



Foundation

# 2019 YEAR-END SUMMARY & ALUMNI NEWS

Jolene  
DiBrango '89

CREATING STUDENT OPPORTUNITY

REVITALIZING OUR ECONOMY

BREAKING BARRIERS

EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

**MOHAWK VALLEY  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

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December 31, 2019

Greetings from the MVCC Foundation!

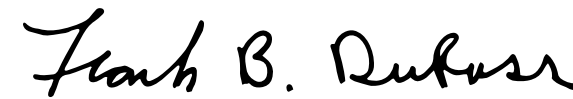
As we wrap up 2019, we are proud to say this was another exciting and transformative year for the MVCC Foundation. Through new partnerships, programs, and initiatives we have made achievements that would have been unimaginable just two years ago:

- We're accomplishing more for students. Once again, we had a record-breaking year in scholarship dollars awarded, and received important financial support for athletic facilities, youth coding camps, emergency loans, and other programs that directly serve scholars pursuing their academic dreams.
- We're accomplishing more for alumni. This year, we dropped the annual fee for an Alumni Association membership and added a wide range of new activities and benefits. All alums are still part of the MVCC community, and we're working hard to provide even more resources and services for you!
- We're accomplishing more for small businesses and the economy. thINCubator continues to make an outstanding impact on the local entrepreneurship ecosystem, and we're thrilled to have announced a new partnership with the Small Business Development Center and the Innovation Collective to help business owners in the Mohawk Valley rethink how they do business.

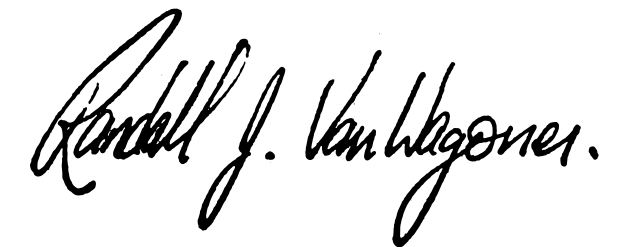
Through these three strands of our programming, we are accomplishing more for our community. The services and resources that we work so hard to offer mean that, somewhere across the Mohawk Valley, a parent can attend classes without worrying that their child has food on the table; youth can access after-school programs to help them build skills and tap into life-changing opportunities; the best and brightest of our high school graduates are encouraged to begin their higher education journeys in their home community; and entrepreneurs can turn their innovative ideas into businesses that support their families.

In this report, we have highlighted a small snapshot of what your donations have empowered the MVCC Foundation to achieve in 2019. As always, we welcome your support! If you would like to make a contribution toward our mission of service and educational excellence, please visit [mvcc.edu/donate](http://mvcc.edu/donate). We look forward to working with you and all of our community partners as we collaborate to develop and grow our community in 2020.

Sincerely,



Frank B. DuRoss  
Vice President for Community Development, MVCC  
Executive Director, MVCC Foundation, Inc.



Dr. Randall J. VanWagoner  
President, MVCC



# JOLENE DIBRANGO '89

Jolene DiBrango was the first in her family to graduate from college when she received her associate degree from MVCC in 1989, an experience she says played a big part in where she is today.

"I felt as if I 'found' myself there," she says. "I made new friends — lifelong friends — and it offered me a chance to start over, in a way. I was able to branch out, meet new people, broaden my horizons, and begin to develop into the woman I am today."

One of those new people DiBrango met was her husband, Joe. "I was walking down the hall and this cute boy sneezed. I said, 'Bless you,' and the rest is history."

It was at MVCC that a 17-year-old DiBrango, a self-described shy young woman, got on the path

that led her to her current role — as executive vice president for the New York State United Teachers (NYSUT). "Our union is over 600,000 members strong, and we represent educators and school-related professionals in P-12 and higher education, healthcare professionals, and we have a vibrant retiree membership," she says. "Advocating for issues that matter to our members feeds my soul, and I am humbled to serve in this role."

NYSUT fights for increased funding for institutions of higher learning and advocates for community colleges at the state and national levels, she says. In fact, NYSUT represents the MVCC Professional Association, the union for MVCC's faculty and professional staff.

"Community colleges are essential to every community. I believe this, but more importantly, our organization believes this." — Jolene DiBrango '89

"Community colleges are essential to every community," DiBrango says. "I believe this, but more importantly, our organization believes this. A community college can change the economic status of an entire family by providing an education that allows for the flexibility that so many students need today. It's plain and simple: I wouldn't be where I am today without MVCC."

DiBrango came to MVCC after graduating from New Hartford High School, where she focused on business courses. The College offered an associate degree in secretarial science, which seemed like a nice continuation of her studies, she says. "Attending MVCC allowed me to live at home and work, which was important to both me and my family."

She especially appreciated the small classes sizes, as well as the level of teaching and individualized support provided by her professors. It is attributes like these that can help propel a student forward and into a career path, she says.

"My time at MVCC prepared me so well for my future that less than a month after graduation I was employed by Oneida County BOCES after successfully completing a civil service exam," she says. "I was utilizing my secretarial science degree and loving it."

DiBrango found herself immersed in an educational setting with the opportunity to assist in classrooms while waiting for substitute teachers to arrive. "I enjoyed being with the students so much that I began to pursue my four-year degree in the evenings," she says.

She earned her bachelor's degree from SUNY Oswego and her master's degree from Nazareth College of Rochester. She began teaching in 1994 in the Canandaigua City School District, then spent the majority of her 25-year teaching career in the Pittsford Central School District teaching sixth grade, where DiBrango says she felt most at home.





“Once you’ve taught 100 middle-schoolers a day, you can do anything!” she says. “It is the hardest job in the world but certainly is the most rewarding. For me, having a positive impact on the lives of my students couldn’t be beat. Teachers change the world each day. Every interaction with a student has the potential to change that child, and that is serious business.”

DiBrango became involved in union work when a senior teacher asked her to be a representative. “It was the day after I received tenure as a teacher,” she says. “I never forgot that someone else saw something in me that was special. I try to pay that forward every chance I get — particularly for other female unionists.”

As a young educator, DiBrango was already aware of the importance of the labor movement, mainly due to the insight of her late grandfather, a staunch believer in the power of the collective and doing the right

thing. “He was the most principled man I have ever known,” she says. “He most certainly had a huge influence on me and was the reason I knew about the importance of unions.”

