



**Moving Forward Together**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2017-18

MCLA





# From President Birge

Dear Friends:

I am both energized and excited by all that has taken place this year and all that is ahead for our thriving campus. In a year marked by a number of firsts, continuing innovation, and extraordinary opportunities, we have built upon established traditions and added new practices to advance and enhance our campus. We have much to look forward to.

From our very first travel study course to Cuba, which offered students a unique immersion experience as they stayed with local families, to the 10th time a class headed across the pond to England—MCLA students are exploring and making an impact as they form new friendships and are introduced to new cultures and their histories. Travel study this year also included a trip to a rural village in Haiti, where students recognized just how very different life in other parts of the globe can be, while a journey to Paris introduced students to French art and culture.

Closer to home, visits to experience San Francisco's LGBTQIA+ history and a Civil Rights bus tour through the American South further enriched our students' understanding of the world around them. All of the trips were eye-opening, life-changing, and unforgettable.

With the hope that more students might enjoy experiences such as these, my wife Lisa and I have established the Birge Travel Scholarship, to help defray the costs of such travel. Two additional new scholarships also were established this year—in honor of two of this year's honorary degree recipients—the late State Rep. Gailanne M. Cariddi, and our retiring executive vice president, Denise Richardello, who concludes her 40-year career with the College this summer.

Last semester saw record-breaking involvement at MCLA's Undergraduate Research Conference. This 16th annual event attracted more than 250 students, mentored by 45 faculty, who shared their work via some 150 presentations that included performances, artwork, papers, and posters. And, we held our second annual Innovation and Entrepreneurship Challenge, where student finalists pitched their original and inventive ideas to area business leaders. The winner received a \$10,000 prize; a funded, 10-week internship; advising and space to continue developing her idea in downtown North Adams at Lever, Inc., a center for entrepreneurship and social innovation.

MCLA continues to gain strength through a nearly \$2.2 million Title III grant from the U.S. Department of Education, which supports student success and retention. MCLA also was the recipient of a number of important arts grants that put the

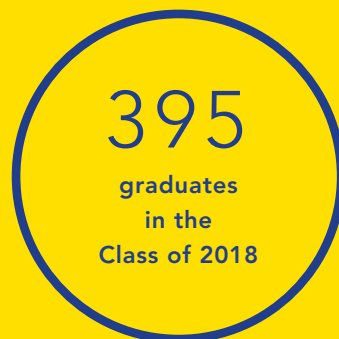
campus at the helm of several key projects. This funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the United States Department of Education will serve to build creative capacity through entrepreneurship, innovation, education and the creative economy.

This year I was pleased to be appointed to the Lever, Inc., Board of Directors and 1Berkshire Board of Directors. My participation on these two local boards augments the College's outreach to the greater community as we continue to maintain—and expand—vital connections in the Berkshires and work to elevate economic growth all over the region. Associations with organizations such as Lever and 1Berkshire are of utmost importance as MCLA sends an increasing number of students throughout Berkshire County to serve internships and find employment once they graduate.

Over the past year, MCLA added a number of new degree programs to support the needs of Berkshire County employers like Berkshire Health Systems, including our Health Sciences major, which prepares students to pursue advanced study in a variety of health fields; and the Community Health Education major, which addresses a growing, local demand for health care education.

As the 1Berkshire Board seeks to draw increased numbers of tourists to visit our cultural community, new Fine & Performing Arts programs—which include concentrations in design and studio art, and minors in dance, design, and music production—will further support businesses and venues dedicated to the arts. And, our addition this year of MCLA's entrepreneurship minor also complements the work done at Lever, which helps to launch high-growth, high-potential companies that will create jobs. In addition, those who graduate with a concentration in MCLA's new electrical engineering program will be prepared to support employment needs for new, and more established, technology-based companies such as General Dynamics in Pittsfield.

Already a public liberal arts college with an excellent reputation for providing an affordable, high-quality education, we continued our quest for excellence through our strategic planning process. This strategic plan represents a call to action, and charges all of us to challenge our assumptions, think creatively about how we approach our work, and act strategically as we pursue the shared goal of making MCLA a better, stronger, and more diverse institution.





Over the next five years, we will create new educational opportunities for our students and new professional opportunities for our faculty and staff. We will emphasize the importance of communication; we will share MCLA's story and values more widely.

As part of this planning, our conversations on diversity, equity, and inclusion continue. Over the past 12 months, the result was a number of changes across the campus, which you will read more about in this report. It's only the beginning. At the suggestion of our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force, we conducted a nationwide search for someone to lead these efforts. In February, we welcomed Dr. Christopher MacDonald-Dennis to campus in the newly created role of chief diversity officer.

This summer some more new faces will join MCLA's leadership team, as Dr. Emily Williams will be our new vice president of academic affairs, and Bob Ziomek '89 fills the position of vice president of advancement. And, we are thrilled that yet another alumna of the College, Gina Puc '07, will assume a new role. Formerly our director of admission, she will step up as our new dean of enrollment management and community relations. We also welcomed two new members to the MCLA Board of Trustees. They are Brenda Burdick, whose specialties lie in business communications and marketing, as well as public, community, and government relations; and Frederick J. Keator, who brings his financial expertise to campus.

We also continued our exceptional speakers series with lectures that included political expert Jeffrey Toobin, a senior analyst for CNN and staff writer for *The New Yorker*; Emmy Award-winner Byron Pitts, co-anchor of ABC's *Nightline*; and NBC News contributor Clint Watts, a former FBI agent, foreign policy and

cyber security expert. And, we were delighted to spend some time with internationally acclaimed poet Ocean Vuong, who presented us with a reading.

At Commencement, we were pleased to hear from aerospace engineer and NASA astronaut Stephanie Wilson, who grew up right here in the Berkshires. A shining example of what heights our students might attain through hard work, education, and a determination to achieve their goals, she advised this year's graduates to "choose something that captures your heart, as well as your mind—for both your heart and your mind must be challenged and engaged."

