for the Center on October 4th, as evidenced by the photos on page 3. Thanks to the generosity of Armand and Donald Feigenbaum, the building will carry their name and provide a transformative stream of resources in perpetuity.

We added a new artificial turf field at the Zavattaro Athletic Complex that provides our student-athletes with one of the finest playing surfaces in all of New England. We completed major renovations to the Berkshire Towers and Hoosac Hall residence areas, creating new living and gathering spaces for students.

Equally powerful was the recent renovation to Amsler Campus Center, providing students with space they have embraced as part of their residential experience.

Smaller, but similarly influential, enhancements have also been made. From the establishment of a new faculty center in Eldridge Hall, to our work positioning Freel Library as a 21st-century learning commons, to projects that make the campus more beautiful, efficient, and sustainable, our remarkable facilities team has worked magic. Our physical spaces speak to their pride in the institution, a pride we all share.

Through *Sowing Seeds for Success*, the College's first comprehensive capital campaign, there are opportunities to be part of this proud tradition and to leave a mark on the physical campus environment.

We continue to transform our academic programs as well. New majors have been added in art and arts management; athletic training; chemistry; environmental studies; and political science and public policy. Please see the article on page 6 about the recent accreditation of the athletic training major.

We launched a new graduate program, the Professional Master of Business Administration. We continue to look at opportunities to develop and deliver programs that are necessary, relevant, and aligned with the needs of our region and the Commonwealth. For example, we've been intentional in growing our Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) programs in particular, knowing that these are areas where there is a great need, and where an education nurtured in a liberal arts tradition can powerfully prepare students for graduate study or careers in the innovation economy.

The quality of our academic programs and the success of our students rely on a remarkably talented faculty and staff. Our faculty are dedicated educators, distinguished scholars, and passionate advocates for their students, and you can read just a few examples of this beginning on page 4. Sadly, we are now mourning the loss of Professor Emeritus Avaz Hajizadeh, a fine man and superior teacher. The scholarship of our faculty has brought MCLA national recognition, and their commitment has guided students to graduate school and into careers and lives as engaged citizens.

“What students gain from their MCLA experience, and from the friendships and relationships that develop through that experience, is transformative.”

The Campaign provides opportunities to support these remarkable professionals.

As a public liberal arts college, our place in the community is vitally important. We have an obligation to provide access to higher education to the citizens of the Commonwealth and to all who seek a high-quality, affordable education. This responsibility and our commitment to meeting it have transformed our place in the community over the past ten years, and have positioned MCLA to be part of the national conversation about the vital role of public higher education and public liberal arts colleges.

Working together, we created the Berkshire Compact for Education and brought together higher education, K-12, public officials, business, and nonprofit leaders in collaboration around a simple, yet powerful vision: that the great educational resources in the Berkshires be deployed to ensure all students in our region complete 16 years or more of education.

Similar partnerships rooted in shared investment in today's opportunities and tomorrow's potential created the Berkshire STEM Pipeline Network and the Berkshire Cultural Resource Center (BCRC). Through these programs, we do good and important work to raise student aspirations, provide professional development opportunities to educators, connect the College to the rich cultural resources in the region, and serve as an economic development engine for the city and the county.

Together, we built the Feigenbaum Center for Science and Innovation. At every step, from the initial vision to the celebration we shared in October, this project relied on the tireless advocacy and engagement of faculty, staff, alumni, trustees, Foundation board members, community members, and friends in the State House who listened when we spoke of this need. The building is a testament to collaboration, vision, and shared investment. I am grateful to everyone who helped make this vision a reality. And, through the Campaign, there are still more opportunities to support, advance, and be part of the legacy of the Feigenbaum Center for Science and Innovation.

Our public role has brought with it national

attention. Through our membership in the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC), MCLA is at the forefront of national conversations about the transformative power of the liberal arts. Faculty scholarship has brought us to the attention of funders including the National Endowment for the Humanities. MCLA has been recognized as a Top 10 Public Liberal Arts College by *U.S. News & World Report* for three years running. While we don't do this work for the accolades, the recognition that MCLA is a place where good and important work takes place is gratifying.

Ultimately, the story of MCLA is a story of human transformation. Our buildings, programs, partnerships, and relationships support the work we do for our students. From the moment a student steps onto the MCLA campus – indeed, from the first phone call or email a prospective student or family makes to explore whether MCLA is the right place for them – we are deeply invested in that student's success.

What students gain from their MCLA experience, and from the friendships and relationships that develop through that experience, is transformative. Whether it is a new idea, the confidence that comes from presenting an undergraduate research project in front of an audience, or the realization of a passion for serving others, MCLA is a place that changes lives. I know this to be true, because it certainly changed mine in powerful ways.

I am grateful for the friends, colleagues, supporters, and stakeholders who have been with us over the years. I look forward to the new friends who will join us as we write the next chapters of the MCLA story through the work of the *Sowing Seeds for Success* campaign and the hard work and dedication of the MCLA community.

Sincerely,

Mary K. Grant, Ph.D.  
President

## THE OPENING OF THE FEIGENBAUM CENTER FOR SCIENCE AND INNOVATION

On October 4, 2013, the College cut the ribbon to officially open the Center for Science and Innovation. At the ceremony, the Center's new name was revealed, the Feigenbaum Center for Science and Innovation, in addition to the news that the College received a \$5 million pledge – the largest in the College's history – to *Sowing Seeds for Success: The MCLA Campaign for the Future*. The pledge establishes a new endowed fund that focuses on innovation and leadership in honor of Dr. Armand V. Feigenbaum and his brother, Dr. Donald S. Feigenbaum, who passed away earlier this year. The Feigenbaums founded and led the General System Company, a worldwide leader in the field of Total Quality Management.



Kathy Cariddi Mogavero '52 with her niece, State Representative Gail Cariddi.



At the event, the Feigenbaum Foundation announced a \$20,000 annual scholarship in the name of the late Bernard "Bud" Riley, long-time advisor to the Feigenbaums and treasurer of the foundation. Pictured above are members of Bud's family.



Science alumni returned to campus for the Ribbon Cutting and participated in a panel discussion moderated by Deb Foss, professor of psychology, after the ceremony. The panel included Richard Brown '74, Bridget Gormalley '09, Dan Harris '08, Abbey Scott '00, and Rick Maybury '80.



A tour stops in for a briefing in one of the chemistry labs. Kevin Moran (Berkshire Eagle), Vicky May (Greylock Federal Credit Union), Cory Thurston (Pittsfield Economic Development Association), Dick Lamb (former Chair of Trustees/True North), Peter Lafayette (Berkshire Bank Foundation), Mary Nash, Tom Leavitt (MountainOne Bank), and Laurie Swint '92 (Brazeel and Huban, CPA).

# LEADING THE WAY

## IN INNOVATIVE PROGRAMMING

Since its beginnings as the Normal School in 1894, MCLA has undergone constant evolution and expansion, creating new pathways for students and helping them navigate their individual journeys toward a bright and prosperous future. Recent years have been particularly momentous, as notable additions to the faculty have provided new and innovative academic opportunities and High-Impact Experiences for students.



*Dr. Cynthia Brown, vice president of academic affairs, with Dr. Christine Condaris, chair of the fine and performing arts department.*

**Dr. Cynthia Brown**, vice president of academic affairs, says, “There’s a lot of positive momentum at MCLA right now, a direct reflection of President Mary K. Grant’s vision and leadership. The strength of our academic programs and strong partnership between curricular and co-curricular activities are drawing a lot of interest to MCLA.” Brown says that, through ongoing academic planning, several positions have been added in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). The opportunity to teach in a new, state-of-the-art facility like the Feigenbaum Center for Science and Innovation was a powerful incentive in recruitment efforts.



*Above: Biology professor Ann Billetz, Ph.D. Left: Computer Science professor Mark Cohen, Ph.D. with students in front of the Center for Science and Innovation under construction*

Among the newest additions to the MCLA faculty is **Mark A. Cohen, Ph.D.**, who formerly worked at a Pennsylvania university to join MCLA as an associate professor in the computer sciences department in 2011. Mark feels that MCLA has a great deal to offer both faculty and students, and he especially appreciates the small learning environment. “In a world of distance learning, large lecture classes, and massive online classes,” he comments, “it is very refreshing to have a job where I can actually interact face-to-face with a small group of talented students.”

Cohen has been working in collaboration with colleagues **David Eve, Ed.D.**, and **Mike Dalton, Ph.D.**, to enhance the computer science program, making it “one of the best in the state system.” Four computer science concentrations are now offered:

software development, information technology, business information systems, and bioinformatics. “These concentrations offer students the opportunity to combine computer sciences with other disciplines, giving them the broad skill set needed to tackle the complex problems that companies are facing,” says Cohen.

The bioinformatics concentration was inspired by the 2011 donation of a high-performance computing cluster. **Nuclea Biotechnologies**, headquartered in Pittsfield, Mass., donated the computer to assist faculty in teaching students complex analysis of large data collections, especially biological data that can be used in research pertaining to human disease and drug discovery.

The computer science department joined forces with the biology department to develop new

bioinformatics concentrations within the two disciplines. Associate professor **Ann Billetz, Ph.D.**, chair of the biology department, played an integral role in this effort. Cohen and Billetz also initiated a co-curricular Bioinformatics Club, enabling students to further explore this growing field.

Billetz came to MCLA in 2002, soon after completing a postdoctoral research fellowship at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation’s Lerner Research Institute. She has been instrumental in expanding and strengthening the offerings of the biology program, helping to prepare students for cutting-edge careers within the life sciences. In addition to developing the bioinformatics concentration, she recently collaborated with biology professor **Anne Goodwin, Ph.D.**, to develop the allied health concentration that launched last year.