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**“Working on NYSUT’s women’s movement is important to me because our members believe in fairness, equality, safety, access, and representation...”**  
— Jolene DiBrango

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DiBrango later was elected president of her local union, and became more involved at the regional level, eventually becoming a trustee with the New York State Teachers Retirement System. She was elected executive vice president of NYSUT in 2017, and now oversees NYSUT’s Research and Educational Services Department and the Education and Learning Trust. She also leads NYSUT’s advocacy with the State Board of Regents and Education Department, and the NYSUT’s Women’s Committee.

“Working on NYSUT’s women’s movement is important to me because our members believe in fairness, equality, safety, access, and representation, and they believe being a part of a union means we can achieve that by working collectively,” she says. “I take that very seriously.”

DiBrango is currently leading NYSUT’s Take a Look at Teaching Initiative to address the teacher shortage in New York State. The initiative aims to attract students and career-changers to the field, increase diversity, and build stronger P-12 and higher education partnerships.

“We are actively working to attract and retain teachers,” she says. “Our students want teachers who come from their communities, know what they are going through and know how to help, enlighten and support them. We need talented, creative, smart people to enter the profession and share their experiences with the students of New York State.”



## **JIM FIORE '77**

### **PROFESSOR STRIVES TO MAKE EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS ACCESSIBLE TO ALL STUDENTS**

MVCC Professor Jim Fiore '77 is somewhat of a pioneer when it comes to Open Educational Resources.

He’s been writing technical journals and lab manuals since the 1980s, and, in the early 1990s, he contracted with a company to publish his first textbook.

“I learned some hard truths about the publishing industry,” he says. For example, when he went to update his textbook for the second edition, he found out the rights had been sold to a new publisher. He also had very little input into the publishing and printing of his text, and absolutely no control over cost. “Textbook prices had started to go crazy. Students going to school and not being able to afford their books is just wrong. This is a huge barrier for them.”

Fiore began doing research and discovered Open Educational Resources (OERs), which include any type of educational materials that are in the public domain or introduced with an open license, meaning that anyone can legally and freely copy, use, adapt, and re-share them. OERs are different from online access books, which only can be accessed online for a semester or two and are not owned by the student. For comparison, some OERs, such as foundation texts for particular subjects, are often kept in students’ personal libraries for future reference.

Fiore was able to reclaim the rights to his book, but they just included the text he wrote — not illustrations and diagrams — so he had to redo all of the schematics and diagrams for the third edition. It was released as an OER, a 600-page PDF that he wrote, edited, and proofread himself, which can be downloaded for free. It also can be updated whenever revisions are needed. “You give up royalties, but you get control over your book, and this is a huge thing for students,” he says. This past spring, he published the book through Amazon’s Kindle Direct Publishing, and students can buy a hard copy for about \$15 — a far cry from the triple-digit price tag the publishing company had put on it. The pages are in black and white to keep costs down, but the book has a glossy color cover.

“I was skeptical at first, but when I saw the book, it was very nice quality,” he says. “And I’m a little old school; I like physical books. But these books are properly bound, and the quality is there. The resolution is even better than the edition that cost students \$200.”

Fiore explains that the license for Open Educational Resources is noncommercial remix with attribution, so he still owns the rights and can control the editions and pricing. He says others can edit, add to, and republish his work, but it must be published under the same license.

For Fiore, the sharing of information to help people learn just makes sense. “I come from the software world, and in the '80s, it was all about software and freeware, and OERs are the same ethos,” he says. Fiore makes them available for free on his website and gets emails from skeptical people all over the world. For instance, a man in South America who was trying to start a technical institute on a shoestring budget came across Fiore’s books online but didn’t believe he could just give them to his students. “People distrust altruism. They want to know what the catch is,” he says. “But there’s no catch. I’m an educator — my goal is to disseminate the information and help students.”

So far, Fiore has published 12 OER titles — with two more in the works, and has covered almost all of the courses he teaches. MVCC’s Electrical Engineering Technology program is more than half OER in curriculum, and other courses and programs are developing OERs. “I’d love to see this take off here,” he says. “OERs are really a community endeavor. We are a community of educators. Everyone does a little bit, everyone gains a lot. I think it’s a great model.”

“And when you’re talking about buildings, it’s really about people. It’s about people wanting to be in that space and enjoying the experience.”  
— Christopher Crolius



# CHRISTOPHER CROLIUS '78



## ALUMNUS OF MERIT DEDICATED TO SERVICE, COMMUNITY

While he graduated from MVCC in 1978, architect Christopher J. Crolius often finds himself back on the College’s Utica Campus where he began to lay the foundation for his future.

Only now, Crolius isn’t sitting in a classroom learning about civil engineering or out in the Quad with his surveying class — he’s in and out of buildings to check in with clients, or up on the roof to assess the progress of projects his firm is working on at MVCC. “I’ve been very fortunate to have been involved in a number of projects here over the years,” he says.

Crolius, a principal and co-founder of MARCH Associates Architects and Planners PC in Utica and MVCC’s 2019 Alumni of Merit Award winner, plays an active role in all aspects of the firm’s operations,

taking a hands-on approach to solving design and construction issues. MARCH Associates — now in its 26th year — has worked on many projects at MVCC’s campuses, including recent exterior signage and Alumni College Center renovations, and was the architect of record for the newly renamed Francis A. Wilcox Hall.

“I’ve had the opportunity to do renovations and transform tired spaces into spaces that are bright and well-received,” Crolius says. “At this point, I think we’ve worked in almost all of the buildings on campus.”

Crolius says it is satisfying to revisit projects he’s been a part of — especially on a campus that means so much to him. “My partner Tony always says our projects are like children,” he says. “You invest your time in them, remember things about them, but it’s not just the experience — it’s the firm, our consultants, and everyone else. It’s really a team approach.”

That team approach, and a focus on service, he believes, is what sets MARCH Associates apart from other architects. “We’re small enough that I can be involved in the majority of projects, but we’re large enough that we can do projects of significance,” he says. “I love building things, solving problems, and working with people. And when you’re talking about buildings, it’s really about people. It’s about people wanting to be in that space and enjoying the experience.”

Crolius, a native of Boonville, was first attracted to MVCC because of its affordability and found its engineering programs were highly rated and transferrable. “I thought that it was a very good foundation. It was broad enough that I had general knowledge in a lot of areas.”

