Mott Makes MLK Day a Family Affair

Mott never has a shortage of volunteers for the Martin Luther King Day of Service. This year 50 students, faculty, and staff and their families made 66 no-sew fleece blankets that were donated on behalf of Project Linus, a non-profit agency with a mission to console traumatized, ill and needy children.

Once again the funding for the project was generously provided by Phi Theta Kappa. “The MLK blanket making is a way to give back behind the scenes, and it has a job for all ages. It is a great way to bring everyone together,” stated PTK member, Stephanie Pomper. MLK Day of Service provides opportunities for families to serve together. Nursing Professor, Teri Hill stated, “It was a multi-generational event for us. My daughter and grandchildren also participated. It was wonderful to share the importance of volunteerism with them.” The blankets were delivered by PTK students to local agencies which serve children and their families in need including Crossover Ministries and Shelter of Flint.

“_to serve where there is a need is one of the most important things we can do.”

SERVICE IN THE CTL

Every semester MCC faculty, staff and their families provide their time and energy to the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan. MCC is dedicated to helping combat hunger in Genesee County and around the state.

Welcome to Engage!

From Debra Gibes, MAT, Faculty Director of Experiential Learning

Throughout this academic year service learning has become an integral part of the campus from the classroom level to the department level and across disciplines. The impact is exciting and the momentum is growing. Thank you Mott for your dedication to collaborative engagement.

Sincerely,
Debra Gibes
Debra Gibes, MAT

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HELP PORTRAIT a Campus Tradition

The Help Portrait which started as a small campus project 6 years ago involving photography students, faculty and a few campus volunteers, has evolved into an annual campus-wide collaboration that includes students, alumni, faculty, and staff from Cosmetology, Early Childhood Development, Music Department, Criminal Justice department, Mott Honors program Campus Clowns and many other volunteers. Bob Rentschler, Photography Program Coordinator stated that this year was a collaborative record event. “The Help Portrait event is all about giving back to the community,” stated Rentschler. The MCC Help Portrait is part of a global movement of photographers, hairstylists and makeup artists using their time, tools, and talent to give people a professional portrait who otherwise couldn’t afford it. Help Portrait world-wide has provided 325,000 portraits to people in 67 countries and Mott is a proud contributor of this effort. “It made me see different things that photography can do for people” stated Photography Lab Assistant, Emily Zuwala. “It was definitely a game changer in my world of photography and seeing how many people volunteered an entire day was so greatly appreciated and very heartwarming.”

In addition to providing hairstyling, make-up, live music, and activities for the children during the event, the LERN club (Law Enforcement Resource Network) comprised of Criminal Justice students were able to give parents DNA and fingerprint kits for their children. Club advisor Jimmy Baber stated, “Students practiced fingerprinting and how to swab cheeks for DNA collection. We look forward to contributing to the event for years to come.”

A Closet of Compassion

Mott Community College Dental Hygiene students are relentless in their efforts to represent their commitment to care by giving back to their community. This semester, Dental Hygiene students with Professor Cheryl Doyle, launched a new partnership with Foster Closet in Genesee County. Foster Closet of Michigan provides personal items to begin the process of rebuilding a foster child’s self-esteem and providing them with belongings they can call their own. Cheryl Doyle explains that “Foster Closet is run solely by volunteers, many of whom are foster parents themselves, so our dental hygiene students were able to make a very positive impact.” The students learned that many times the children are taken from their homes with only the clothes on their back. Dental Hygiene student Elaine Simpson stated, “I loved volunteering for Foster Closet! Foster Closet provides children what they need while they go through such harsh times in their lives.” To learn more about Foster Closet, visit their website at www.fosterclosetofmichigan.org

“Our Dental Hygiene students were able to make a very positive impact.”
Over a dozen MCC faculty, staff, and almost 90 students are taking experiential learning to a new level of teamwork through the Facing Project, a nation-wide effort to connect people through stories to strengthen communities. Mott Community College along with two other universities were selected by Michigan Campus Compact to take part in this year’s topic “Facing College”. Mott launched the project with a Meet and Greet in which 27 international and immigrant students are telling their stories to Honors writing students in English 102 with Professor Joshua Sauvie. Along with meeting course goals the storytellers and authors are broadening cross-cultural understanding and better communication. Honor students will take on the persona of the storytellers and write their stories in the first person.

Honors student Jazzmin Jackson was excited to join the project as she saw it as a great opportunity to gain a new perspective. “I want to learn more about what they had to go through in their home countries and learn about how they got here.” She stated her goal is to write her storyteller’s story so that it touches people and they can see themselves in it. The storytellers come from countries all over the world including Syria, Yemen, Vietnam, South Korea, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, Honduras, Israel, Mali, Egypt, South Africa, Peru, Saudi Arabia, and India. One husband and wife participating as storytellers believe that the Facing Project is a great opportunity saying, “It is our duty to share our culture.”

To capture a visual expression of each story, photography interns are providing portrait photos for each of the storytellers and authors which will be compiled with the stories and published in a book to be presented at a book launch and live event on May 11th. The live event will include dramatic readings of the stories by theater students, artwork expressions of the stories by student artists, and video renditions of the stories by students in Black and Gold Productions Video Club.

MCC faculty have strengthened a partnership with Genysis PACE, elderly care services by coming together during the holidays. PACE participants and staff enjoyed a full concert of holiday songs by MCC Chamber Singers headed by Dr. Matthew Packer. In addition, Santa and Mrs. Claus made a surprise visit to Genesys PACE during the participant holiday party. These special guests were recruited by Dr. Brian Ivory, Director, MCC Honors College. Laura Ruffin, Professor of Psychology, also visited Genesys PACE with her psychology students and presented custom-designed memory boxes to encourage memories. Many conversations, common bonds and tears were shared between PACE participants and students. (Credits: Lea Anne Ivory, Writer and Photos)
Learning through Cultural Exchange

Developmental Reading and Writing students had the opportunity to use their reading and writing skills to engage in cross-cultural exchange at the Flint Islamic Center. Students from Debra Gibes’ Academic Literacy course used picture books with Muslim based themes for inter-faith dialogues with the patrons at the center. Writing students from Bill Reich’s English 099 ALP course interviewed the patrons to learn more about their lives. The students captured their stories into memoirs which will be shared in a published format later this summer.

Faculty and students alike expressed that they gained a deeper understanding of inter-faith connections and cross-cultural communication through this exchange. The comments from the students express their depth of learning. One student in Professor Reich’s class stated, “I think that most of us came away from the experience having relearned that we all should treat others, no matter their race or religion, how we would like to be treated.” A student in Academic Literacy stated, “I think that more students should be given the opportunity to learn about different cultures and religions in this up-close and personal manner.” Students saw the opportunity as replicating an exchange program. “I really appreciated being able to visit such a beautiful center and speak with those whose experiences had been so different from my own.”

“I think that more students should be given the opportunity to learn about different cultures and religions in this up-close and personal manner.”

Keeping the Flu Away

First year Nursing students used their skills to help keep the community healthy by administering 101 flu vaccinations in 4 hours to volunteers at a local hospital. Under the supervision of clinical instructors Paula Harris and Lisa Gajda-Gutzman, students were responsible for administering flu vaccines, educating recipients on side effects, and screening for contraindications to the vaccine at a Volunteer Flu Clinic. The coordinator of the flu vaccination clinic shared her thanks, “Thank you so much for taking on the Volunteer Flu Shot Clinic yesterday. It appears that your students did a fabulous job. Please pass on our thanks for making it a great day!”

(Credits: Paula Harris, Writer and Photos)