“The allied health concentration is designed to give students the background they need to go on to a Masters in Physician Assistant Studies or a Masters in Nutrition program,” Billetz explains. “This has become a very popular concentration with our students, due in large part to the high demand for physician assistants in health care today.”



## ATHLETIC TRAINING PROGRAM EARNS ACCREDITATION



Professor Krzyzanowicz working with students in the athletic training room.

Current and future students in the athletic training program at MCLA have received some good news. The athletic training major is a nationally accredited program of the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE).

**Peter Hoyt, Ph.D.**, director of the athletic training education program and associate professor of biology, explains that this accreditation will enable students to take the Board of Certification (BOC) exam for athletic trainers upon graduation from MCLA. Those who pass the test are recognized as certified athletic trainers, better positioning them for entry into the workforce or graduate school. In the past, students had to achieve a master's degree prior to taking the test, because the BOC stipulates that candidates for accreditation must graduate from an accredited athletic training program.

"We've been working toward this accreditation for a long time," says Hoyt, who was recruited by MCLA to help put the wheels in motion back in 2005. "The program was originally a sports medicine concentration offered through the biology department. Our first step was to develop it into a full major." This goal was accomplished in 2009, as the athletic training major became approved by the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education. It is the only such program in western Massachusetts, southern Vermont, and eastern New York.

Another important step toward accreditation was the hiring of a medical director, **Paul Donovan, D.O., F.A.C.E.P.**, and a clinical education coordinator,

**Ryan Krzyzanowicz, M.S.Ed., A.T.C.** "These roles were essential to accreditation, and it is great to have our team in place," says Hoyt.

Athletic trainers collaborate with physicians to prevent, evaluate, and treat injuries to the physically active. They are employed in a broad range of environments, including colleges and universities, gyms and athletic clubs, elementary and secondary schools, industrial and corporate settings, physician's offices and hospitals, and even within the performing arts. MCLA's athletic training program was intentionally designed to connect with cultural and recreational resources in the region that have a health and wellness component. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projected that the employment of athletic trainers would grow by 30% between 2010 and 2020. Athletic training is recognized as an allied health care profession.

Hoyt credits many people for helping to develop the athletic training major and achieve accreditation. Among them is **John Moresi, Sr., D.D.S.**, a local dentist and longtime friend to MCLA who passed away earlier this year. Moresi, who served as adjunct faculty, was one of the key players in helping to develop the athletic training major. While this accreditation will likely generate more interest in MCLA's athletic training major, Hoyt says the program has always been top-notch. "We've always kept the bar high, because we wanted to ensure that our students had the option to attend and succeed in graduate school."

Research is also important to **Elizabeth Hartung, Ph.D.**, who joined MCLA's Department of Mathematics in 2011, shortly before completing her doctorate in mathematics at Syracuse University. Although she teaches a variety of courses for all levels of math, her area of expertise is graph theory. She is involved in research regarding graph representations of carbon molecules.

Last year, Hartung worked with an undergraduate student on an independent graph theory research study, and she looks forward to working with additional students in the future. "I would welcome the opportunity to collaborate with students from within the math, computer science, or chemistry programs," she says. "It would be interesting to explore the models used within different disciplines."

With the growing emphasis on STEM programs and careers, it became evident that a STEM program manager was needed to support STEM initiatives both on and off campus. In 2011, **Chris Himes, Ph.D.** joined MCLA to

support STEM initiatives both on and off campus

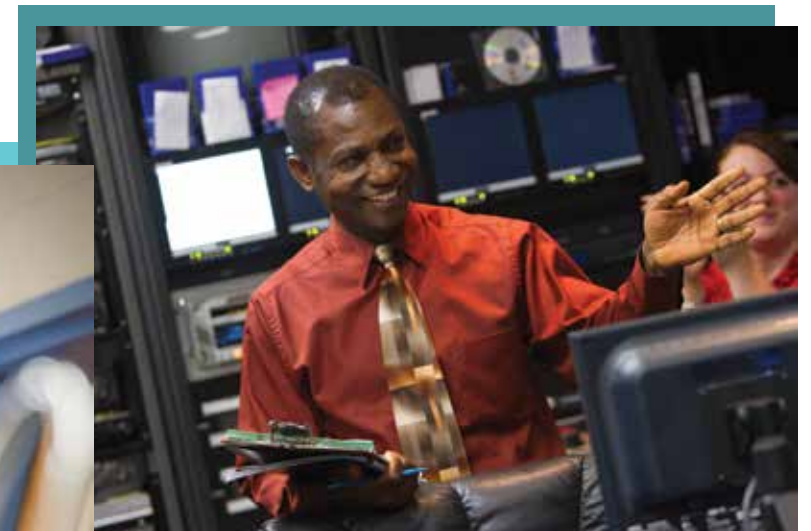
Himes, who came to MCLA after completing postdoctoral fellowships at Williams College and the University of New Mexico, supports students enrolled in STEM programs by overseeing two tutoring programs and by serving on the Student Success and Retention Task Force. "My goal is to help students succeed and prepare them for entering either the workforce or graduate school," he says. He strives to build upon MCLA's reputation for excellent STEM programming by "producing amazing alumni."

Regional outreach is an equally important element of Himes' position. He serves as coordinator of the Berkshire STEM Pipeline Network, part of a state-wide effort to boost participation in STEM programs, increase the number of

STEM educators, and improve STEM educational offerings. Beyond his role as STEM program manager, Himes is an adjunct faculty member, teaching two science courses for non-majors.

Himes became familiar with MCLA during his time at Williams College. "I was drawn to MCLA due to its strong presence within North Adams and the surrounding region," he recalls. "As I got to know more, the student body caught my attention. The whole campus is a vibrant place, and the commitment to student success is inspiring."

While a strong emphasis has been placed on expanding STEM programs in recent years, other academic programs have also continued to grow and prosper. Professor **Joseph Ebiware, Ph.D.**, of the English/communications department, has witnessed this firsthand over the last three decades. He first came to



Above: Professor Joseph Ebiware, Ph.D.  
Left: Chris Himes, Ph.D.

MCLA from Central Connecticut State University in New Britain, Conn. in 1985. Five years later, he relocated to Baltimore, Md. “Sometimes you think the grass is greener elsewhere,” he reflects, “but when I was in Baltimore, I realized that MCLA was a better fit for me and my family.” He returned to MCLA in 1992, where he has remained ever since.

Through the years, Ebiware and his colleagues have continually worked to enhance the offerings of the English/communications program, providing a solid foundation in literature, writing, language, and mass media, as well as opportunities for specialized study through six different concentrations. Ebiware, who specializes in mass media, teaches a wide variety of courses, including Broadcast Journalism, Script Writing, Broadcast Delivery, Inter-cultural Communications, and News Literacy, among others. He is involved with research on the evolution of mass media technology and its impact on broadcasting, particularly on news.

Ebiware is pleased about the changes that have taken place at MCLA in recent years. “The campus itself has changed dramatically in terms of physical appearance, which is a morale-booster of sorts. It affirms the efficacy of what MCLA does and people’s belief in this institution. Ultimately, it’s an inspiration to be my best every day as I stand in front of students, from whom I also demand a lot.”

With the Feigenbaum Center for Science and Innovation now complete,

*At the Ribbon-cutting Ceremony, the College unveiled a new work of art by Honorary Degree recipient and famed landscape artist Stephen Hannock. The painting was gifted to the College by Hannock and placed in the atrium of the new building. Pictured here are Governor Deval Patrick, President Mary Grant, Stephen Hannock, and psychology major Asia Andrews '14 in front of the painting.*

the College turns its sights to the renovation of Bowman Hall, to create space to house the math, computer science, art, and arts management programs. When Bowman reopens in 2014, it will feature an art gallery, robotics laboratory, studio space, a faculty center, a high-end computer

graphics design lab, and much more.

In looking toward the future, MCLA will work to ensure that students continue to have access to high-quality, innovative programming led by a team of talented, diverse, and passionate faculty members. ■



## MCLA PURSUES REACCREDITATION

In the past two years, faculty, staff, and students from across the MCLA community have been deeply engaged in a comprehensive self-study process as part of the College’s ten year reaccreditation by the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, a division of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC).

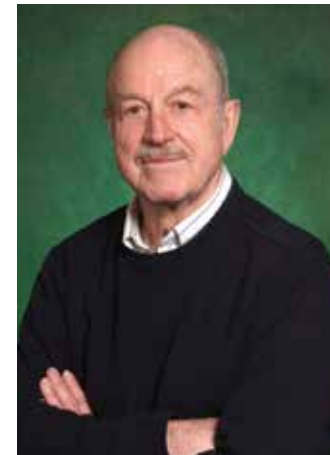
The self-study prepared by MCLA benchmarks the institution’s progress, challenges, and opportunities relative to eleven standards outlined by NEASC. These standards include: mission and purposes, planning and evaluation, organization and governance, the academic program, faculty, students, library and other information resources, physical and technological resources, financial resources, public disclosure, and integrity.

In addition to serving as a resource for helping institutions such as MCLA maintain their commitment to high standards and quality, accreditation complements the requirements outlined by state educational systems, federal oversight of financial aid, and professional licensure in many fields. NEASC is the regional accrediting body for 232 colleges and universities in New England.