After earning his associate degree in 1978, Crolius transferred to Utica College for a bachelor’s degree in construction management. In his senior year, he worked part-time as a spec writer at Stetson-Dale, an engineering/architectural firm in Utica. He worked

through various roles — architectural team leader, project manager — then took the architecture exam to become licensed. During this time, he also earned his MBA from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

Crolius and two other architects, Tony Martino and Chuck Higerson, split from Stetson-Harza several years after it was acquired by an engineering company, then started MARCH Associates in 1993. The firm has a vast portfolio that features many projects — about 85% of its workload is within the educational market, including schools such as New Hartford and OHM BOCES; and colleges such as MVCC and Utica College. “Lately the emphasis in education has been on security and how we make places safer for students and staff,” Crolius says, “so we have to balance between being secure but also remain warm and inviting.”

Finding that balance can be a challenge, he says, especially in aging structures.

“It starts with developing a single point of entry,” he says. “When some of these older buildings were designed, they had multiple entry points. The district office might not be located right at the main gate, but you kind of need a gatekeeper. A lot of our work has dealt with moving that function to that entry point so it is controlled.”

Crolius is a registered architect in New York State, and a member of the American Institute of Architects: the Construction Specifications Institute, the Sealant, Waterproofing, and Restoration Institute, and the Mohawk Valley Builders Exchange. He also serves on the Construction Management Committee Advisory Board at Utica College. He is not the only member of his family with ties to MVCC — his wife, Cindy, and youngest son Brian are also graduates.



# CHRIS BEAL '12

## ALUMNUS BEGINS COMMUNITY COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP FOR VVS STUDENTS

Chris Beal '12 believes strongly in the mission of community colleges like MVCC, and has found a way to give back to his high school, Vernon-Verona-Sherrill, while helping the students there reach their highest potential without incurring a lot of student loan debt.

In 2019, Beal began the Community College Business Administration Scholarship, which is awarded to a graduate of Vernon-Verona-Sherrill High School planning to major in business administration or a related field, such as accounting, finance, or marketing, at MVCC or another community college in New York State. For the year 2020, the scholarship, sponsored by the Beal family, will amount to \$250. To be eligible, the student must have a GPA of 90 and write an essay explaining how they will overcome difficulties in college to earn their degree.

He was inspired to start the scholarship because as a student, he received scholarships and always wanted to give back once he paid off his own student loans.

"I believe community colleges are a fantastic option to receive a college education at a reasonable cost," Beal says. "I created the scholarship to encourage people to start off at a community college and reduce their student loan debt by doing so."

"I believe community colleges are a fantastic option to receive a college education at a reasonable cost. I created the scholarship to encourage people to start off at a community college and reduce their student loan debt by doing so." — Chris Beal '12

He says that MVCC gave him a great foundation for understanding accounting, which he uses every day in his role as the AP Accountant and Purchasing Administrator at Medical Answering Services in Syracuse. "The professors are exceptional and have a sole focus of teaching the students," he says. After graduating from MVCC, Beal went on to earn a bachelor's degree from SUNY Oswego in 2014.



## ALUMNI ASSOCIATION UPDATES

### New this Year

Joining MVCC's Alumni Association is free and, as a result, alumni are joining in droves! In fact, this year's membership is up by more than 150%. It's easy to become a part of this exciting network – just complete the online membership form by visiting: [mvcc.edu/alumnimember](http://mvcc.edu/alumnimember). We ask that you fill out this form annually so we can stay in touch. As soon as you fill out the form, we will mail you your Alumni card. This membership card unlocks a series of benefits, including:

- Discounted tickets to MVCC's Cultural Series events. Alumni Association members only pay the employee price for tickets.
- An MVCC Wellness Pass: \$100 per year or \$40 per semester. This pass entitles members to use the Fitness Center (Prerequisite PE154), indoor running track, pool, and racquetball courts. More information is available by visiting [gomvhawks.com/information/facilities/cost\\_and\\_fees](http://gomvhawks.com/information/facilities/cost_and_fees).
- Invitations to special MVCC events, such as the annual Alumni and Friends Utica Comets game that is held on the stage at the Adirondack Bank Center at the Utica Memorial Auditorium (only 49 spots available!).
- Discounted tickets to Buffalo Bills games.
- Assistance from MVCC's Career Services Office, such as resume and cover letter writing, job searching, networking, and interview skills training.
- Access to FreeWill.

If you have any questions about MVCC's Alumni Association membership or benefits, please send an email to [alumni@mvcc.edu](mailto:alumni@mvcc.edu).



### About FreeWill

The MVCC Foundation has partnered with FreeWill to give you a free and easy way to write your legally valid will today. Many people like to include a gift to MVCC to invest in accessible, high-quality education. However, the service is free whether or not you choose to include a gift. If you prefer to work with an attorney, you still can use the tools to start your will and document your wishes, saving you time and money at the lawyer's office. And it's always free to log back in and make updates if things change.

For more information, visit [mvcc.edu/freewill](http://mvcc.edu/freewill).



In 2018-19, the Foundation's scholarship committee (supported by subcommittees of faculty and staff) reviewed hundreds of applications and awarded 442 scholarships amounting to more than \$345,000 to students in a wide range of academic programs. This represents an increase of approximately \$50,000 from the previous year.

**NEW SCHOLARSHIPS**

The Foundation partnered with community members and donors to launch five new scholarship funds in 2019:

**The Dr. Ralph J. Eannace and Althea M. Phillips Eannace, J.D. Memorial Scholarship** was established to honor the memory of Dr. Ralph and Althea Eannace. This devoted couple not only saw to the education of their own four children, but also encouraged the quest of many young people who sought to better their lives through higher education, providing guidance and financial support for these students as they earned undergraduate and graduate degrees. In keeping with this tradition, and in loving memory of Ralph and Althea Eannace, their children, family, and friends established this scholarship to aid MVCC students as they learn and achieve their educational goals.

**The Rudolph J. and Shirley J. Goebel Airframe and Powerplant Technology Scholarship**

supports students in the Airframe and Powerplant program. This scholarship honors Rudolph J. and Shirley J. Goebel's love of aviation and their long friendship with John "Laddie" and Alice Leitz, who fostered and supported their common interest. Having worked hard their entire lives while building their own homes and raising and educating their children, Rudy was finally able to embrace flying after their own "birds" had fledged. Shirley always was there to assist and support, and spent many pleasant hours with Alice and Laddie while Rudy earned his wings at the Frankfort-Highland Airport. After retiring, Rudy built two airplanes and continued his interest in the airplane communities in other parts of the country.