Since last fall, Lisa and I have had the pleasure of becoming better acquainted with MCLA faculty, staff, and administrators through a new monthly "tradition"—themed gatherings where we share food, drinks, and some fun surprises. Likewise, I hope to see you on campus soon. Please join us as we support our students' learning and growth through a wide variety of experiences. For those who love sports, come join our growing base of fans. There's something for everyone, including our newest athletic team, men's lacrosse. Competition is slated to begin during the 2019-20 academic year. Come, take in a game, attend a lecture, attend an alumni event, view some great art, listen to a concert, or watch one of our exceptional theatre productions. I look forward to seeing you!

Sincerely,



James F. Birge, Ph.D.

President

# You Asked, We Answered:

## MCLA task force helps implement equity initiatives

Over the past year, MCLA has implemented a number of changes across the campus to make the College welcoming and comfortable for all students. The conversation and action is ongoing, with new strategies that continue to develop. At the heart of this transformation is the new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Task Force, chaired by Michael Obasohan '11, assistant director of diversity programs and MCLA's Multicultural Education Resource Center, and Dr. Kerri Nicoll, assistant professor of sociology.

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Last year, Obasohan and Nicoll, along with Angela Hunt '18 and Sychiah Johnson '17, traveled to UMASS-Amherst to attend an intergroup dialogue program that focused on effective listening. This technique may be used in the classroom, and with student leaders, to help guide difficult discussions such as those that center on issues of race or gender.

Last August, 15 faculty and staff members were trained in the technique, presently in its pilot stage. That effort continued to move forward in January, when two UMASS facilitators

came to campus to present two-day training sessions with faculty and staff. MCLA also has incorporated diversity and acceptance into its First Year Experience programming.

As faculty and staff learn more ways to be inclusive in the classroom, in their offices, and in the way they think about and communicate with students, MCLA has added a feature to our student information system that allows them to select the pronouns they prefer to use, as well as their preferred names. In addition, some members of the administration and the

staff have volunteered to include their preferred pronouns with their email signatures and on their name tags, with the intent of making this practice the norm.

To protect the well-being and safety issues of transgender students in particular, and in support of a positive environment, all students may replace their IDs upon request in the event that they desire to replace their birth name with another that they choose.

In response to requests from students, MCLA last summer converted all single-use bathrooms

on campus to gender-neutral restrooms, outfitting them with lockable doors and signs that indicate they may be used by anyone.

Previously, there were no single-use bathrooms on the first, second, and third floors of the Amsler Campus Center. However, MCLA has converted a former multi-stall restroom to a gender-neutral restroom, with locks installed on the outer door.

MCLA is open to listening to all students' needs, and to responding to those needs to make experiences at the College better for everyone. This work will move forward as we continue to build campus awareness on issues around diversity.

15  
faculty and staff  
members trained in  
effective listening

## Dr. Christopher MacDonald-Dennis:

### 'This is me'



This spring, MCLA welcomed our new chief diversity officer, Christopher MacDonald-Dennis, who was selected after a nationwide search. The addition of his new position was a result of a Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Task Force finding that, although acceptance and inclusion are everyone's job, the campus needed someone to lead the effort.

According to MacDonald-Dennis, it is critical to weave diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the institution. "It can't just be a checked box," he explains. A connector on campus, he works with faculty and staff on ways to work with different groups of students on issues such as how to better listen to one another, and the best ways to resolve disagreements.

"It's not easy; we are a really diverse campus," MacDonald-Dennis says. "As a public institution, we are to trying educate across race, class, sexual orientation—all axioms of difference. My job is to help the

institution look at how we serve everyone. College is the place to confront issues we were taught not to talk about when we were young. Here, we get to interrupt that practice, and actually deal with it."

A proud alumnus of Massachusetts public colleges, MacDonald-Dennis is a graduate of Framingham State University and UMASS-Amherst, where he earned his bachelor's and doctoral degrees, respectively.

Previous to his arrival at MCLA, he served in positions at two highly selective private liberal arts colleges. "However, I was never of that world," MacDonald-Dennis explains. "The liberal arts opened my world. I was a working-class kid from Revere. I grew up in the projects. I was the first in my family to go to college.

"This school is about access. This school is about justice. MCLA is home. These are my students. This is me."

# Prepared for Success:

## MCLA adds diverse lineup of new majors, minors, and academic programs

It's an exciting time to be at MCLA with myriad new programs that prepare students for tomorrow's changing workforce.

First, our Biology Department rolled out two new Bachelor of Science degree programs in health sciences and in community health education, along with two new concentrations—in pre-medical professions and pre-veterinary.

As the year moved forward, MCLA continued to initiate even more offerings, including the Computer Science Department's concentration in electrical engineering, and a new entrepreneurship minor within the Department of Business Administration. Our Fine & Performing Arts Department was particularly prolific, with the introduction of new concentrations in design and studio art, as well as minors in dance, design, and music production.

As a result, MCLA students have more options than ever before!

11

new programs have been added since 2016, including programs in Health Sciences and the Arts.





## Grad Programs Attract Top Talent in the Berkshires and Beyond

### What makes a good graduate program?

Dedicated faculty, recruitment initiatives that meet prospective students where they are, and an ever-evolving curriculum that aims to meet the needs of local employers and industry trends. MCLA's graduate and continuing education programs check all those boxes—and more. New outreach and recruitment methods for all programs, including Facebook Live info sessions where people ask questions in real time, and in-person info sessions located in cozy spots like Dottie's Coffeehouse in Pittsfield, where students can meet one-on-one with an admission counselor, have helped MCLA build impressive student cohorts for our graduate programs. "It's important to create opportunities that busy, working professionals and nontraditional students can easily access," says Dr. Joshua Mendel, director of recruitment and outreach for MCLA's Division of Graduate and Continuing Education.



## Master of Business Administration

Recruiting efforts continue to result in strong MBA cohorts. Started in 2011, the MBA program has graduated more than 80 students so far.

"The word is out in Berkshire County about the quality of our program," says Mendel. "Many of our MBA students have received promotions, started their own businesses, or obtained salary increases." Those success stories create a word-of-mouth effect in the area, leading other local professionals to MCLA.