## THE FACULTY

### A Tribute to Faculty Emeriti

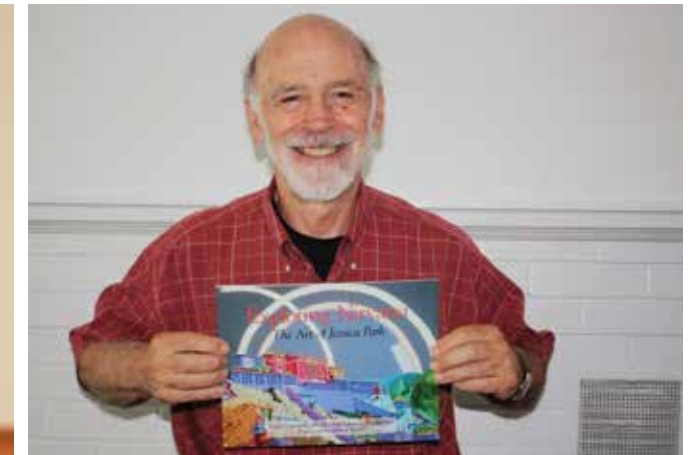
The word “retirement” means different things to different people. Thankfully, in the world of higher education, it seldom means goodbye. Last spring, as the academic year drew to a close, several highly respected, longtime professors announced their retirement from MCLA.



Donald Washburn, Ph.D.



Robert Bence, D.A.



Anthony Gengarelly, Ph.D.

While they have stepped down from their responsibilities as full-time faculty, they will continue to inspire students and colleagues as they transition to the role of emeritus professors, a new chapter in their academic careers.

**Donald Washburn, Ph.D.**, professor of English/communications, left his home in Pennsylvania, bound for MCLA, in 1971. Washburn played a key role in broadening the offerings of the English department. He is credited with developing the highly successful communications program and with creating a variety of unique courses, some of which have stemmed from his own strong sense of spiritual awareness. Among them is Science and Spirit, which he has returned to teach this semester.

“This course challenges students to examine the question of what kind of life they want to lead,” Washburn explains. “There is a lot of wonderful

literature that explores the dialogue between spiritualism and atheism. People think there’s no place for religion in higher education, but my classes present all different views and allow students to make their own choices.”

At age 81, Washburn says he still feels as sharp as ever, which he attributes in large part to living a healthy, active lifestyle. In his newfound free time, he is enjoying the opportunity to focus on his poetry and pursue other interests, such as composing music.

Another Pennsylvania native, **Robert Bence, D.A.**, professor of political science and public policy, taught at schools throughout the country before finding his way to MCLA in 1976.

In the 37 years since, Bence has appreciated the opportunity to develop and teach a wide variety of courses focused on government, politics, and policy at the local, state, national, and international levels. Specific courses

have included US Government and Public Policy; Middle East and the United States; Arab World in Transition; Political Behavior and Elections; and Canadian Politics in a Comparative Perspective, among others. Some of his courses have enabled him to lead educational trips to Canada and other locations with his students.

While Bence is taking the fall semester off to travel to India, he is scheduled to teach two courses during the spring 2014 semester. He looks forward to spending more time with his wife, children, and grandchildren; enjoying his many outdoor hobbies; and becoming more politically active in his retirement.

**Anthony Gengarelly, Ph.D.**, joined MCLA as a history and political science professor in 1972. In 1994, after completing a master’s degree in art history from Williams College, Gengarelly transitioned into MCLA’s

newly founded fine and performing arts department. From 1997 to 2003, he served as managing editor of and frequent contributor to *The Mind's Eye*, a journal of scholarly and creative work published annually by MCLA.

He served as chair of the fine and performing arts department from 2004 through 2012, during which time he oversaw the creation of two new majors: one in arts management, the other in art.

Gengarely also developed a ten-year working relationship with autistic artist Jessica Park, who lives in Williamstown, Mass. Gengarely and his students created four exhibits featuring Park's work and published a seminal book in 2008, *Exploring Nirvana: The Art of Jessica Park*. A second book about Park, *A World Transformed*, was the recipient of the faculty lecture award in 2012.

Gengarely plans to continue his involvement with the Jessica Park Project and teach on a part-time basis. He is also grateful for the opportunity to spend more time with his wife and enjoy his two grandchildren. ■

MCLA has recently initiated a new **Faculty Emeriti Endowment Fund**. Contributions may be made in honor of faculty members that have previously retired, as well as new retirees, to support faculty scholarship opportunities, including creative projects, curriculum development, student success initiatives tied to faculty roles, and research.

If you would like more information or would like to make a contribution to this fund, please make your check payable to the MCLA Foundation, Inc. or call the Advancement Office at (413) 662-5229.



Honorary Degree recipients Elizabeth Coleman, Mardi Ann Crane-Godreau '98, Diane Patrick, and Jack Downing with President Grant.

## COMMENCEMENT 2013

with First Lady Diane Patrick



On Saturday, May 18, MCLA welcomed the members of the Class of 2013 into the alumni community at the 114th Commencement ceremony.

Diane Patrick, First Lady of Massachusetts, was presented with an honorary doctor of laws degree and delivered the 2013 Commencement address.

Mrs. Patrick is a lawyer, domestic violence and mental health advocate, educator, and community volunteer. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in early childhood education from Queens College of the City University of New York. After teaching elementary school in New York City for five years, she entered Loyola Law School in Los Angeles, Calif., to study labor and employment law.

After moving to Massachusetts with her husband, Governor Deval Patrick, she accepted a position at Harvard as University Attorney in the Office of General Counsel, where she spent six years before becoming Harvard's director/associate vice president for human resources.

In 1994, Mrs. Patrick took a job with the Washington D.C. firm Hogan and Hartson, where she worked with both the education and labor and employment law practice groups. She joined the law firm of Ropes and Gray in Boston in 1995 where she combined her passion for education and her background in labor and employment law.

In her address to the class of 2013, Mrs. Patrick said, "Education can be a powerfully transformative experience if you let it be... I think this place encourages us to open our eyes and minds, to see and hear and think about things in different ways." She challenged the graduates to take risks – discover who they are and what's possible.

Also receiving honorary degrees this year were **Elizabeth Coleman**, president of Bennington College; **Mardi Ann Crane-Godreau '98**, medical researcher and assistant professor at the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth; and **John "Jack" Downing**, president of Soldier On.

## THE STUDENTS

# BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

## Increased Diversity Leads to New Campus Clubs and Activities

Continued growth, expansion, and strengthening of academic programs at MCLA, combined with new outreach strategies, have resulted not only in increased undergraduate enrollment, but also in an increasingly diverse student body. Students representing a widening array of cultures, interests, and geographic areas are discovering the opportunities available at MCLA, not to mention the rich, cultural heritage of the Berkshires. In correlation with this growth, campus clubs and organizations are flourishing, creating a more vibrant and thriving community than ever before.

"It's a natural progression," explains **Celia Norcross**, director of student development. "Our student body has become more diverse, and new clubs have been driven by student interest. The more clubs there are to choose from, the more likely that students of varying interests will find one or more that appeals to them."

The benefits of becoming involved in co-curricular clubs and activities are vast. Students acquire valuable



Harlequin's 2013 production of Into the Woods.

new skills, learn to manage their time wisely, and develop a greater awareness of available resources. With today's reliance on technology to communicate, Norcross says that participation also promotes face-to-face contact with others and contributes to community-building.

"Students learn to work together toward a common goal – to live and breathe together," she explains. "It's very important for them to gain these parameters before they enter the workforce."

**HARLEQUIN**, a musical theater club, comprises MCLA's fine and performing



The Allegrettos offer a spring a cappella concert each year.

arts students and offers a perfect example of student collaboration. Norcross, the club's staff advisor, says that every Harlequin production is entirely student run, from auditions through the final performance. "They do the casting, build the sets, conduct rehearsals, and even staff the box office," she says. "It's very empowering for them to see what they can accomplish by working together."

**Juwonni Cottle '13** learned this in 2009 when he approached the Hoosac Hall Advisory Board for permission to lead a ten-person holiday caroling group as part of a community service effort.

"The ten of us had a great time rehearsing and making music, so we decided to take the group to the next level and become an official organization," he recounts. "I wanted everyone to respect us, not only for our personality and showmanship, but for our technique as well."

**THE ALLEGRETTOS**, an award-winning a cappella and gospel ensemble, was born. Known for its powerhouse vocals, the group has since

tripled in size, performed throughout Massachusetts, and has been featured on the WGBY series *Together in Song*.

The level of commitment exhibited by The Allegrettos and other student groups across campus is commendable and has become a source of pride at MCLA.



NEXXUS performing during the 2009 MCLA Presents! PAM Show!

**Monique Symes '11** is also credited with co-founding an award-winning performing arts club at MCLA. Symes, who had long enjoyed African-American step dancing, says, "it was only natural for me to want to continue doing something I loved." She joined forces with fellow stepper **Jamila Creswell '11** to form the

**NEXXUS STEP SQUAD**. The group combines elements of marching, South African Welly dance, and other forms of dance to perform approximately five shows a semester.

Symes says that NEXXUS had a major impact in enriching her college experience. "Coming out of high school, I was extremely focused on academics," she says. "That's important, but I needed something else I could be passionate about. NEXXUS enabled me to become a part of the MCLA community... my team members became like family, and I was also able to build relationships with faculty and staff." According to Norcross, groups such as NEXXUS, that are multicultural in nature, have become much more prevalent. "These students have cultural traditions that are near and dear to their hearts, and they want to be able to share that with the student body and the surrounding community," she says.

**Thomas Alexander**, coordinator of ALANA, International, and Veteran Student programs and services, couldn't agree more. The number

of multicultural students has risen dramatically, which he says is "truly a college community effort." **ALANA**, a component of the Multicultural Education Resource Center, was developed to support this growth and assist multicultural students in becoming more connected to campus life. Its mission, Alexander says, is to "embrace the contributions of various cultures" and to "empower or re-empower students, through education and collaboration."