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*"I will never forget and will strive to leave an impact in someone's life as you've done for me."*

– Scholarship Recipient

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**The Edward G. Hays Aviation Career Scholarship** was established in 2019 for the MVCC Airframe and Powerplant program to provide a continuation of Mr. Hays' commitment to education and safety in aviation. As a flight instructor for more than 30 years, Mr. Hays was an FAA-Designated Examiner privileged to issue licenses for Commercial, Instrument, and Airline Transport pilots. It is Mr. Hays' hope that this scholarship would provide encouragement and assistance to students for a long and successful career in aviation.

**The Edward G. Hays Aviation Career Scholarship – Small Unmanned Aerial System (sUAS) Program** supports students in the Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems program. This scholarship is in recognition of commitment, dedication, and achievement to further students' education in the field of aviation.



*"It was always my intention to return to school... There was always something standing in my way; finances, new baby, or a move to a new community. Thankfully, the time for my dream is now."*

– Scholarship Recipient



*"This scholarship means so much to me. It is a reward beyond the much needed monetary value, it serves as genuine incentive it talks to my heart and says you can do it, we believe in you!"*

– Scholarship Recipient



**John Buffa '85**

He was honored at a Gala as the founder of the Heritage Association and for his 40 years of service as president and executive director of the museum. DiNovo also was knighted by the Italian government in 1994 for his outstanding service to the American Community.

**1970s**

**David Mathis '70 MVCC Trustee and Alumnus of Merit,** Retail Business Management, was elected vice chair of the Association of Community College Trustees. Additionally, Mr. Mathis was awarded the Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency's Treva Wood Community Activist Award.

**Stanley Wilczek '72**

Engineering Science, worked for 30 years as a nuclear engineer at Niagara Mohawk. Wilczek has since transformed his career and recently finished his fifth book in the mystery/thriller genre. He also currently serves as an assistant professor at Keuka College in an adult accelerated program for students working toward their four-year degrees in business management.

**Nancy (DePaolo) Pattarini '75 Alumna of Merit,** Advertising Design and Production, completed her doctorate from Nova Southeastern University in conflict resolution studies with a concentration in organizational development.

**1950s**

**Don Karecki '53** Retail Business Management, sold his one-person book company in 2010 to CRC Press Taylor & Francis – London and was retained as their consulting editor. It is his job to find authors who are a match for publication consideration. The company specializes in science, engineering/technology, math/statistics, computers/IT, and business and economics. All other disciplines are equally welcome.

**Philip J. DiNovo '54**

Business Administration, founded the American Italian Heritage Association and Museum in 1979 while teaching at Morrisville College. The first museum was in Utica, N.Y. The present museum, the American Italian Heritage Museum, is located in Albany, N.Y., and is the largest Italian American museum in the east.

**John "Buzzard" Schneider '79**

Electrical Service Technician, retired from General Motors in 2012 and is currently living in Michigan just east of Ann Arbor.

**1980s**

**John Buffa '85 Alumnus of Merit,** Banking and Insurance, was named executive vice president of commercial banking at Adirondack Bank.

**Scott Wilson '87**

Engineering Science, is now the manager of production operations for NASA's Orion Program, which is built around the Orion Multi-Purpose Crew Vehicle, a cone-shaped spacecraft that will be used for deep-space missions.

**1990s**

**Sabrina Mosseau '98 BS, RN, OCN,** Nursing, was named executive director of New York Oncology Hematology (NYOH). NYOH is the leading provider of community-based cancer care and blood disorder services. With six locations and a team of 32 physicians and 350 cancer care specialists, the organization provides more than 100,000 cancer visits a year.

**2000s**

**Edward H. Briggs '00** Chemical Technology, is northeast regional sales manager for Indium Corporation and is a SMTA-certified process engineer.

**Vinny Galluppi '02**

Web Development and Information Design, is currently data systems coordinator II for the Franklin County Sheriff's Office in Columbus, Ohio. Galluppi has supported over 2,000 employees in the current IT team, including both of the County's jails, all locations around the city, such as patrol, SWAT, SIU, and all other departments over the population of 1 million. Galluppi is currently the team lead in support for the IT department.

**Arthur Alger '07**

Financial Management Services, celebrated 10 years with AmeriCU Credit Union this year. Alger began his career with AmeriCU in 2008 and his current position is ATM/Debit Card Research – Fraud Analyst. In his current role, he is responsible for all debit card fraud/disputes.

**Anthony Marrello '08**

Web Development and Information Design, was hired as a web developer at ABC Creative.

**2010s**

**Michael Bottini '10 '19** Business Management, Fire Protection Technology, was appointed to the Rome City Fire Department.

**Peter Manno '13 RN**

Nursing, was named provider relations specialist for Mohawk Valley Health System.

**James Noon '15**

Fire Protection Technology, was named assistant fire chief at the Utica Fire Department.

**Mark Mitchell '16**

General Studies, received the Gary and Jeanne Labella/RSI Transition Award at Utica College. The award recognizes a transfer student for excellence in making the transition from a previous school to the PR/J program at UC.

**Malinda Farrell '17**

Nutrition and Dietetics, transferred to Syracuse University, graduating this past summer with her BS in Nutrition Science. Farrell is now working for ACR Health as a nutrition health educator in the North Country, which includes Syracuse, Utica, Watertown, and Oswego.

**Greta Schaller '17**

Cybersecurity, was hired as an IT Specialist I by Northern Safety and Industrial in February.

**Garett Begnoche '18**

Computer Science, was promoted to software developer at Covey Computer Software, Inc. He joined the CoveyCS team as an intern in January 2018 and was hired full time after earning his degree from MVCC.

**Dawn Foster '18**

Cybersecurity and Computer Science, has been hired as a computer technician at Upstate Cerebral Palsy.

**Steve Losinger, '18**

Electrical Services, is the implementation engineer in the Engineering Department at Fiber Instrument Sales.

**Arthur Mucitelli '18**

Business Management, has been hired as marketing and sales assistant at Covey Computer Software, Inc.

**Ahmat Adam Djouma '19**

Public Policy, was named a DREAM Scholar by the Achieving the Dream Network. Djouma was born blind. He and his family are originally from Sudan, but violent conflict there forced them to flee to Chad, where they lived in a refugee camp. In 2009, they immigrated to the U.S., where Djouma had to learn braille and English simultaneously. In 2017, he graduated in the top 10% of his class at Thomas R. Proctor High School with a Regents diploma.

**Ryan Thayer '19**

Fire Protection Technology, was appointed to the Rome City Fire Department.