MBA Program Director Dr. Nancy Ovitsky recently spearheaded a reworking of the MBA program's final elective course, which was split into one credit courses in subjects like leadership and presentation skills, further preparing graduates to excel in the professional world. "Our MBA program, begun in 2011, continues to attract a diverse group of talented people from multiple industries who are hoping to advance their careers in our regional economy," Ovitsky says. "We regularly learn that our graduates are earning promotions in their current careers or successfully seeking new opportunities in the workplace. We also have great support from the local business community, which provides speakers, facilitators, and advice for our students both in and out of the classroom."

## Williams and Cornell Undergrads Choose MCLA for their MBA



### Mohammad Rashid '20

Originally from Ghana, Rashid graduated from Williams College with an economics degree, then went down the road to MCLA for his MBA. He plans to pursue a career in corporate management, and eventually open his own business. "I am growing as a student and gaining a unique working knowledge of the ever-changing global business models and strategies," he says. "I would definitely recommend the program to others, specifically working professionals."



### Suzy Konecky '20

A Cornell University grad and former Cricket Creek Farm cheese maker, Konecky turned to MCLA's MBA program to enrich her business and financial skills as the new development director of the Buxton School, a private boarding and day school in Williamstown. "I didn't really consider any other places because MCLA is right here. It's so convenient," she says. "The classes are on every other Saturday. This program works really well for someone who is also working full time and leading an active life."



## **Master of Education**

Students who major in education as undergrads now can stay an extra year and earn both a bachelor's and master's degree in education. MCLA just accepted an inaugural group of seniors who will be on campus for their +1 year starting next summer. This pipeline program allows students a chance to earn their master of education focusing on future work with individuals with disabilities or in inclusion classrooms; ultimately, students can earn their master of education and a second license in teaching children with moderate disabilities.

The decision to focus on teaching those with learning differences is a direct response to local superintendents reporting a need for more educators with those specific qualifications, Mendel says.







## Leadership Academy

Leadership Academy continues to draw educators from many states (particularly the New York metro area) for its intensive curriculum that combines a two-week residency with online work. In 2017, the Leadership Academy was 60 strong; it continues to grow today.

Built for educators who aspire to lead educational organizations, the program offers a blend of social, political, and academic theories and practices that examine current trends in public education. Students who complete the program earn a Principal license and have the opportunity to add the Superintendent license. MCLA also has a relationship with Texas A&M where Leadership Academy students can transfer nine credits to a doctorate program there.

Leadership Academy graduates continue to recommend the program to their coworkers, and many educators have received accolades for their work—in 2017, Jeremy Rich, principal of Barringer Road Elementary in Ilion, N.Y., was named “principal of the year” by the School Administrators Association of New York State.

# Teamwork

Berkshire Community College (BCC) President Ellen Kennedy '83 and MCLA President James F. Birge sign an articulation agreement that allows students who have completed their associate's degree in physical therapist assistant (PTA) at BCC to complete a Bachelor of Science degree in health sciences with a concentration in pre-physical therapy at MCLA.



# Intersecting Disciplines:

## MCLA's Berkshire Cultural Resource Center

How can arts and culture intersect with chemistry, history, and sociology? Within MCLA's Berkshire Cultural Resource Center (BCRC), they do—leading to high-impact learning that embraces the liberal arts.

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BCRC Director Michelle Daly has worked to expand those opportunities over the past year, finding space for cross-disciplinary engagement that goes beyond simply pointing out the ways different concepts can often have important common ground. Through its programming and cross-disciplinary work, BCRC is creating rich opportunities for students, faculty, and the greater community that are a hallmark of a liberal arts education.

Take "Freedom from Fear/Yellow Bowl Project," the exhibit and related programming by Setsuko Winchester on display at MCLA's Gallery 51 last fall. Winchester's work—creating 120 yellow tea bowls representing the 120,000 Japanese-Americans who were placed in internment camps during World War II, then photographing those bowls sitting

quietly at the sites of those internment camps, "was proof of concept," says Daly, creating opportunities for MCLA classes to look at Winchester's work in ways that tap dance across fields of study.

It's art that raises profound questions, and connects to the current events of today. It also connected students directly to Winchester, who visited classes and hosted a gallery talk.

Erica Barretto '18, an English/communications major, experienced the exhibit from the lens of three classes—a senior capstone course on race, a Writing in the Arts course for which she served as a teaching assistant (TA), and her Fundamentals of Arts Management course. Two of those courses also featured class visits with Winchester.

Through the process, "I got to engage with faculty and students from different disciplines," Barretto says, "which was really rewarding. You get more out of something when you get to hear other voices and interact with different people [outside your major]."

As a TA, Barretto gathered resources for a writing prompt: "Who gets to be an American?" The query centered around the poignant questions raised by Winchester's work. "They had a lot of difficulty with it at first," she said. "But once they finalized it and continued writing, they saw it really complemented the course. I liked that they had a challenge—when they overcame the challenge they were rewarded, and it expanded their perspective."



# Downtown Collaborations

DownStreet Art continues to be at the core of major programming for both BCRC and the City of North Adams, with a new slate of themed Thursdays beginning in June. The 2017 designation of North Adams as a cultural district by the Massachusetts Arts Council has helped solidify that relationship and reinforce the importance of shared—or concurrent—arts programming, says Daly.

New North Adams transplants are connecting with the city's art scene through BCRC, too. The artist Gerald Sheffield spent this past spring at 36 Chase & Barns, a new artist residency in North Adams where he created work for his exhibition, *pride* which opened at MCLA Gallery 51 this May. Arthur De Bow, formerly director of exhibitions at the Oregon College of Art and Craft, has found a new home in North Adams—and a new job as curator of MCLA Gallery 51.

Looking to the future, Daly says she expects to “create more experiences for students to have interactive, personal contact with the artists we’re working with.” Being able to hear from a professional artist—who often works across disciplines in their own professional life—opens students up to new possibilities and ideas in a way that goes beyond class work.



# A Focus on Outreach:

## MCLA's Center for Service and Citizenship

MCLA students again contributed thousands of hours toward community service projects this year, from grade-school mentoring programs to citywide group projects to a hunger awareness campaign here on campus.

In April, more than 170 MCLA students and community partners came together for the annual Spring Day of Service; in addition to traditional service spots like the Berkshire Food Project community gardens, new sites included the UNO Community Center on River Street, the Fort Massachusetts site by the former Price Chopper in North Adams, and the Manice Education Center in Savoy.