2012-2013 ALANA Club Council. From left: Thomas Alexander, coordinator of MCLA's ALANA program, Aysha del Valle '16, Piterson Allen '15, exchange student Zizhe Pan, Jafreisi Pena Baez '16, exchange student Jin Huang, and Juan Luis Andujar '15. Photo by Dennise Carranza '13.

While multicultural clubs represent a significant portion of new co-curricular and extra-curricular offerings, special interest clubs also are on the rise. Students passionate about everything from world-record breaking to fashion to taking action for gender equality now have an avenue for sharing and exploring their interests with others. For some, this is also an opportunity to educate and inspire change. Such is the case with the **ENVIRONUTS**, a group co-founded by **Jason Brown '13**.

The Environuts got its start in 2010 during a Green Living Seminar presented by the environmental studies department and the **MCLA**

**Berkshire Environmental Resource Center (BERC)**. During the seminar, Brown collaborated with three other students in developing a club to promote green living and sustainability. The group later wrote a constitution and sought recognition as an official MCLA club.

Today, Brown says, the Environuts play a vital role in serving as the "student leg of sustainability." Its members work closely with the College's Sustainability Committee (aka "Green Team") on efforts to become a climate neutral campus. This is in accordance with the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment signed by MCLA President Mary K. Grant in 2007.



Environuts co-founder Jason Brown '13, center, with environmental studies students and professor Harold Brotzman.

"It is very satisfying to be able to find something you are passionate about and turn it into a thriving club," says Brown, who also served as president of MCLA's **STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (SGA)** during his senior year. In this role, he had the opportunity to help other clubs on campus reach their full potential.

"MCLA prides itself on being a very vibrant community, and the contributions of students outside the classroom have a lot to do with that," he comments. "SGA is responsible for overseeing all of the clubs and activities on campus and allocating student activities fees among them. It's a great opportunity to have a significant impact on student life."

While many of the clubs at MCLA are relatively new, the SGA has been in operation for more than a hundred years. The group, consisting of an elected cabinet, several appointed positions, a student senate, and class representatives, was formed to facilitate, supervise, and unify matters of campus student governance. Staff member **Diane Collins** has served as the SGA office manager for the last three decades.

"When I took on this position, there were only 18 clubs," she reflects. "Now there are nearly 60. With so many new multicultural and special interest clubs, there truly is something for just about everyone who wants to become involved."





Alyson Stolz '15 with Jake Powers '14, Trustee Buffy Lord '98, and Hardman Lecturer and Animal Planet host Jeff Corwin.

Alyson Stolz '15, who was elected to serve as Student Trustee for the SGA during the 2013-14 academic year, says the SGA plays a strong role in unifying the campus.

“Being part of the SGA helps you personally and also helps your classmates – all those you represent,” says Stolz. “It’s been a great experience and has helped me grow as a person and as a leader. I can’t wait to see what comes of it.”

For students like Stolz, who give so generously of their time and talents while at MCLA, “what comes of it” will likely be a very bright and rewarding future. These are not students who wait idly for opportunity to find them. They are capable, confident, passionate leaders who take charge of their own destiny and care about the world around them. Wherever life takes them, they will undoubtedly help to make their communities a better place, just as they have at MCLA. ■

## EMPOWERING STUDENT ATHLETES ON AND OFF THE FIELD

As exciting as it may seem from the sidelines, the life of a student athlete is uniquely challenging. Balancing athletics, academics, and their social lives can be overwhelming at times, as can trying to live up to others’ expectations. Without proper support, student athletes can easily succumb to feelings of stress, anxiety, and inadequacy.

In compliance with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), MCLA strives to protect the welfare of student athletes and enhance their college experience through the Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC). Developed in 1989, the committee consists of approximately 25 student athletes representing each of MCLA’s teams. **Dot Houston**, assistant athletic director/senior women’s administrator, co-advises SAAC with **Kaylyn Smith**, an NCAA grant-funded intern serving as assistant to the director of athletics.



Rebecca Pike '16 in a game against Fitchburg State University

“Our goal is to give student athletes a voice in matters both on and off the field and to help connect them to the campus and community. We meet regularly to talk about issues pertaining to lifestyle, academics, and athletics and to keep members apprised of any policy or bylaw changes set forth by the NCAA,” explains Houston.

SAAC is also a means to unify student athletes, foster the student-athlete image, and promote the principles of good sportsmanship. Working through SAAC, student athletes help organize and coordinate campus events such as Fan Day, National Girls and Women in Sports Day, and Division III Week, and contribute approximately 1,000 hours per year in community service.

Based on the achievements of student athletes, it appears as though SAAC has a positive impact. A number of MCLA’s student athletes are named to the MASCAC’s All-Academic Team each semester, signifying a cumulative or semester-based grade point average of at least 3.20. In addition, **Jami Morrison** was named MASCAC Coach of the Year. Last January, as testimony to MCLA’s commitment to good sportsmanship, the Women’s Soccer program received the National Soccer Coaches Association of America Silver Award for Ethics. This marked the fourth straight season in which the Trailblazers’ program received an ethics award for exhibiting fair play, sporting behavior, and adherence to the rules of the game. MCLA has been the recipient of such awards in ten of the last eleven seasons.

Houston says that, in addition to being represented at MCLA, SAAC gives students an opportunity to provide feedback that can be shared on both the conference and national levels and help shape future NCAA legislation. A member of the Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference, MCLA is affiliated with the NCAA’s Division III.

## THE ALUMNI

## ALUMNI SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATION

# ON THE RISE

It has long been recognized that active, supportive alumni are an excellent indicator of a college’s success. The loyalty and affinity of former students signifies that they enjoyed their experience at the institution; felt engaged in the campus community; and have been able to succeed in life, thanks, in part, to the education they received. Alumni participation is, in many ways, a measure of satisfaction.

In recent years, a growing number of alumni have become active at MCLA, serving as allies and advocates in support of the institution’s mission. More graduates are participating on the Alumni Association, Trustee, and Foundation Boards, lending credence to their engagement with their alma mater. As MCLA continues to transform, these individuals are helping to define its future by sharing their own successes.

**Cecelia Hamrock Kennedy '78** and her husband, **John Kennedy '78**, both feel a deep-seated sense of responsibility to support their alma mater. “Those who believe in the education they received, as we do, need to try and give back to their institutions of learning,” Cecelia remarks. “We have always felt this was a priority and have instilled the same sense of responsibility in our son.”

During her time at MCLA, Cecelia earned her degree in early childhood education, while John earned his degree in education. Although they have since pursued other careers, they



**“THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN THE EDUCATION THEY RECEIVED, AS WE DO, NEED TO TRY AND GIVE BACK TO THEIR INSTITUTIONS OF LEARNING.”**

– **CECELIA HAMROCK KENNEDY '78**

both feel that the school provided them with a solid educational foundation, as well as important life skills. “It was a good general preparation for business opportunities that came along,” Cecelia says.

Through the years, the Kennedys have generously supported MCLA’s fundraising efforts, including the current comprehensive capital campaign, *Sowing Seeds for Success*. Cecelia has served on the Alumni Association Board of Directors for the past eight years.

“Being on the Board has broadened my understanding of the inner workings of a College,” she comments. “I am impressed with the continued effort to expand the College and to examine those areas that are garnering a lot of attention, not only in terms of careers, but also in terms of what’s going to assist the community.”

Cecelia makes every effort to reach out to MCLA students. When a student from New Jersey attends the college, she writes a letter of encouragement and often encloses a gift card to a North Adams store or coffee shop. “It’s important for students to know that

there are alumni out here who care about what happens to them,” she says.

**Andy Zaback '80** and his wife **Doreen Yale Zaback '79**, both speak highly of MCLA, saying “the school provided a good, general education and some very valuable educational tools.” Those tools enabled Doreen to continue her education and obtain an M.S. in geosciences from the University of Texas at Dallas, followed by her Ph.D. in geology from Indiana University. Receiving a B.S. in medical technology from NASC provided the building blocks on which her 26-year career as an environmental scientist was built.

Andy, who graduated with a degree in business administration and currently serves on the Alumni Association Board of Directors, reflects on his experiences at the College. It was one experience in particular – an internship in the president’s office – that Andy says had the most profound impact on him.

“The opportunity to work in the president’s office was a game changer for me,” he explains. “It really helped me to blossom as a person. I matured a great deal and gained invaluable



Andy Zaback '80 and wife  
Doreen Yale Zaback '79

leadership skills and confidence. The experience provided something tangible that enabled me to move beyond the classroom.”

Through his internship experience, Andy gained exposure to labor relations and became interested in the field of personnel. He worked in human resources for several years before returning to school, at Indiana University (IU), to obtain his MBA in finance. Today, Andy has found success as a specialist in venture capital and private equity. He is a managing member of Longmeadow Capital Partners, LLC., of Longmeadow, Mass., a value-added private equity firm that invests in small to mid-size health-care-related businesses.

Andy has a deep appreciation for the people and experiences that helped shape his career. Participating on the Alumni Board is one means for him to reciprocate. Andy also serves as a mentor to MCLA students, returning the favor that he himself received. “I want to be able to help people here in this region get on their feet,” he says. “MCLA is producing very high-caliber students, and it’s great to be able to help them.”

Having become reacquainted with MCLA, Andy says he is very impressed with President Grant’s leadership and the College’s transformation. “I take every opportunity to spread the word about MCLA to fellow alumni,” he says. “Many of them would be blown away if they could see the campus now.”

## ALMA BENEDETTI: A PORTRAIT



Former Director of Alumni Relations, Jocelyn Merrick, with Alma Benedetti '37.