**Ahmat Djouma '19**



The MVCC Foundation inducted four new members to the MVCC Hall of Fame during a ceremony on Tuesday, Nov. 12, at the College's Utica Campus. The Hall of Fame recognizes individuals who have embraced our community, modeled the way, inspired confidence, and encouraged excellence at MVCC. Selections are also chosen based on business or professional achievements or awards, leadership service to the local community, personal achievements, leadership support and involvement at MVCC, significant contributions to MVCC athletics, and any other appropriate qualifications.

**For full bios, visit [halloffame.mvcc.edu](http://halloffame.mvcc.edu)**

**THIS YEAR'S INDUCTEES ARE:**



**Dr. Maryrose Eannace**  
Vice President Emerita Dr. Maryrose Eannace has had a career in education spanning nearly 30 years. She most recently served at MVCC as Vice President for Learning and Academic Affairs and an adjunct instructor, and has held administrative and

faculty positions at Skagit Valley College in Washington, Cazenovia College, SUNY Polytechnic Institute, and Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute.

During her time at MVCC, Dr. Eannace was laser-focused on student success. She was the driving force behind multiple programs and initiatives, a strong supporter of MVCC's chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, and has further shared her expertise through numerous publications, including two college textbooks and two textbooks for junior high and high school students.

Dr. Eannace served as an Executive Board member of the National Council of Instructional Administrators (NCIA) and as a Commissioner on the Academic, Student and Community Commission. Locally, she served many years on the Board of Student and Business Alliance, a BOCES program.

Her efforts and achievements have been recognized nationally, and her accolades include winning and becoming the namesake for the NCIA's Outstanding Service to Community Colleges award in 2019.



**Frank E. Przybycien**  
Administrator/Professor Emeritus Frank Przybycien spent 45 years in service to MVCC, serving as Professor for more than 20 years, head of the Engineering Technology and Trades Department for another 20 years, and then Director of Community

Restoration Initiatives until retiring in 2012. His service to MVCC resulted in community partnerships and led to transfer agreements and a reputation of distinction for program graduates.

Przybycien served on the Technology Accreditation Commission of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology and as an Accreditation Observer for the American Society of Civil Engineers for 25 years, during which he worked on accreditation of new technology programs in Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

Przybycien was a visionary who consistently went above and beyond in his efforts to expand MVCC's impact. He authored a textbook on surveying and field operations to better serve his students, and his partnership development efforts were a key factor in the launch of several programs and initiatives. His outstanding service to the community has been recognized with several awards, including the 2009 Genesis Educator Award, induction into the Oneida County History Center Hall of Fame in 2013, the Bagg's Square Association Legacy Award in 2014, and induction into the Oneida City School System Wall of Distinction in 2019.



**Robert C. Decker**  
Professor Emeritus Robert Decker '73 spent 20 years at MVCC, moving up the academic ranks from Instructor to Professor and Director of Engineering Technologies until his retirement in 2016. During his tenure, Decker played a pivotal role in guiding the

College's Engineering Technologies and Trades Department through a transformative time of technological advancement and education. In addition to critically important work in maintaining accreditation for engineering technology programs, he served as lead faculty member for initiatives such as course and program development in solar energy, semiconductor manufacturing technology and mechatronics, providing key insight and motivation to research, develop and launch critically important coursework at the College. He also served as the lead faculty member in a long-running partnership with Verizon to implement a customized training program.

In addition to internal projects, Decker was active in developing partnerships with other higher education institutions and organizations focused on technology, trades, and engineering education. He served as the Principal or Co-Principal Investigator for multiple National Science Foundation projects, including a regional Northeast Advanced Technological Education Center at SUNY Polytechnic Institute. He is the co-inventor on a U.S. Patent for universal connectors for rechargeable and non-rechargeable batteries and led the effort to navigate rapid transformations in technology through educational programming, curriculum development, and maintaining high standards for accreditation.



**Michael Sewall**  
Professor Emeritus Michael Sewall served in a variety of roles for 35 years at MVCC, beginning as a faculty member before working his way up to administration and finally returning to professorship for an additional 15 years before retirement. He made

exceptional contributions as a Human Services and Psychology department professor, notably guiding a major internship requirement that he spent countless hours molding into an outstanding experiential learning opportunity for students. Sewall was promoted to Rome Campus Coordinator for the Division of Public and Health Services and later to Rome Campus Dean, where he served for nearly a decade before returning to his role as Professor where he could continue his true joy – teaching. Beyond his retirement in 2006, he continued to teach as an adjunct faculty member for many years to continue working with students.

Throughout his career at MVCC, Sewall was heavily involved in a multitude of college development efforts, including significant impact on assessment policies and practice. Both as a Professor and Dean, he remained highly involved with the College Senate, and he served on several committees. He played a vital part in developing and implementing strategic plans, conducting open forums to inform the College community on new efforts, and developing assessment instruments and surveys that are still in use today. He was awarded the SUNY Chancellor's Faculty Service Award and was highly sought after both nationally and internationally as a speaker in his field.



# MVCC NEWS AND EVENTS



## MVCC HOSTS CEREMONY TO NAME FRANCIS A. WILCOX HALL AT UTICA CAMPUS

MVCC hosted a ceremony to rename the Information Technology Building at its Utica Campus on Sept. 17. The building is now named Francis A. Wilcox Hall in honor of the late electrical engineer and decorated U.S. veteran Francis A. Wilcox, who included the MVCC Foundation in his will when he died in 2011. His generous gift of \$3 million creates even more opportunity for local students and allows MVCC to continue its mission of providing accessible, high-quality education for all students. Kevin Keehle, executor of Wilcox's estate, and his wife Sue, worked with MVCC Foundation to carry out Wilcox's wishes.

Of the \$3 million, \$2.5 million is allocated for the Wilcox Memorial Endowed Fund, which will support two full-tuition scholarship funds: The Presidential Scholarship and Exceptional Student Scholarship — merit-based awards that benefit more than 70 high school graduates each year and are renewable for their four semesters at the College.

The remaining \$500,000 will be split: \$250,000 will be used to establish the new Francis A. Wilcox Memorial Adult Student Scholarship, which will be endowed, and the rest will be used to create the Wilcox Family Fund, to be used for MVCC's areas of greatest need to help the College maintain its dynamism and impact in the face of swiftly evolving societal, technological, and academic needs.