The idea that a well-rounded community citizen contributes to their community through service is part of MCLA's DNA: during the last academic year, 446 students completed 2,676 collective service hours through the Center for Service, according to Director Spencer Moser. That number does not count other projects

completed in classrooms, club activities, or as part of other initiatives.

The value of service often carries forward after a program comes to a close. Take the center's "Mentoring for Tomorrow" program, which matches MCLA students with students at Colegrove Elementary School in North Adams who are in need of a positive, adult role model. Coordinated by MCLA student Samantha DeCarlo '21, the pairs "spend time talking together, hanging out, building a rapport, and having a role in these young people's lives," says Moser. "What we hear from schools is it is a sustaining relationship—it's what some of the kids need to come back to school the next day."



As the spring semester waned, the MCLA students—and their Colegrove counterparts—asked if there was any way to continue the relationships they've enjoyed, and Moser is working with North Adams Public Schools to find one.

In its third year, this mentoring program is one from a "menu" of programs the Center for Services collaborates on with North Adams schools. Other initiatives include an after-school art program, college enrichment endeavors for teens, and activities that develop writing skills for middle school students. Each program focuses on the



idea of access to and familiarity with college. If students "are comfortable at an early age with the concept of college," Moser says, they're that much more likely to aspire to higher education.

Service and outreach also relate to one's own community. During the 2017-18 academic year, students working with the Center for Service did a "soft rollout" of new initiatives that respond to food insecurity on campus, including an already-active student food pantry located in Moser's office, and a community meal card that anyone can contribute to for those who would prefer a meal through campus dining halls. These efforts will continue next year with expanded outreach. This academic year, they were coordinated by students Julie Gambill '20 and Julianna Henault '21.

Moser says he is particularly proud of the student leaders who worked for the Center for Service this academic year, as they coordinated service projects and did other office-related tasks.

"There is a cadre of service warriors here," Moser says. "They have pride in what they're doing; they're consuming space in a really positive way." Community Engagement Coordinator Christopher Hantman '14, who manages the students, "is a big part of developing this camaraderie. They're creating a center for themselves and other students. To me, that is as important as anything else. That can go really far. I think it sustains a lot of excitement and passion."



## Service Warriors

The student team in the Center for Service meets every Tuesday, helps coordinate and manage the center's programming and assists with other tasks. They are:

Bridget Broyles '19

Sam De Carlo '19

Taylor Doyle '18

Lawrence Edwards '18

Julie Gambill '20

Julianna Hennault '21

Bri Higgins '20

Elly McMeniman '21

Casey Messina '18

Connor Ogborn '19

Mariza Sfakianaki '18

Reagan Smith '19

Taylor Weise '18

# Prepared for Success:



## Expanding internship opportunities and career connections at CSSE

Since he arrived at MCLA in mid-2017, Career Development Specialist Dale Osef has helped change the way the Center for Student Success and Engagement looks at student career development, internships, and more. With new community outreach initiatives, a significant software overhaul, and plenty of face-to-face events, MCLA is working hard to ensure students are ready for the work force after graduation.

Just ask Shannon Prouty '21, a rising sophomore who will begin an internship with Berkshire Health Systems (BHS) this fall, working with patient records and getting a sense of all the different work that goes into running a hospital. After an in-person meeting at Berkshire Medical Center with the hospital's chief information officer, William A. Young, "she was hired on the spot," says Osef.

Meetings like these are just one way MCLA responds to the needs of local employers--BHS reached out to MCLA, Osef says, asking for qualified interns interested in working in the medical field. Prouty, who is from Leicester, Mass.,

ultimately wants to become a neurologist; previous work experience at a hospital in Worcester put her ahead of the pack as a candidate. "I enjoy working with patient information, and it's something I know how to do," she says.

Prouty also will design her internship before she arrives—BHS will train her, and she'll create a curriculum for herself and for future interns, which will include benchmarks and goals. The psychology/chemistry double major (with a concentration in biochemistry and a minor in math, by the way) has wanted to be a doctor since she was 7. Undergraduate experience working in health care will help her along the way.

"The IT department at Berkshire Health Systems is very excited that Shannon will be joining us as an intern this fall," Young says. "We hope that she will be the first in a series of MCLA interns to work with us through the Internship Program. This is an exciting time for IT in health care, and we welcome the opportunity to share our knowledge and experience with Shannon."

Back on campus, students are invited to attend workshops that hone their job interview skills, refine their resumes, and provide elements that will help in the process, including free professional head shots.

And, new career software called The Career Trail Online puts internship and job listings in one location. It includes professional development training and assistance, and places for students to post resumes and search for jobs, and for employers to search for recent graduates. Through The Career Trail Online, students can make career counseling appointments at CSSE and directly connect with MCLA alumni or an employer who is willing serve as a mentor.

"Students have the opportunity to connect with international employers like Wells Fargo, and also may apply to local organizations like Barton Associates and Berkshire Business Interns," Osef says.

In spring 2018, The Career Trail included listings for more than 30 individual internship opportunities—all specifically seeking MCLA students, who are known in the area as hard workers who are hungry for experience and opportunities. Local businesses and industries "are really enthused about MCLA students," Osef says.



## Record number of students present research

MCLA stands out among other undergraduate institutions because of the abundant opportunities our students enjoy to present their research, including at our Annual Undergraduate Research Conference (URC), which we hold each April. With nearly 250 students participating this year, it was our largest such conference to date!

For many, it was only the beginning. Six students headed to Burlington, Vt., this spring with biology professors Dr. Anne Goodwin and Dr. Eric Doucette, assistant professor of biology, to participate in the Northeast Natural History Conference, where each presented faculty-mentored research about organisms found in the region. And, as the sponsor of the Massachusetts Beta Chapter of the Alpha Chi Honor Society, Dr. Graziana Ramsden, professor of modern languages, took five students to the national convention, which took place this year in Portland, Ore.

Also over the spring semester, students participated in the Massachusetts Statewide Undergraduate Research Conference, also known as the "CURC," at UMASS-Amherst. The MCLA contingent included Tianna Darling '18, who discussed her research titled, "The Impact of Soviet Secrecy on the Space Race," which was a product of a recent independent study course.