**Alma Benedetti** was one of nineteen students in the 1937 graduating class from North Adams State Teachers College. After completing her degree, Alma began a long and successful career in the North Adams public schools. A beloved art teacher, generations of North Adams children were inspired by her keen sense of color, composition, and design. Through her passion for teaching, they learned to appreciate art and to discover the artists within themselves.

At 97, Alma walks upright. There is strength in her grip and her eyes still brighten with pleasure as she takes in the minute details of her surroundings. As she leads a tour through her lush and colorful perennial garden and later the home she has lived in for over eighty years, Alma’s ability to reflect upon and synthesize a lifetime of experiences is captivating. She particularly enjoys the strides women have made, her feistiness evident as she applauds family, friends, and acquaintances that have been guided by an adventurous spirit and not settled for following expected or conventional paths. Alma smiles as she discusses MCLA and all of the changes that have taken place since she was a student.

Alma has been engaged with the MCLA community in a myriad of ways. She is a long-time member of the Alumni Board, serving as a full member since 1998, and was made member emerita in 2007. In 1999 she received an honorary doctorate in pedagogy. She also served as an honorary co-chair of the 2006 Major Gift Initiative.

While a tiny bit wistful about the demolition of Taconic Hall, Alma also admires on the many creative and smart facility improvements that have transformed campus life. She is excited by all that the Feigenbaum Center for Science and Innovation will mean to MCLA. Alma rejoices in the choices the current curriculum offers and sees MCLA growing exponentially beyond what she ever thought possible. One of the best traits of this dedicated alumna and treasured friend is her sincere and thoughtful support for MCLA and her enduring enthusiasm for the progress her alma mater continues to make.



Mike Christopher '73

By serving as advocates for MCLA, alumni such as Andy are often able to generate interest and re-engage other alumni in the campus community. Such was the case with **Mike Christopher '73** and **Mike Barbieri '85**, both of whom are actively involved in the MCLA Foundation. While the two have only recently begun working together in this capacity, their story dates back much further.



Mike Barbieri '85

As a senior at MCLA, Barbieri, a business administration finance major, was coming up just a little shy on credits for graduation. He approached the Career Services office about the possibility of an internship. They, in turn, contacted Christopher, who was president of the Lenox Savings Bank at the time. As an MCLA alum, he was happy to oblige. Barbieri became an intern at the bank, working under the direction of Christopher.

The experience proved valuable in helping Barbieri prepare for a career in banking. “It gave me real work experience, enabling me to utilize the skills I had learned in the classroom and to see, firsthand, how the finances of the bank functioned,” he says. Once Barbieri had completed his internship and fulfilled his requirements for graduation, Christopher offered him a full-time position. Barbieri’s summer internship evolved into a 13-year long career.



## FAMILY CONNECTIONS CONTRIBUTE TO MCLA'S RICH HISTORY

Freshman Kyle Maybury had many options to choose from when applying to colleges

last year, but his heart was already at MCLA. His father, **Rick Maybury '80**, would have supported his son’s decision no matter what college he selected, but he could hardly contain his excitement at seeing Kyle attend his own alma mater. Family connections such as this play an important role in MCLA’s success. Alumni are central to the institution’s history, and with each family generation that attends the College, that history becomes even richer.

“It’s always nice when the sons and daughters of our graduates come back to get their degrees here,” says **Annette Jeffes**, dean of enrollment management. “They have a meaningful bond to MCLA, which makes the experience that much more special for the entire family.”

**Jocelyn Merrick**, former director of alumni relations, says alumni whose children attend MCLA often experience a renewed sense of pride as they become reacquainted with the campus community. “When they look at MCLA as prospective parents of a future student, they see it in a whole new light. This is especially true of those who aren’t local and haven’t witnessed the ongoing change and evolution of the College.”

The families featured below, and others, are a testament to MCLA’s legacy of excellence over time and continue providing a quality educational experience, generation after generation.



George Candelet '86, Lisa Mogavero Candelet '86, Kathy Cariddi Mogavero '52, Mitchell Candelet '13, Jaclyn Candelet '11, Michael Candelet '11.



Jeff Cohen '88, Jordan Cohen '13, and Carrie Cohen

Sarah Flint Wood '07 and David Flint '78

Though both men have since moved on from Lenox Savings Bank – Barbieri is now vice president of Pittsfield Cooperative Bank and Christopher is retired – they have always maintained contact with one another. Last year, over lunch, Christopher approached Barbieri about joining him in his efforts to support the MCLA Foundation.

“I’ve been involved in MCLA as a incorporator for some time, but in recent years I have become more active as a member of the Foundation Board of Directors, where my skills in finance can best be employed,” says Christopher, who also serves as a *Sowing Seeds for Success* campaign co-chair. “The Foundation is a separate entity, but everything that it does is for the benefit of the College and its students. Several years ago, we were seeking additional incorporators to bring on board, so I decided to approach Mike.”

Barbieri accepted the offer and now serves on the Foundation Board of Directors as well as the fundraising and audit committees. Of his experience, Barbieri says, “As you get to a certain point in your career, you develop a deeper appreciation for your college education. It has been very fulfilling for me to find a way to give back so that the next generation can benefit.”

Both men agree that their shared alma mater has made amazing strides. “The College has elevated academics, expanded programming, and become more active in the community. There are a lot of exciting things taking place here,” says Christopher.

Countless opportunities exist for MCLA alumni to serve and promote the college, and it is never too late to become involved. If you’d like to reacquaint yourself with the MCLA community and help to ensure that future generations of students continue to benefit from a high quality, affordable educational experience, please call 413-662-5193. ■

## Sowing Seeds For Success Dollars At Work!

A few of the many programs funded by generous donors to *Sowing Seeds for Success: The MCLA Campaign for the Future:*

- Berkshire Bank Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Academy
- Community Service Programs
- Endowed Student Scholarship Funds
- Environmental Studies’ Green Living Seminar Series Fund
- Freedom Ride: Student Bus Tour to Civil Rights Sites in the South
- Honors Program Scholarship Fund
- Internships
- Library Research Technology
- Travel Course Scholarship Fund
- Political Science and Public Policy Model UN Program Fund
- Public Policy Endowed Fund
- Center for Science and Innovation Fund
- Student Aid Fund
- Undergraduate Research
- Veteran Student Support

All gifts of \$10,000 or more to the campaign are eligible for one of these naming opportunities

### Student Enrichment

- Scholarships
- Student/Faculty Research Projects
- Internships
- Study Away Fund
- Student Honors Fund
- Undergraduate Research Program

### Faculty Enrichment

- Endowed Chair for a Senior Scholar
- Distinguished Professorship
- Visiting Professorship or Lecturer
- Visiting Scholar (Artist-in-Residence, etc.)
- Endowed Departmental Fund
- Faculty Academic Program Initiative Fund
- Fund to Support Student/Faculty Research
- Faculty Conference Fund
- Departmental Travel Fund for Research

### Campus Enrichment

- Library Acquisition Fund
- Multicultural Education Resource Center
- Named Section of MCLA Campus
- Equipment and Technology Upgrade Funds
- Departmental Equipment Fund
- Center for Science and Innovation Endowed Maintenance Fund

### Center for Science and Innovation Equipment

Giving opportunities for equipment range from \$10,000 to \$500,000.

### Center for Science and Innovation

Giving opportunities for the Center for Science and Innovation range from \$10,000 to \$5M.

For more information, contact Marianne Drake, Chief Advancement Officer at 413-662-5229.

## Discover Your Hidden Philanthropist



Kathleen Therrien '97, specialist in planned giving

Supporting a cause you feel passionate about is a wonderful way to demonstrate your values. Unfortunately, many individuals don’t believe they have the financial means to make a significant contribution. According to **Kathleen Therrien '97**, specialist in planned giving, people are often surprised to discover their hidden philanthropic potential.

“We all accumulate assets during our lives that we take for face value and don’t really think about how they could enhance our current income and also benefit others,” says Therrien, who serves on the MCLA Foundation Board of Directors and is the director of trust and estate administration at Williams College. Since MCLA is in the midst of a Capital Campaign, it’s a perfect time to consider broader giving opportunities and also remind people that the College receives only one-third of its support from the Commonwealth.

Below, Therrien responds to questions about planned giving and the assets that may enable you to consider a charitable gift to MCLA, supporting its needs and yours:

### What are the advantages to giving stock?

Giving appreciated stock (held for more than 12 months), rather than cash, enhances your giving power. If you give \$1,000 in cash, the gift costs you \$1,000, and you receive a charitable deduction for the same amount. If, instead, you choose to give \$1,000 in stock, your gift is \$1,000, but your cost for that gift is what you paid for the stock. In addition, you avoid capital gains tax on its gain in value AND receive the same charitable deduction as the cash gift.

### Can I make a gift directly from my IRA?

Yes, The American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012, which extends through December 2013, allows donors age 70 ½ or older (the age at which minimum distributions are required, aka RMD) to make immediate gifts of up to \$100,000 of their RMD directly from their IRA to qualified nonprofits without paying taxes on that income. It’s a great solution for those seeking to reduce their taxable income and support numerous qualified public charities.

### I have a life insurance policy I no longer need. Can that be given to charity?

Certainly, naming MCLA as the owner and beneficiary of a whole life insurance policy is a great way to support the College. Your gift would be equal to its cash surrender value or premiums paid, whichever is less, and provide immediate funds to the College for your directed use. This type of gift would also provide you with a charitable deduction, again reducing your income.