**"This is a truly transformational gift that will change the lives of so many students, and the fact the gift adds to our endowment assures the impact will endure into the future."**

— MVCC President  
**Dr. Randall J. VanWagoner**

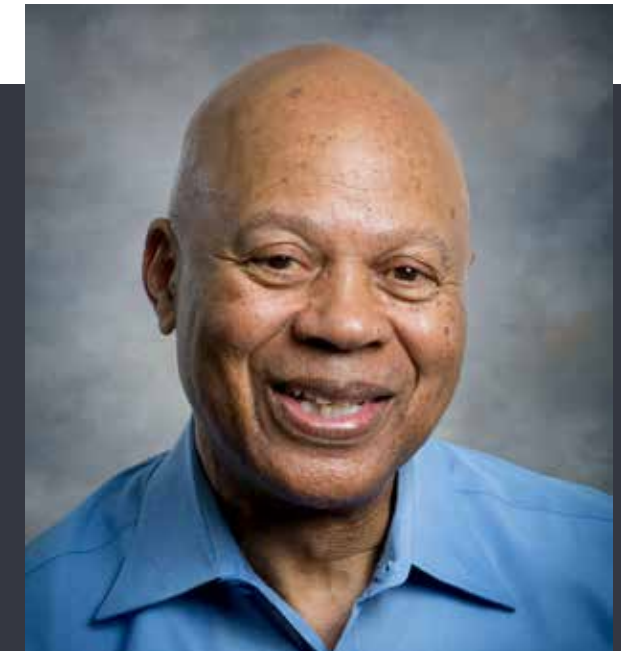
The MVCC Presidential Scholarship will be renamed the Francis A. Wilcox Memorial Presidential Scholarship. This full-tuition scholarship (less financial aid) is awarded to students who graduate in the top 10% of their class in an Oneida County high school. Students must be enrolled full-time, taking a minimum of 12 credit hours each semester, and maintain a minimum B GPA (3.0) for each semester in attendance. The endowment of this scholarship will free up funding for the MVCC Foundation, enabling it to help other students in need at the College. The Francis A. Wilcox Memorial Exceptional Student Scholarship is also full-tuition, but for students who

## NEWS

live outside of Oneida County who graduate in the top 10% of their high school class. There is a limited number of scholarships, and awardees are selected by the MVCC Scholarship Committee. Students must be full-time, taking a minimum of 12 credit hours each semester, and maintain a GPA of 3.0 for each semester in attendance.

The Francis A. Wilcox Memorial Adult Student Scholarship will help to create more opportunities for students age 25 and older who live in New York State, show financial need, and have a GPA of 2.0 or higher. The amount will vary, but will be able to be used for tuition, fees, and other educational expenses. The student may reapply annually as long as they are attending full- or part-time, and enrolled in a degree, certificate, or micro-credential program.

Wilcox was born in Utica and attended Blessed Sacrament School. He graduated from St. Francis de Sales High School, then earned his bachelor's degree from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and his master's degree from Cornell University. He served in the U.S. Army Signal Corps in India during World War II and was the recipient of the Good Conduct Medal, the Meritorious Unit Award, and the World War II Victory Medal. After his service, he worked as an electrical engineer with General Electric in Utica and Syracuse. In retirement, he volunteered at the Utica Public Library and the Oneida County Historical Society, helping people from all corners of the United States research genealogy.



## DR. MARSHALL JONES VISITS MVCC

MVCC alumnus and National Inventors Hall of Fame inductee Dr. Marshall Jones '62 visited MVCC on April 1 to meet with science and engineering students, participate in a live chat with President VanWagoner, and tour some of the labs he learned in while a student in the 1960s.

Dr. Jones, who earned his associate degree in Mechanical Technology from MVCC (back when it was Mohawk Valley Technical Institute), is now a General Electric engineer who holds more than 50 U.S. patents and is recognized as one of the foremost authorities in the field of laser material processing. In 2017, he was inducted into the National Inventors Hall of Fame for his pioneering work on industrial lasers, joining the ranks of innovation giants such as Nikola Tesla, Thomas Edison, and the Wright Brothers.

While at MVCC, Dr. Jones met with a small group of engineering students for a question and answer session about his career and the field. "It was a great thing for me to be able to see him," one student reported. "Going in-depth with a scientist like that — especially an engineer — it was really good."



**SBDC LOCATES AT THINCUBATOR**

MVCC, SUNY Polytechnic Institute, and the New York State Small Business Development Center (SBDC) announced on Feb. 15 that the Mohawk Valley SBDC is relocating its operations to MVCC's thINCubator at 326 Broad St. in Utica. At its new location, the Mohawk Valley SBDC will be even closer to community members being served by the organization, and it will be able to build upon its strong foundation from the multi-year support it received from SUNY Poly.

The joint announcement was made by MVCC President Dr. Randall J. VanWagoner, SUNY Poly Interim President Dr. Grace Wang, and Small Business Association Syracuse District Director Bernard Paprocki. Dr. VanWagoner said, "This move is another step toward fulfillment of the entrepreneurship pledge made by MVCC in August 2018 to increase the College's focus on entrepreneurship. We are thrilled to have the Mohawk Valley SBDC join with us in our entrepreneurship initiatives to foster economic growth in our community."

The Mohawk Valley SBDC was established in 1986 to provide small business owners and entrepreneurs in Oneida, Madison, Herkimer, and Lewis Counties with the highest quality confidential business counseling, training, and business research at no cost. As one of 22 regional centers around the state, the Mohawk Valley SBDC has worked directly with 13,549 businesses, helping them to invest \$255,275,686 in the area's economy, and it has created or saved 7,620 jobs to date. The Mohawk Valley SBDC has three business advisors and a government contracting coordinator.

"SUNY Polytechnic Institute is proud of our history of supporting the Mohawk Valley Small Business Development Center. We are excited to work collaboratively with the New York State SBDC and MVCC to enable the Mohawk Valley SBDC to more efficiently achieve its important mission and provide community members with even greater access to its business services," said Dr. Wang. "We are thrilled to continue our strong partnership with MVCC as we find the best ways to serve the needs of the Mohawk Valley, and we look forward to the Mohawk Valley SBDC's continued success."

SBDC State Director Brian Goldstein said, "I have seen first-hand MVCC's and SUNY Poly's dedication to entrepreneurship, and when I was approached earlier this year with this plan, it soon became evident that this would be a win-win for the community and SBDC."

"Bringing MVCC's thINCubator and the SBDC under one roof will centralize entrepreneurship services and provide a "one-stop shop" of entrepreneurial assistance for our region's entrepreneurs, students, and business owners looking to create opportunities for economic growth and creativity," said Frank DuRoss, Vice President for Community Development and Executive Director of the MVCC Foundation.

Members of the community who may be interested in the Mohawk Valley SBDC's services are encouraged to visit the organization's new location at thINCubator or contact sbdc@mvcc.edu for more information.