First-year student and environmental studies major Noah Henkenius '21 presented his poster, "Sediment Transport and Salinity of the Hoosic River" not only at the CURC, but also at the College's conference and the Northeast Natural History Conference. Part of his work is a continuation of ongoing research he conducts with several other students, as they determine if the dams near North Adams impact how sediment flows throughout the river.

In addition to providing valuable public speaking experience, Henkenius says it was important to present at all three conferences to obtain numerous and differing perspectives from students and faculty at other institutions. "I was asked if snow plowing processes could contribute to higher salinity in the river in some areas, but not others. Since this was a popular question, it is a variable I hope to investigate with the group, further into the future," he explains.

Last fall, students traveled with faculty to the Mansfield University of Pennsylvania with URC organizers Dr. Justin Golub and Dr. Jenna Sciuto, where they participated in the Northeast Regional Undergraduate Research, Scholarly and Creative Activity Conference (NERURSCA).



There, they presented research that ranged from posters such as "VR Medical Diagnostics: A Teaching Tool" and "Statistical Prediction Model for Human Intelligence Tasks" to presentations, like "Too Little, Too Late: Is Political Representation Suffering due to Suffrage Laws?"

"NERURSCA is a great opportunity for students to present their work to a wider audience, and to see the research done by students at our sister COPLAC (Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges) schools," says Golub, who chairs MCLA's undergraduate research program. "Students enjoy the opportunity to travel, and they receive excellent feedback from students and faculty from other institutions."

Sciuto, who serves as associate chair, agrees. "The small size of the conference really allowed the students to learn from each other, make connections, and receive helpful suggestions about their work."



54

# Model United Nations Crisis

## The Malaysian Emergency

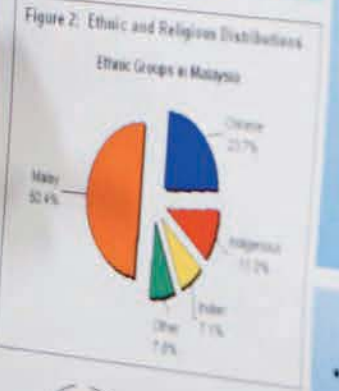
Major General Roy Urquhart: Drew Weine

### Goal of the Malaysian Executive Council

- Secure British commercial interests
- Isolate and try to eliminate the Communist presence in Malaysia

### Crisis Background

- After World War Two, an Indonesian Communist Party, the Indonesian National Revolution, and the Indonesian Communist Party resisted the British presence in the region.
- When the British reoccupied Malaysia, some former guerillas embraced the outlawed Malaysian Communist Party, and united against British rule.
- By 1948 the Malaysian Communist guerillas were attacking the British presence in Malaysia.



# MCLA Welcomes:



Burdick



Keator

## New Trustees

In 2018 we welcomed two new members to MCLA's Board of Trustees, when Brenda Burdick and Frederick J. Keator joined the campus to help advance the work of the College.

As the senior manager of marketing and public relations at General Dynamics Mission Systems in Pittsfield, Mass., Burdick brings more than 25 years of experience in business communications and marketing, as well as public, community, and government relations. Keator, the managing partner of Keator Group, LLC, in Lenox, Mass., has been recognized by numerous organizations as one of America's top independent financial advisors.

MCLA President James Birge was pleased to welcome Burdick and Keator to the Board, and is grateful for the valuable expertise they now will contribute to the campus community.

"Through her extensive community service throughout the Berkshires, which includes her work with the Berkshire Compact for Education and as a corporator on the MCLA Foundation, Brenda Burdick is dedicated to helping others who live in this region," Birge said. "Frederick Keator brings a wealth of knowledge to MCLA. Over the years, the Keator family has been a great supporter of the College. I look forward to continued growth and the many accomplishments ahead for the College, as we work with these two new members of our Board of Trustees."



Puc



Ziomek



Williams

## New Leadership

This summer MCLA will welcome two new faces to the College’s leadership team, as Gina Puc ’07 will move from her position as director of admission to assume her new role as our dean of enrollment management and community relations. In addition to Puc, alumnus Bob Ziomek ’89 also will serve his alma mater when he returns to campus as the vice president of advancement. And, Dr. Emily Williams, who brings with her experience from another COPLAC (Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges) institution, will assume the role of the vice president of academic affairs.

Puc, who most recently has served as MCLA’s director of admission, began her career at the College upon her graduation 11 years ago. Ziomek comes to the College from Western New England University, where he has been the assistant vice president for development. Williams has served as the vice provost for curriculum and assessment at Ramapo College of New Jersey. We look forward to working with these three new campus leaders!

## New Faculty

### **Bridget Gormalley ’09, physics**

B.S., physics, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts  
M.S., applied physics, Columbia University

### **Dr. George Salam Hamaoui, biology**

B.A., microbiology, Ohio Wesleyan University  
Ph.D, microbiology, University of Massachusetts

### **Dr. Hannah Noel, English/communications**

B.A., American studies, Williams College  
M.S., American culture, University of Michigan  
Ph.D, American culture, University of Michigan

### **Dr. Victoria Papa, English/communications**

B.A., English, Saint Anselm College  
M.S., English, State University of New York  
Ph.D, English, Northeastern University

### **Dr. Nicole Portner, biology**

B.S., biology, Howard University  
M.P.H., public health, Florida International University  
Ph.D, biology, Florida International University

### **Marianne Young, education**

B.A., English and secondary education,  
University of Rhode Island  
M.A., educational leadership,  
Vermont College of Norwich University



# Across the Globe:

## Travel study courses in Cuba and beyond

This year's travel study courses featured MCLA's first-ever trip to Cuba, and marked the tenth time that Dr. Rosanne Denhard, professor of English, brought her students on a tour of England. Also over the spring break, students visited popular destinations such as France and Japan, and explored California's "Queer San Francisco," as well as the American South, where they embarked on a Civil Rights bus tour.