### Can I receive income back from my charitable gift?

Yes, for capital gifts, but not for annual alumni fund support. MCLA recently started offering a life income fund known as a Charitable Gift Annuity (CGA) for donors age 60 and older, living in Massachusetts, who give \$10,000 or more in cash, stock, or insurance. A CGA provides up to two income beneficiaries with fixed income payments for life based on the value of the gift and its expected term. Those payments can start immediately or be deferred for up to twenty years. Donors receive an immediate partial charitable deduction and potentially tax-free and

reduced capital gain income over the life of the fund, depending on the type of asset establishing the fund. Upon termination, the proceeds will support a chosen use at MCLA.

A charitable remainder trust, established through a third-party financial institution, is another way to provide for MCLA while also receiving income for life or a set period of time. If you already have a charitable remainder trust and have not designated a charity to benefit from its remaining interest, you can assign all or a portion of its remainder to MCLA and receive gift recognition in the College’s current campaign.

### Can I include MCLA in my will?

Making a bequest within your will or living trust is a wonderful way to support MCLA. While this does not provide a current gift or current benefit to you, it ensures that the institution will receive either a specified dollar amount or percentage of your estate upon your passing. If you decide to make a charitable bequest but your will has already been executed, you can easily make this provision through a codicil. Another option is to name MCLA as the beneficiary of your retirement account, commercial annuity, life insurance policy, or donor advised fund.

With so many options, Therrien says that anyone with the desire to give can find a way to make it work. If you would like additional information, please call the College’s Advancement Office at 413-662-5229. Learning more about the many giving opportunities available will enable you to think broadly about your assets and their potential benefit to both MCLA and you.

Of course, before making any gift to charity, you should seek counsel from your financial advisor.

# CLASS NOTES

## 1942

**Ruth Koczela** was recently reunited with one of her first fourth-grade students, a pupil she had not seen in over 40 years. The former student tracked her down after he found a letter he had written to her some forty years ago after she had left her teaching job. It just goes to show that students never forget their favorite teachers!



Classmates from the 60s attended the Plymouth Alumni event in April, enjoying the opportunity to catch up and meet more alumni in the area. From left to right: Janice Marshall Calzini '65, Alumni Board member Dennis Zicko '65, Gaile Davidson Fowler '65, Joe Santacrocce '63, Harold Williams '64, and Ruth Lambert Zicko '64.

## 1951



Barbara Bradley Matthews '51 visited campus this summer with her daughter on their tour of western Massachusetts. Barbara enjoyed sitting on the porch of Smith House and reminiscing about her time at the College.

## 1965

**James Holden-Rhodes** has published his first book, *Smart and Faithful Force: Henry Clay Cochrane and the United States Marine Corps, 1861-1905*. It has been nominated for the Distinguished Book Award by the Society of Military History as well as the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation Alexander Award for Best Marine Corps Biography.

## 1966

**Chuck Vincelette** has been appointed to the Greylock Federal Credit Union's voluntary Supervisory Committee by the financial institution's board of directors. The committee functions as a representative auditor for the credit

union's membership as well as oversees compliance, policies, rules, regulations, and performance of employees. Chuck has served in financial services positions for over 30 years.

## 1958



Beverly Haddad '58 and Nancy Alsing Stewart '58 flew from California to the Berkshires last May to be a part of Commencement. They spent time visiting family and friends and reminiscing about their student days.

## 1971



J. Andre Robert '71, Bonnie Raynor Robert '71, Vincent Guerino '71, and Kathy Lapine Guerino '73 attended the Pittsfield Alumni event in December.

## 1973

**Cynthia Hardaker** was named Teacher of the Week by *Ware River News*. Cynthia has taught in the Ware School District for 26 years, was awarded the Harold Grinspoon Distinguished Teacher Award in 2005, and served as president of the Ware Teachers' Association for more than 12 years.

**Paula Plock** was honored at the State House in Boston for being one of six finalists for the 2012-2013 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year Award. She has taught at Williamstown Elementary School for the past 18 years.

## 1974

Long-time Adams Community Bank employee **Allyn Lafleur Basel** retired as senior vice president after 37 years of service to the bank and the community.

## 1975

**Candace Hill Lash** was recognized by the Pioneer Valley Life section of the *Springfield Republican* for her dedication and advocacy for the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (MSPCA). Candy currently works as

the director of community and media relations for Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society.

## 1979

**David Nigrelli** has joined the Birmingham, Ala.-based Regions Financial Corp. as vice president and senior relationship manager. Regions Financial is a full-service consumer and commercial banking company with customers in 16 states in the South, Midwest, and Texas.



Bill Olsen '79, Maureen McDermott Olsen '78, and Doug Frazier '78 caught up at the Boston Holiday Social last December. This October is their 35th Reunion.

## 1980



Former MCLA professors Jack and Susan Conklin alongside alum Ed Behan '80 and Stephanie Behan. This photo was taken when Ed was installed as the Commodore of the Sayville Yacht Club in Blue Point, N.Y. where Jack has been a lifelong member. Jack is currently the President of Flowing River Education Associates. Ed continues to work in the field of biology, and Stephanie owns the Oliver West Day Spa in Sayville. Photo by SMB Photography.

## 1981

**Stephen Daglio** has been appointed as Vermont Mutual Insurance Group's new regional general adjuster covering New England and New York. Stephen has more than 30 years experience in the insurance industry both in New England and nationally.

## 1982



The class of 1982 had a mini-Reunion at the Alumni Association's Westford, Mass. event in March. Pictured left to right: Greg Zoia, John Alexopoulos, Jeff Cohen and Alumni Board president Pamela Kenny Connolly. A special congratulations to Jeff—his son Jordan Cohen '13 graduated from MCLA this May.

## 1983

**Kevin O'Connor** has been hired as the executive director of Joseph's House & Shelter, Inc. in Troy, NY.



Michael Hagerty '81 invented a "picture catcher bat" on which he currently has a patent and trademark pending. To check out Mike's invention go to [www.picturecatcherbat.com](http://www.picturecatcherbat.com).



Alumni Board president Pamela Kenny Connolly '82 with Bill Righter '80 in Plymouth.

## MCLA GOLF CLASSIC



President **Mary K. Grant '83** and her husband **Jim Canavan** were honored at the 17th annual MCLA Golf Classic on September 19, 2013. The event was held at Berkshire Hills Country Club and raised over \$27,000 for the athletics department. We would like to thank all of our sponsors, players, and guests for making the 2013 MCLA Golf Classic a great day for all involved.

The organization runs three homeless shelters, four supported housing programs, homeless outreach, and a medical/dental/legal clinic for the homeless.

### 1985

**John Ahearn** was selected as a finalist in the CFO of the Year, Large Private Company category for Business Review. John is currently the CFO for Rifenburg Construction Inc.



Joe Zavattaro '61, M.Ed. '63 and Sharron Sprague Zavattaro '85 helped celebrate the holiday season at Mission Bar + Tapas in Pittsfield. In March, Baseball team alumni helped wish Coach Zav a happy 80th birthday in Springfield, MA. With over 40 alumni in attendance, it was a fun gathering to honor Joe and the College's baseball tradition.

### 1986

**Nancy Fournier** has been re-elected to a 10-year term as a corporator of Greenfield Co-Operative Bank's parent company, Greenfield Bancorp, MHC. She has been a director of GCB since 2005 and a corporator of the MHC since its formation in 2008.

**Rick Park** has received a national playwriting award. His romantic comedy *Gay Guy, Fat Girl* is one of two recipients of the Mark Twain Prize for Comic Playwriting. The award is part of the Michael Kanin Playwriting Awards Program, a series of awards presented annually by the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival. Rick was also just nominated by the Independent Reviewers of New

England for "Best Actor in a Drama" for his role as the Tiger in *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo*.

### 1988

**Kris D'Andrea** has been named branch manager of Needham Bank's Wellesley office. Kris formerly served as the assistant branch manager at Citizens Bank in Braintree.

**Lisa Orgettas**, executive director of Spectrum Adult Day Health in Beverly, was recently a guest speaker at the Beverly Senior Center and presented "Memory Loss with Aging: What's Normal, What's Not." Lisa has worked in an executive leadership capacity providing therapeutic daytime services for elders with dementia for over 15 years.

**Jennifer Girard Segala** was honored by the Northern Berkshire Business and Professional Women as their 2012 Woman of Achievement. Jennifer has been in real estate for 26 years and is also former president of the Northern Berkshire BPW.

### 1989

**Tracie Sheehan** has been hired as a special education teacher at Laurence MacArthur Elementary School, which is part of the Dennis-Yarmouth school district. She currently teaches third grade.

### 1991

**Diana Bonneville** was appointed as the new principal of South Hadley High School. She formerly served as the principal of Hopkins Academy in Hadley.

Congratulations to **John DiTomasso** and Bonny Bedard! On August 4, 2012, the couple were married at the Berkshire Hills Country Club in Pittsfield.

### 1992

**Janine Driver Larson**, along with her husband Leif and son Angus, welcomed their newborn son Charlie Ryan to the family on August 1, 2013.

### 1993

**Christine Walsh** has been welcomed as a new associate at Steepleview Realty in Williamstown.

### 1994

**Dave Troilo** has been a musician throughout his life. Most recently, Troilo performed in *A Christmas Carol* at the Stadium Theatre. Last summer, Dave was cast in the role of John "Boss" Smith for the world premiere production of *Paragon Park the Musical*, produced by The Company Theatre.

### 1995

**Jayne Burdett** was recently hired by the Worcester-based Bay State Savings Bank as its new assistant vice president and branch manager. Jayme was most recently a branch manager for Bank of America.