**ANNUAL FUND TOTALS TOP \$46,000**

The 2018-19 MVCC Annual Fund campaign proved to be very successful! With this year's mailings, the MVCC Foundation raised more than \$46,000 from nearly 400 donors – a total that is up from the 2017-18 total by nearly \$13,000!

In the last year, your generosity has helped the MVCC Foundation:

- Create eight new scholarships and/or funds that benefit MVCC students
- Assist 442 students with \$345,379.67 in scholarships, an increase of more than \$50,000 from the previous year
- Assist 63 students with \$48,721.54 in Emergency Relief funding
- Launch several social enterprise efforts under the name 'Tea Leaf' to increase experiential learning opportunities for college students while providing a needed service to the community.

As you may know, we no longer make phone calls to our alumni. We realize that everyone is busy and you don't always have time to chat on the phone when we're calling. In an effort to communicate with you on your schedule, we chose to send a series of mailings that you can read at your leisure. We also periodically send email updates. Beginning this year, we would like to text you with alumni updates, events, and solicitations. If we don't have your mobile phone number or your email address, please contact us with an update: 315-792-5555 or alumni@mvcc.edu.



**INNOVATION COLLECTIVE WILL GROW LOCAL HIGH-TECH ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

MVCC Vice President for Community Development Frank DuRoss joined Oneida County Executive Anthony J. Picente, Jr., and Founder/Chairman of Upstate Venture Connect Martin Babinec at thINCubator in Utica to welcome the Innovation Collective to Oneida County as the group prepares to kick off a series of public events.

The Innovation Collective is an organization based in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho, that helps communities stimulate economic development through a bottom-up approach that starts with connecting entrepreneurs to the community resources needed to support them. This is accomplished through a multi-year campaign of programs and software designed to inspire people, foster new businesses, and unlock millions in investments.

The Innovation Collective will begin its process in Oneida County with a series of public events that consist of story-telling nights, idea-sharing sessions, weekend-long mentoring summits, and a technology festival that highlights the work on which people within the community are focused. The organization

plans to convene think tanks, offer mentoring sessions with representatives of Fortune 500 companies, and create co-working spaces. The Innovation Collective will also work with county government to pass laws that facilitate research and development and create a unique branding opportunity for the community.

*“We really wanted to work here in Utica because we believe the people of Utica are resilient people, they’re creative people and they have an incredible spirit and we want to tap into that and teach them how to start companies.”*

— Chris Cochran, Innovation Collective

Since the Innovation Collective’s launch in 2014, it has unlocked \$57 million in new investments, helped launch over 50 new LLCs, encouraged new education programs, and inspired more than 15,000 program participants. In its flagship city of Coeur d’Alene, there are now more tech companies per capita than any other city in Idaho. In addition to Utica, the organization is also currently establishing presences in Yakima, Wash.; Reno, Nev., and Albuquerque, N.M.

**TEA LEAF SOCIAL ENTERPRISES**

The MVCC Foundation is excited to announce that it has launched a series of social enterprise efforts to increase experiential learning opportunities for college students while providing a needed service to the community. Other social enterprise efforts are expected to be added under the Tea Leaf name in the near future.

**TEA LEAF AIRCRAFT EXCHANGE, LLC**

The MVCC Foundation is soliciting donations of selected aircraft and aircraft parts for an innovative program that provides MVCC students in the College’s FAA-accredited (Certificate #VXYT570K) Airframe and Powerplant Technology Certificate Program with resources for unique training in disassembly and restoration of aircraft parts, enabling students to gain hands-on experience while providing a recycling opportunity for the aviation community and adding a resource stream to support College programs. The College’s operational fleet includes a Boeing 727-100, two Gulfstream GII business jets, a Bombardier Challenger 600, a twin engine Cessna 310, Piper PA-28-140, two OH-58 Helicopters, and additional aircraft frames, engines, and other equipment. The MVCC Foundation has received multiple donations of various aircraft to support this program, and any individuals interested in donating aircraft may contact Tea Leaf Aircraft Exchange LLC at [tealeaf@mvcc.edu](mailto:tealeaf@mvcc.edu).



**TEA LEAF VENTURES, LLC**

**Tea Leaf Manufacturing**

The MVCC Fabrication Lab (FABLab) was launched in 2015 and today hosts industrial-grade equipment and tools including multiple 3D printers (with capacity for printing in plastic, nylon, rubber, and other materials), 3D scanners, laser etchers, and other equipment that quickly made it a highly valued prototyping space for local industry, entrepreneurs, and non-profit institutions. Tea Leaf Manufacturing will enable the College to increase its ability to provide industry-relevant experiential learning for students while expanding services to external companies and institutions through Fabrication Services, Design Consultation Services, and a MakerSpace Subscription for a small fee, with the proceeds to be reinvested into the College’s programs. Companies, entrepreneurs, and other individuals interested in accessing FABLab or other MVCC manufacturing facilities may contact Tea Leaf Manufacturing at [tealeaf@mvcc.edu](mailto:tealeaf@mvcc.edu).

**Tea Leaf Touring**

Tea Leaf Touring is an intellectual speakers bureau representing teachers, thinkers, and doers for speaking engagements and consulting at colleges, universities, and corporations. Tea Leaf Touring offers a comprehensive roster of the most dynamic educators, thinkers, and doers in the fields of technology, psychology, politics, organizational change, athletics, arts and entertainment, motivation, media and literature, and business. The initiative works with meeting planners and event managers to deliver the most appropriate and engaging personalities and collaborates with its clients to develop dynamic presentations that enlighten and inspire. Those interested in being represented by or locating a speaker through Tea Leaf Touring may contact [tealeaf@mvcc.edu](mailto:tealeaf@mvcc.edu).



**WEEK OF GIVING SPOTLIGHT**

Over the past two years, the MVCC Foundation has raised more than \$50,000 from approximately 400 donors through its Day of Giving (2017) and Week of Giving (2018).

In February 2020, the MVCC Foundation will host its third Annual Week of Giving event – and we hope all of our alumni and supporters will show MVCC some love by making this campaign the most successful online giving campaign held to date. This year’s event will raise funding for MVCC’s College-Community-Connection (C3) program, an innovative pilot effort to build a structural support system for low-income and underserved students seeking a college degree.

MVCC’s C3 program was developed as an on-campus, wraparound support center to offer timely, effective solutions for traditionally non-academic crises to ensure students are able to stay in school and complete a degree to help them access a stable economic future. C3 supported 30% more students than anticipated in its initial performance period, and, to extend this impact, MVCC seeks to permanently incorporate this pilot into the structure of the College.