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Haiti



Paris



London



Cuba

## Cuba

At the University of Havana are (from left): Faly Elhard '18, Dr. David Cupery, Victoria Muñoz '19, Charlier Weissfellner '18, Mike McAndrew '18, Cassie Lavoie '18, Sam Payne '18, Drew Weisse '18, Henry Ayles '18, Rose Borgnis '17, Eamon Hanlon '20 and Jake Vitali '20

## Haiti

Pictured with some new friends in Haiti are (from left): Katie Howe '20, Abbie Walsh '19, Celine Manigbas '19, Lindsey Vachon '20, Sam Johnson '21, Sabrina Superneau-Gilman '18, and Nick Bassett '19, with some new friends in Haiti.

## London

At Westminster Abbey are (back row, from left): Lauren Mangiardi '19, Katlyn Breitenbach '20, Aryel Brosnan '18, Katherine Duval '19, Caitlin Mayes '19, and (front row, from left) Dr. Rosanne Denhard, Tayler Wiese '18, Brianna Lamb '18, Erin Carney '19, KiLee Fortier '18, and Michael Masley Hannett '19.

## Paris

At the Place de la Concorde are (from left, front): Meghan Deluca '19, Makayla Keeney '21, Hunter Schrade '20, and (back) Melyssa Fortini '19, Kamryn Dunton '19, Maggie Dobson '18, Sabrina Dudish '18, Lindsey Rosa '21, TJ Jones '20, and Michele VanWormer '18 at the Place de la Concorde.



# Paying it Forward:

## Now alumni, former student athletes begin careers at the College

With six recently graduated student athletes working on campus, it's a great time to be at MCLA. From Athletics to Advancement, these young alumni are showing our undergraduates that, in addition to providing an exceptional education, the campus also is a wonderful place to begin their careers.

Amanda Meczywor '15 is an annual giving associate in our Office of Institutional Advancement, where her responsibilities include managing the College's Phonathon program, assisting with student philanthropy, and the young alumni giving initiative. She says the opportunity to work with students and



new graduates is one of her favorite parts of her job!

It was great to be welcomed back to MCLA's tight-knit community, where she enjoys close relationships with her co-workers and the students who are employed in her office, Meczywor said. A former softball player, she adds, "Your teammates become family and friends for life, and the support among all the athletes is amazing. You always see groups of athletes supporting each other, on the field and in the classroom. I was always so humbled by the amount of support the entire MCLA community gives to the student athletes."



Eamonn Andre '17, who played baseball for the Trailblazers, now works as the team's pitching coach. In addition to assisting Head Coach Mike Gladu with various baseball decisions, his job involves managing the pitchers as a group, and developing programs in conditioning and throwing.

However, "I'd have to say my favorite part about my job is being around baseball. I love the game of baseball and I want to be around it all my life," Andre says. He agrees with Meczywor: "The best part of being a student athlete was the relationships that I built with my teammates and the lifelong friendships I've gained from it. Also, playing baseball for four years wasn't too bad."







## Athletic Highlights



### New Fitness Facility

MCLA soon will have a brand-new, state-of-the-art fitness center and expanded sports medicine room, three times the size of our existing space, filled with new equipment for all to enjoy. It also will include new, additional office space for the Department of Athletics, bringing it into one, centrally located area.

The more spacious sports medication room will be outfitted with ice baths, therapy tables, and rehabilitation equipment. Once completed, this space will be a place where athletic trainers may treat our student athletes for a variety of injuries.

The new fitness center will feature cardio and strength training equipment, as well as an elevated walking track. Work on the project is expected to conclude in fall 2019.

“This is going to be a phenomenal asset to the College, not only on the athletics side, but for many potential students who are interested in attending MCLA,” says Director of Athletics Laura Mooney. “Health and wellness is a focus right now, and a lot of students want to know that they can take care of themselves when they go away to college. This facility will showcase that.”



### New Team: Men's Lacrosse

Following many conversations among multiple groups on campus, and during strategic planning, MCLA will expand its Athletics Program with the addition of a new men's lacrosse team. Men's lacrosse is a natural choice after the successful establishment of our women's lacrosse team over recent years. The fastest growing sport in the country, men's lacrosse is also of interest to a number of prospective MCLA students, many of whom play this game in high schools throughout the Berkshires, the New England region, and beyond.

MCLA has begun the recruitment process for a men's lacrosse coach, who in turn will work to attract student athletes and develop a club program this coming 2018-19 academic year, with the goal of fielding a team to begin play in 2019-20. In addition, MCLA will enhance other existing sports teams during the upcoming academic year as we seek to hire additional, full-time coaches, starting with women's lacrosse and baseball.



Womens Head Basketball Coach Loren Stock

## MCLA Earns an 'A' for Women Coaching Women

The recent report from Tucker Center for Girls & Women in Sport marked the first time in the six-year history of its Women in College Coaching Report Card research series that any institution received an 'A' for having 100 percent of its female teams led by women head coaches. And this time it wasn't just one, but three colleges—including MCLA—that made the grade.

According to Director of Athletics Laura Mooney, at the time the research was gathered for the report, all of the College's women's teams were coached by women.

"Women are in the minority in athletics leadership, so it's really important that we are empowering and mentoring women in those ways," Mooney says. "Blazing trails in these areas and showing young women that they can grow up and serve in leadership positions is important. It gives them confidence. This mindset really can change the industry as a whole."







# Food for Thought:

## MCLA welcomes world-class lecturers

MCLA consistently welcomes outstanding speakers to campus, and the 2017-18 academic year was no exception.



Fall lectures included political expert Jeffrey Toobin, a senior analyst for CNN and staff writer for *The New Yorker*. He presented "Inside the Secret World of the Supreme Court" at the Seventh Annual Michael S. and Kitty Dukakis Public Policy Lecture. Our

Hardman Lecture was delivered by multiple Emmy Award-winner Byron Pitts, co-anchor of ABC's *Nightline*, who presented a talk titled "Mass Media and Democratic Governance: The American Experience." In addition, Joanna Ballantine, vice president of The Trustees of Reservations for the western region of Massachusetts, presented the



Elizabeth and Lawrence Vadhais Environmental Issues Lecture on "A Century of Preserving Nature and Culture for Future Generations: What's Next?"

This spring, we were joined by NBC News contributor Clint Watts, a former FBI agent, foreign policy and cyber security expert, who delivered our spring public policy lecture, "Russian Spies, Social Media, and Fake News: An Inside Look at Russia's Cyberwarfare Campaign Against American Democracy."