Tom Donahue '91 recently published his first book, *Fraternal Bonds*. Tom returned to the Berkshires for a book signing at the Pitcher's Mound on April 27. He is pictured here with friend Ken Sullivan '92. To read more about Tom's book go to [www.fraternalbonds.com](http://www.fraternalbonds.com).

### 1996

**Jim Holmes** was the recipient of this year's Marion B. Kelley Teacher of the Year Award. Jim is a teacher at Sullivan Elementary School in North Adams where he teaches seventh graders how to analyze evidence to help solve crimes. His forensics program is just one of the many ways Jim connects with students and gets them actively engaged with learning.

**Stephen Wilcox** was hired at FingerPaint Marketing Inc. in Saratoga Springs, N.Y.

### 1998

**Krista Wroldson** gave birth to a baby boy in September, 2012. Congratulations to Krista and her family.

### 1999

**Jennifer Civello** has been named the new executive director of the Williamstown Chamber of Commerce. Jennifer currently serves as an adjunct instructor at MCLA where she teaches psychology and sociology.

**Sandie Stockmal Emerson** was recently promoted to director of administrative communications and standards at Xerox. She can be reached at [sandra.emerson@xerox.com](mailto:sandra.emerson@xerox.com).

Congratulations to **Jessica Gwozdz** for opening her own private dance school Studio North Dance Arts in North Adams! The school offers classes for ages 3 to adult.



### CHRISTINE NAUGHTON '99 APPOINTED TO LEADERSHIP POSITION

Congratulations to **Christine Naughton '99**, who was recently appointed director of alumni relations and development with the departure of Jocelyn Merrick, a resident of Williamsburg, Mass., who left to take a position with Northfield Mount Hermon School in Greenfield, Mass. Chris has been a member of the Institutional Advancement team since 2011 and has had responsibility for donor engagement and stewardship. In her new role she will oversee strategic planning for alumni relations initiatives, including the alumni board, and supervise the annual giving program. Marianne Drake, chief advancement officer and president of the MCLA Foundation said, "As a non-traditional alum of this special institution, Chris is passionate about the mission of the College and understands the importance of reconnecting and engaging alumni. She will be very successful in this new role, building on Jocelyn Merrick's work." We wish Jocelyn well in her new endeavor and know that Chris will bring tremendous enthusiasm and creativity to this important role. Chris can be contacted by email [c.naughton@mcla.edu](mailto:c.naughton@mcla.edu) or phone 413.662.5074.

### 2000

**Sean Coyle** was appointed as the new vice president and business development officer for commercial lending at The Milford National Bank and Trust Co. Sean has previously held positions at Commerce Bank of Milford, Strata Bank, and Bellingham and Citizens Bank in Franklin.

**Stephanie Frost** is now at ICT International as a technical assistant. She is leading a component of the Community Transformation Grant National Evaluation, a contract with the Centers for Disease Control.

**Bill Hickey** recently opened the doors of his law practice in Acton. Bill is a domestic relations and bankruptcy attorney representing clients across Massachusetts. Bill is admitted to the bar of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Federal District Court for the District of Massachusetts, and the Supreme Court of the United States. Find Bill at [www.williamjhickey.com](http://www.williamjhickey.com).

### 2001

The Boston chapter of The Awesome Foundation, a global network "devoted to forwarding the interest of awesomeness in the universe" by providing grants to creative projects has notified **Gerol Petruzella** that it has chosen his project, "Dungeons and Discourse," as a grant recipient.

**Janice Ward** was hired as the new vice president and wealth management advisor of Berkshire Bank. Janice has more than 11 years experience in both trust and estate planning.

### 2003

**Christina Barrett** was promoted by Berkshire Community College to director of marketing & student

recruitment. In her new role, Christina will oversee the operations of BCC's Admissions Office as well as public relations and marketing.

Congratulations to **Jami-Lynn Frank Pytko**, who received her master's in business administration from MCLA in May at the first Commencement for PMBA graduates at the College. Jami topped that in September by marrying Ryan Pytko in Manchester, Vt.

#### 2004

**Travis Brodowski** has announced his engagement to Jennifer Pawluk. The couple planned a September, 2013 wedding at St. Mary's Church in Hudson, N.Y.

**Erik Bruce Wroldson** married Megan Eldridge in May, 2013 in Pittsfield.

#### 2005

Congratulations to **Frank Borrelli** for being named the director of theater at American International College in Springfield, Mass. As the director, Borrelli will produce and direct one major play per semester as well as teach a theater course.

In April, **Rene Wendell** gave a presentation at the Sheffield Historical Society on Native Americans in South County, specifically the Berkshire Mohicans. Rene has been collecting Native American artifacts since he was a child, and, for the past 10 years, has worked as a ranger at the Trustees of the Reservations at Bartholomew's Cobble.

#### 2006

**Rachel Churchill** was joined at the September Alumni Association Board of Directors Meeting by her then seven-week old daughter Audrey. Rachel has been a member of the Alumni Board for the past two years and was last year's recipient of the first Young Alumnus



Maura Mills '05 married Matthew Armstrong in Pelham, New Hampshire on July 14, 2012. Bridal attendants included Jennifer Beaton Marciello '05 and Kristen Eldred Estelle '05. Also in attendance were Steve Estelle '05 and Nicole Losavio '05.



Jason Sinclair '05, Brandon Navom '04, and David Halbert '03 joined MCLA in Boston for the annual Alumni Holiday Social.

Award. A future alumnae in training, we look forward to welcoming Audrey to the Alumni Association somewhere around the year 2034.

**Laura Harrington** and Seth Zepka were married on August 25, 2012, followed by a honeymoon in Aruba. Laura is currently a cataloging and government documents assistant at Williams College; and Seth works as a general contractor

at Souliere & Zepka Construction and Carlow & Zepka Construction.

We are happy to announce the engagement of **Allyson Hurlburt** and James McCaffrey III. Allyson is currently a therapist at Casa de la Vida in California, where she leads drama therapy groups, works individually, and assists young adult clients with severe mental illness with social

rehabilitation. James is a preschool teacher at Rockridge Little School. A summer 2014 wedding is planned.

In May, **Amelia Wood**, a former art major at MCLA, had her artwork on display at Images Cinema in Williamstown in a show titled "Body As Machine."

#### 2007

Congratulations to **Michael Rosenburg** on his engagement to Amanda Krutiak! The couple planned a September, 2013 wedding.



Alumni Board member Ben Lamb '07 joined us in Boston in December where he chatted with Carissa Everett '07 and Amey Blackburn '09.

#### 2008

Congratulations to **Kenneth Martin** and Jaime Greene on their June 9,



Patrick Harris '08 has worked as a box office associate at Boston's Huntington Theatre Company's Calderwood Pavilion for the past two years. This year, he traveled to NYC with his co-workers as they accepted the 2013 Regional Theatre Tony Award at Radio City Music Hall. Photo credit: Peter Lau Photography.

2012 nuptials! The couple married at the Great River Golf Club in Milford.

**Katy Van Anden** has been hired as the new, part-time executive director of the Saranac Lake Area Chamber of Commerce. She will be taking over leadership of the village's largest business organization.

Congratulations to **Kellie Vincent** on her marriage to Patrick Lynch! A July wedding was held at Bucksteep Manor in Washington, Mass.

#### 2009

**Brinn Kingsley** has recently followed in her father's footsteps by becoming the new St. Michael's Church children and adult choir director in North Andover.

**Andrew Mick** was inducted into the Zeta Zeta Chapter of the Delta Mu Delta Honor Society in April. At MCLA, Zeta Zeta recognizes and rewards scholastic achievement in business subjects and promotes scholarship in training for business. Andy is currently a member of the MCLA Foundation Board of Directors.

**Stephanie Hendricks** was invited back to MCLA to present and work with the athletic training students (as part of the Therapeutic Exercise class). Stephanie went on from MCLA to receive a license in massage therapy and now works for SUNY Albany Athletics as a massage therapist, working mainly with football and track and field athletes.

Currently **Kevin Tynan** is living in Texas and attending the University of Houston Creative Writing Program. He is working toward his MFA in creative writing fiction. Kevin is an assistant editor at *Gulf Coast*, a journal of literature and fine arts, published by the University of Houston. Kevin is also a fiction editor for *Owl Eye*.

#### 2010

**Brian Hubert** completed a master's program at the College of St. Rose in December 2012. Brian is looking forward to putting his skills learned at MCLA and St. Rose to work.

**Jodi Joseph** recently stepped down as director of the Berkshire Creative Economy Council and is now director of communications at MASS MoCA.

**Jade Prickett** has finished her master's degree at Springfield College with a degree in athletic administration. She has accepted a 10-month internship in the athletic department at Boston College.



Kaitlyn Bonneville '10 and Todd Foy '12 are eager to help other MCLA alumni get started in Boston.

#### 2011



Katie Collins '11 graduated from the University of Buffalo this spring with a masters degree in student affairs administration.

Congratulations to **Jamal Ahamad** who was a finalist in the Revolution Dancewear Design Your Dream 2012 costume design contest!

Congratulations to **Joshua Carty** on his marriage to Meredith McMillan in June. We wish you both nothing but happiness!

**Orion Walker-Hazard** has been appointed the new youth librarian in Lenox. She most recently served as interim school library and media specialist at the High School of Commerce in Springfield. She hopes to bring weekly story/activity hours, theme events, and visits to local preschools to her new position.

**Israel (Izzy) Diaz** and recent alum **Lucy Tremblay '13** spent some time backpacking through Europe. They enjoyed bicycle rides and sightseeing in several different countries. See **Lucy Tremblay '13** to read more about their adventure.

## 2012



Ashley Lewis '12, Larissa Huda '09, and Hawa Umarova '12 were excited to attend an alumni event in Boston.