**Services C3 provides include:**

- Child and elder care services: Identifying and utilizing available services and providers
- Transportation: Free access to public transportation
- Healthcare services: Insurance, vaccines, prevention, screening, and treatment
- Family and/or employment assistance: Temporary employment, tax services, financial literacy, and public assistance
- Counseling: On-campus and community-based services
- Legal aid: Free consultations
- Food assistance: On-campus food pantries, connections to community pantries, and other food assistance programs
- Housing assistance: Temporary housing, utilities, weatherization, and relocation
- Emergency Assistance: Relief and recovery, and start-up help

Please be on the lookout for this campaign in February on our website and social media channels. For more information about MVCC’s Week of Giving, call 315-792-5555.

**ALUMNI AND FRIENDS COMETS GAMES**

Our first MVCC Alumni and Friends Comets game was held in March 2019. We enjoyed a great time on the stage of the Adirondack Bank Center at the Utica Memorial Auditorium with alumni and friends representing classes from 1970-2018.

**Save the date!**

We will be hosting our second Annual MVCC Alumni and Friends Comets game on Friday, March 13, 2020. The Utica Comets will host the Belleville Senators. With your ticket, you’ll be able to watch the action up-close and personal on an elevated platform directly behind the goal at the stage-end of the ice. Sit in a chair up against the glass or relax on the couch and enjoy the atmosphere. Food and drink will be included with your ticket. Seating is limited to 49 patrons and space is on a first-come, first-served basis. To reserve your seat or for more information, email [ctaurisano-sprague@mvcc.edu](mailto:ctaurisano-sprague@mvcc.edu) or call 315-792-5345.



**TED MOORE**

The MVCC Foundation hosted the 22nd annual Ted Moore 5K Run and Walk on May 4, attracting 200 participants ranging in age from 12 to 72 years old. Participants hailed from nearly 35 towns, villages, and cities in and outside of Oneida County.

**Top winners were:**

**Top Overall Male:** Dakota Corney, 20, Oneida, N.Y., Time: 17:37, Pace: 5:40

**Top Overall Female:** Kimberly Wrate, 22, New Hartford, N.Y., Time: 19:54, Pace: 6:25



The event raised over \$6,000 toward the Ted Moore Scholarship at MVCC, providing tuition support for more than a dozen students at the College. Sponsors included the Oneida County Stop DWI program and the Sheriff's Office, Sodexo, A&P Master Images, PJ Green, the MVCC Professional Association, the Association of Mohawk Valley Administrators, KISS-FM, WKTV News Channel 2, and the MVCC Alumni Association.

**GOLF TOURNAMENT**

The MVCC Foundation held its 33rd Annual MVCC Foundation Golf Tournament on June 17 at the Valley View Golf and Country Club in Utica. The event broke all previous records, raising just over \$25,000 in funds to benefit the Outdoor Athletics Campaign – an amount that a state capital fund is matching dollar-for-dollar to achieve a total of more than \$50,000. In addition to 50/50 drawings, door prizes, team skins, and other contests, the tournament included contests for closest to the pin, longest drive, and team gross and net.



**AT&T CODING AND TECH CAMP**

MVCC's thINCubator hosted an AT&T Coding and Tech Camp in the summer of 2019 to help youth tap into next-generation skills for new careers. Oneida County Executive Anthony J. Picente Jr. and Utica Mayor Robert Palmieri visited the camp to meet and talk with the 25 participating students, touring the program as youth demoed final projects focused on curbing cyberbullying and promoting online safety through technology.

The two-week-long free program was created and hosted by Tech4Kidz and MVCC's thINCubator. The AT&T Coding and Tech Camp was designed to encourage more local students to enter tech careers. To eliminate economic barriers and to ensure the program was diverse, AT&T contributed \$25,000 to cover all

costs of the camp through AT&T Aspire, the company's signature \$500 million philanthropic initiative that drives innovation in education.

The high school participants tackled team-based coding projects designed to make a difference in their schools and community, while gaining hands-on experience developing their own technology. Students were mentored by local tech professionals, educators, and advocates to identify and design coding solutions, learn Python coding computer programming language, Raspberry Pi's, digital storyboards, animated movies, robotics, and games and basic websites, while going on field trips to see technology at work in the community and at colleges.



**ABOUT THE MVCC FOUNDATION**

The MVCC Foundation, Inc. is a 501(C)(3) nonprofit corporation that relies on the generosity of its alumni and donors to provide support and opportunities to the College and its students. Funds are directed toward four major initiatives: Creating Student Opportunity, Breaking Barriers, Revitalizing Our Economy, and Educational Excellence. Every dollar raised can make a difference, and there are many ways you can give and have a positive impact on our students and community.

**Online:** MVCCFoundation.org

**By mail:** Checks can be made payable to MVCC Foundation, Inc. and mailed to the attention of the Foundation at:

1101 Sherman Drive, Utica, NY 13501

**By phone:** 315-792-5555 (Office hours are Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.)

**By text message:** New in 2019, the MVCC Foundation will have the ability to communicate with alumni and donors via text message. Please contact our office to update your mobile phone number.

**Establish a named scholarship**

With a minimum contribution of \$10,000, an annual scholarship may be established. Pledge commitments can be paid over time.

**Underwrite an annual event**

Whether it's the Ted Moore Run and Walk, our annual scholarship dinner, or the MVCC Foundation Golf Tournament, there are a number of opportunities to highlight your business or organization and support MVCC in creative ways.

**Make a contribution to honor a loved one**

Celebrate a special occasion or remember a loved one by honoring them with a gift to the MVCC Foundation.

**Consider gift planning**

Please remember MVCC in your estate plan or by making a gift that makes payments back to you before benefitting MVCC. For additional information, contact Vice President for Community Development and Executive Director of the MVCC Foundation Frank DuRoss at 315-792-5526 or fduross@mvcc.edu.

**Gifts in-kind**

Gifts in-kind are a form of giving in which, instead of giving money to buy goods and services, those products or services are themselves given. In the past, MVCC has received gifts in-kind that include airplanes, office furnishings, and equipment.

**Matching gifts**

You may be able to double or even triple the impact of your gift if your employer or your

spouse's employer participate in a Corporate Matching Gifts program. Simply speak with your human resources or personnel office about obtaining a gift match form and include the completed form with your contribution.

**Don't forget to follow MVCC on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn for the latest College news and alumni information!**



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