And, local journalist Jenn Smith, the community engagement editor and longtime reporter



for Pittsfield's *Berkshire Eagle* and the locally owned New England Newspapers, Inc., was MCLA's Hardman Journalist-in-Residence. She presented "Preserving Local Journalism: Why Your News, Your Views, Your Voice Matters."

In addition, we had an opportunity during the spring semester to hear from internationally acclaimed poet Ocean Vuong, who presented a reading. Also an

essayist and the author

of "Night Sky with Exit Wounds," Vuong was a participant in MCLA's Visiting Writers series, coordinated by the Department of English/communications.



The Hardman lectures are made possible through the generosity of the Hardman Family Endowment. The Public Policy lecture series is made possible through the generosity of the Ruth Proud Charitable Trust. The environmental issues lecture series is named for Professor Lawrence H. Vadhais, and is sponsored by the Vadhais Endowment.

# Leading by Example in Sustainability

In recognition of our efforts to promote sustainability, MCLA was proud to receive a 2017 Leading by Example (LBE) Award from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Committed to clean energy and reducing our impacts to the environment, the College has installed numerous technologies to cut back on the resources needed to run the campus.

Over the past decade, MCLA's clean energy and sustainability initiatives resulted in a 19 percent reduction in campus greenhouse gas emissions—the equivalent of removing 232 cars from the road—despite a 14 percent growth in campus square footage. During this time, the College also expanded combined heat and power systems on campus, eliminated potable water for on-campus irrigation, and more.

Previously, the Feigenbaum Center for Science and Innovation (CSI) was awarded Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certification by the United States

Building Council (USGBC). And, with heat- and cooling-efficient devices, new windows, and digital controls that provide savings in operational costs, Bowman Hall, our high-tech classroom building, is also LEED-certified.

Other campus initiatives include a regular light bulb swap-out program for student residents, who may exchange less-efficient bulbs for LEDs. MCLA also provides academic learning opportunities with on-campus solar photovoltaic cells, and a small wind turbine for environmental studies and science program students.

MCLA's partners in these efforts include the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) and the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM).



From left are Judith Judson, commissioner of the Department of Energy Resources; Larry Behan, MCLA's vice president of administration and finance; MCLA Energy Manager George Santucci; and DCAMM Commissioner Carol Gladstone.





19  
percent reduction in  
campus greenhouse  
gas emissions  
over past 10 years





# Solving Problems, by Design

Design thinking—a methodology used to find desirable solutions to complex problems—is relatively new to academia, but it’s a practice for which MCLA professors are becoming increasingly well-known as the campus incorporates it throughout students’ curricular experiences.

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The design thinking process flips the script on a traditional class, as students are responsible for much of the standard knowledge acquisition—things typically covered in a lecture—outside of the classroom. They spend their in-class time actively working in groups to solve problems facing the field and/or our community. As such, it is a perfect classroom tool at a liberal arts school as an interdisciplinary means of problem-solving that borrows elements of ethnography, humanities, and the natural sciences, in order to gain insight and test solutions in the real world.

Although design thinking has been actively utilized in the corporate world and in social entrepreneurship circles for the past decade, its move to academia beyond a few, specialized programs, such as those at Stanford and MIT, is not as widespread.

Diane Scott, an assistant professor of arts management at MCLA, spoke to professors from across the United States and Europe this past academic year on the benefits of design thinking at Queen Margaret University in Edinburgh, Scotland, during the 36th Annual Association of Arts Administration Educators Conference.

Scott explains, “In my presentation, ‘Designing Design Thinking into Arts Administration Courses,’ I discussed the concept of design thinking, and specifically how I’ve applied it in my arts management courses at MCLA. The design thinking process lends itself particularly well to many aspects of arts management education, including marketing, community engagement, artist entrepreneurship, and cultural ecosystem studies.”

In addition, our Feigenbaum MCLA Leads Initiative, which was inspired by the leadership and innovative spirit of Armand and Donald



# Forward Thinking

Graduating senior Shannon Cahill '18 of Grafton, Mass., is on her way to a career that just got a very big boost. As the winner of MCLA's Second Annual Innovation and Entrepreneurship Challenge, Cahill will continue to build Greylock Sound, a performing arts booking and promotion agency she co-founded in December 2017.



Shannon Cahill '18 pictured with Jack Wadsworth, sponsor of MCLA's Entrepreneurial Studies Programming, and President Birge



Professor Diane Scott

Feigenbaum, centers on innovation, leadership, entrepreneurship, community development, as well as on design thinking—an important aspect of the initiative. Key components include the College's Design Lab and classroom space in downtown North Adams, the integration of design thinking into the academic environment, and a competition to inspire innovation and entrepreneurship, our annual Innovation and Entrepreneurship Challenge, held this past spring for the second consecutive year.

The Feigenbaum MCLA Leads Initiative, along with Williams College, also participated in a two-day summit on design thinking hosted at MCLA's Design Lab over the past academic year. The gathering included faculty and staff from both colleges, as well as professionals from schools including Dartmouth, Vassar, Columbia, Wesleyan University, and Amherst College.

## New grants put spotlight on MCLA in arts education, Berkshire cultural collaborations

A hub for artistic innovation, MCLA was the recipient of several important grants during the past year. These grants—from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the United States Department of Education—will serve to build creative capacity through entrepreneurship, innovation, education, and the creative economy.

MCLA was proud last fall to be awarded nearly \$740,000 from the U.S. Department of Education to support arts-integrated, professional development for Berkshire County educators, as they partner with cultural institutions and arts educators in local schools over the next four years. One of 20 national projects to be funded, MCLA's "Professional Development in Arts Education" grant is a collaborative effort between our arts management program, North Adams Public Schools, and the Berkshire Compact for Education.

According to President James F. Birge, "Collaborations such as this arts education project are part of MCLA's mission and responsibility as the Commonwealth's public liberal arts institution. We are proud to be part of this important, nationally funded grant project, which will serve as a bridge between the arts, education and the public school systems in our area."

The campus also will take the lead in the creation of an arts education blueprint for Berkshire County, thanks to a \$75,000 Art Works grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). The plan includes positioning arts education as a high leverage solution, through the development and implementation of methods designed to increase access to arts education in and out of school for area young people.