**Samantha Burke** has been hired as an adjustment counselor for the Southern Berkshire Regional School District.

**Todd Foy** has been hired by Massachusetts Senator Ben Downing to work in the State House as one of his new legislative aides.

**Alex Lenski** has been serving as an Americorps program ambassador in the Berkshires and currently serves



dysFUNKcrew mainly comprises MCLA alumni who are dancing their way into the Berkshires. Their many different styles create fun energetic pieces that bring audiences to their feet. Check them out on Facebook! Pictured here: Brandon D. Pender '07, Ashton Darrett '11, Michael Obasohan '11, Jamal Ahamad '11, Becky Clemons '11, Kayla Hollins '12, Amanda Schuler '12, Makayla Lemaire '13, Andres Ramirez.

as project coordinator for the Youth Mentoring Program. In collaboration with Child Care of the Berkshires, he is assisting in coordinating pilot mentoring sites at Berkshire Arts and Technology Charter School in Adams and Brayton Elementary School in North Adams.

**Alexandra Nichipor**, who spent the last year teaching in China at Hebei University, was admitted to Harvard Divinity School's Masters of Theological Studies Program with a concentration in women, gender, and sexuality for fall 2013.

**Amanda Ok** was honored at the State House in Boston as part of the state's second annual "29 Who Shine" awards honoring top community college, state university, and University of Massachusetts graduates for their academic achievements and civic contributions to the Commonwealth.

**Mary Redstone** has been hired as a reporter for the *Manchester Journal*.

She covers the Northshire towns and region for the newspaper.

**Kimberly Sherman** has announced her engagement to David Mortimer Wall. An October 2013 wedding is planned in Adams.

## 2013

**Lucy Tremblay** wrote into the Alumni Office to tell about her and Izzy's (Israel Diaz '11) European backpack adventure: Izzy and I decided back in September to plan a trip to backpack Europe right after graduation. Our trip started by flying into Munich, Germany where we spent a few days exploring and seeing landmarks in the city. Then we continued to our next stop, Amsterdam, Netherlands. In Amsterdam we spent our days seeing the beautiful city on bicycles. Riding around the city, seeing the canals, the red light district, and the history there was absolutely amazing. After a few days we flew to London, England. Izzy had some friends in the city so we were able to see the ins and outs of the



Gabe Lloyd '08 and Kathy Lloyd '13 and their food truck business How We Roll were one of four semi-finalists on LIVE with Kelly and Michael's Truckin' Amazing Cook-Off. How We Roll is a Pittsfield-based food truck specializing in traditional meals stuffed in deep-fried egg roll wrappers. The food truck advocates a farm-to-table approach that includes using local meats and vegetables. The LIVE cook-off dish was "Winner Winner Chicken Dinner Roll." To find them and try their tasty offerings, check out their website at [www.howweroll-shirecity.com](http://www.howweroll-shirecity.com).

city along with the main attractions: Big Ben, Westminster Abbey, and the London Eye. After London, we ended up in Barcelona, Spain and then Rome, Italy. Both of these cities were our personal favorites. In Barcelona, seeing the beach, the museums, and the culture in general was amazing. In Rome, I could not get over how the buildings were still standing! Seeing the inside of the Colosseum was breathtaking. The history and the lifestyle in Europe is entirely different and made me realize what is not a big deal for us here in the United States is a big deal to those from European countries. This experience was one of the most memorable times of my life. And I hope more people can make their way over to different countries.

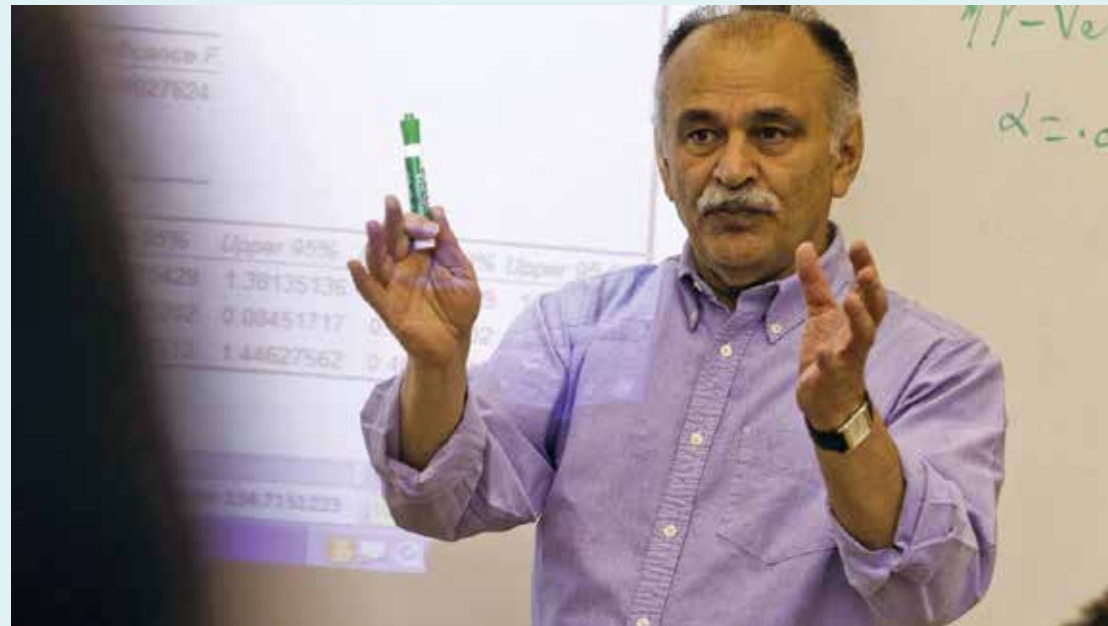
## 2013 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS

On Saturday, October 19, MCLA presented the annual Distinguished Alumni Awards at a luncheon held on campus as part of Reunion weekend. The 2013 Alumni Award Recipients are pictured here (left to right): Kevin O'Connor '83, Humanitarian Award; Richard Brown '74, Distinguished Alumni Award; Eloise Stevens '78, M.Ed. '08, Outstanding Educator Award; President Mary Grant '83; Maura Mills '05, Young Alumna Award; Jerry Desmarais '74, Outstanding Service to the College Award



Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts takes pride in recognizing our distinctly honorable alumni, those who have made outstanding contributions in public or community service or in service to the College and/or its alumni. Please consider nominating former classmates who have strongly represented the College, and made you feel proud to share the same alma mater. Nominees should have matriculated for one or more semesters at the College at least five years before the award is to be received. Awards for consideration include Distinguished Alumna, Humanitarian, Outstanding Educator, Service to the College, and Young Alum. For more information or to nominate an alum, visit <http://www.mcla.edu/Alumni/distinguishedalumni> or call Christine Naughton, director of alumni relations and development, at 413.662.5074.

# IN MEMORIAM



**Avaz Hajizadeh, Ph.D.** retired from MCLA in May 2013 after 30 years of distinguished service to the Commonwealth, the College, his colleagues, and the MCLA community. Sadly, Avaz passed away unexpectedly on September 2 of this year.

Hajizadeh graduated from Pahlavi University, Shiraz, Iran with a degree in economics and public administration. He later earned an MBA from James Madison University, and both an M.S. in operation research and statistics, and a Ph.D. in managerial economics from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. In 1982, Avaz began his career in the business administration and economics department at MCLA. He was awarded tenure in 1988 and was promoted to professor of business administration and economics in 2003.

Hajizadeh was an active and highly respected member of the MCLA campus community. President Mary K. Grant noted that “Avaz cared deeply about his students, and had a profound impact on them both in and out of the classroom. He was a fan of MCLA’s student-athletes, and a fixture in the stands at Trailblazer games.” She went on to say that “He was a trusted advisor, mentor, and friend to his colleagues, celebrated for his insight and wise counsel.”

During his time at the College, Hajizadeh served on a number of committees, including the 2002 presidential search committee that brought President Grant back to her alma mater. In recent years, Hajizadeh served as member of the MCLA strategic planning task force, and as Faculty Marshal. He was part of an ad hoc

working group charged with drafting a new mission statement for the College that was approved by the Board of Trustees in March 2013.

He was a passionate advocate for the College. Deeply respected and beloved by former students, he was instrumental in re-engaging alumni and always went the extra mile to stay connected via phone calls, letters, email, and attendance at alumni events, including events in the Berkshires and Boston. In addition, Hajizadeh recently had answered the call to serve the College as a member of the MCLA Foundation Board of Directors, working to secure and steward a bright future for the College, just as he guided so many students into their own successful futures.

*The Avaz Hajizadeh Scholarship Fund for Overall Excellence has been established in memory of Avaz. If you would like more information or would like to make a contribution to this fund, please make your check payable to the MCLA Foundation, Inc. or call the Advancement Office at (413) 662.5229.*

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# MCLA

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## SAVE THE DATES

### Upcoming Campus Events

#### DECEMBER 4

MCLA Alumni Holiday Social, Boston, MA

#### DECEMBER 12

MCLA Presents! The Sweetback Sisters,  
A Honkey Tonk Holiday Sing-Along

MCLA Berkshire County Alumni Holiday Social

#### JANUARY 31 & FEBRUARY 1

MCLA Presents!  
Blues and Funk Festival  
"Nothing But the Blues!"

#### MARCH 4

Public Policy Lecture: Gloria Steinem

#### MARCH 10-16

Spring Break

#### APRIL 17

Undergraduate Research Conference

#### MAY 16

Baccalaureate

#### MAY 17

Commencement



*Right: The Feigenbaum Center for Science and Innovation includes a beautiful outdoor classroom complete with chalk board.*