The plan will include a regional vision for a systematic approach for arts education for students in grades K-12 and beyond, for which the arts will be positioned and applied as a key regional asset in and out of school. This approach will create a vision for the role of arts education in Berkshire County, capitalizing on the region's arts and culture resources.

Another new project further serves to place MCLA in the forefront of a multitude of educational opportunities throughout the region. Thanks to a \$50,000 planning grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the College will play a principal role in the creation of a new Berkshire Humanities Council.

"This is yet another wonderful opportunity for MCLA to lead the region's humanities and cultural organizations," Birge said. "Once formed, the Council will create regional collaborations and

extend best and emerging humanities practices in teaching, learning and community engagement by utilizing new and deeper ways to connect the resources in our region."

The Council will focus on creating the model for a digital asset map, defining experiential-based learning and formalizing undergraduate research opportunities, and outlining a humanities fellowship program, which MCLA will host.

According to Dr. Lisa Donovan, MCLA professor of fine and performing arts and the principal investigator for the grant, "Across Berkshire County, we have assets in the humanities that are without comparison in other regions. This grant provides an incredible opportunity to move towards identifying, aligning and activating a regional network that will increase access and deepen possibilities for engagement for the entire Berkshire community."

Planning will conclude on June 30, after which MCLA will apply for a direct grant from the Mellon Foundation so that the plans for the Berkshire Humanities Council may be implemented.



Associate Professor  
Melanie Mowinski





# Exploring Art as a Means for Activism

**Art at MCLA has captured attention through unique programs and our auspicious location in the Berkshires. Here, in the heart of North Adams—also home to MASS MoCA and a vibrant artistic community—art brightens both our campus and the region as it beautifies, teaches, and inspires. But this year, art served yet another purpose: it was an instrument for communication and expression for varied modes of activism, which resulted in a heightened awareness of issues important to our faculty and students.**

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For Melanie Mowinski, associate professor of visual art, her venture into activism began with a single card and an idea that developed after the 2017 Presidential Inauguration. Soon, she found herself involved in a project in response to an emotionally charged political climate as she created weekly installments of “The 50 Card Project.”

Created on the College’s Vandercook proof press, the “mantra” cards—which paired inspiring quotes and images in response to political happenings of the week—were shared with interested recipients, and ultimately became an exhibition at MCLA Gallery 51.

“It seemed like a really good way to be mindful in the world, and to try to offer some hope in the form of artworks,” Mowinski said. “A big part of this was the idea that we all want liberty and justice for all.”

In addition to this political activism, MCLA Gallery 51 explored issues of immigration and racism in the United States with the “Yellow Bowl Project” exhibition, intended to bring awareness of the forced removal of Japanese-Americans to internment camps in the American West during World War II. To accomplish this, artist Setsuko Winchester created 120 yellow tea bowls, which she

photographed in installations at each of the former camp sites.

“Art can raise profound and important questions for us to consider, perhaps revealing perspectives or ideas that are new to us, even if the subject material is already known,” said Dr. Anthony Daly, associate professor of history.

The show allowed multiple departments to approach the topic from several different angles as it drew attention to the historical precedent, engaging faculty and students in English/communications, arts management, history, and political science and public policy through a number of opportunities. This included

classroom visits, where the artist involved students in a deeper exploration into the subject matter and themes of her project.

Nicole Stearns '18 uses her art to explore and challenge what it means to be an American. Her paintings, most of which are self-portraits, are both political and personal.

Born in the United States to a mother who is an immigrant from Thailand and a father whose family came to America from Eastern Europe several generations ago, "I've thought a lot about what it means to be American, and have defined that for myself," the art major explained. "Many people think that I look white. So I question the notion of what it means to label someone by their race, and how that's not always clear-cut."

"Art is an effective way to communicate ideas and information," said Emery Bibbons '20, a fine arts major who creates posters, books, cards, comics, and prints. "People naturally like looking at it, so if you do it right, and get lucky, you can have a huge impact on public consciousness."



The conversation on diversity continued when theory, politics, and the arts were united by "Diversity Fellows" Marc Boucai, Ph.D, and Reya Sehgal, whom the Department of Fine and Performing Arts invited for a two-week residency that was shared across the campus. Through visits to classrooms, performances, and workshops, the duo demonstrated ways that performance can be used as a method of communication.

MCLA's Fine and Performing Arts Department also embraced activism this year through its "We the People" theatrical theme, selected in response to the 2016 presidential election and the resulting political and social upheaval. (See more on page 41).











# Engaging Audiences:

## 2017-18 theatre season sparks conversation

In response to the 2016 Presidential Election and resulting political and social climates, the Performing Arts Department selected the 2017-18 theatrical season theme of “We the People” to provide an outlet for conversations to provide students—and the campus and greater community—with deeper insight, and to challenge audiences to ask questions about how we might improve the way we engage with one another.

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### ***Passing Strange*, Oct. 13-22**

The first production of the season, *Passing Strange* is a comedy-drama and rock musical about black identity in America. The play told the story of a young black man from Los Angeles who feels like a foreigner in his own country, and leaves behind his middle class, church-ruled upbringing, to travel to Europe in search of his artistic and personal identity.

### ***Tartuffe*, Dec. 1-10**

*Tartuffe*, a satire aimed at religious hypocrisy by French playwright Molière, was set in a “Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous” world, with a sinister and outlandishly puritanical Tartuffe and characters with comparisons to new leaders in American government.

### ***Rhinoceros*, Feb. 23-March 4**

An adaptation of Eugene Ionesco’s play, *Rhinoceros*, an absurdist theatre production, included comedic, tragic, and dark political tones that warned of an authoritarian society. Loosely set between World War I and II, the play drew inspiration from expressionist painters of the time, as it treaded into the world of psychological horror.

### ***Into the Woods*, April 20-29**

The season culminated with the theatre program’s adaptation of Stephen Sondheim’s *Into the Woods*, which explored what happens after the “happily ever after” in the intertwined stories of several traditional fairy tales, and a look at conflict between generations and the power of banding together across age groups to strike down adversity.

# Stronger Together:

## Grants help fund math, writing, retention efforts

**With programs designed to bolster learning in a variety of fields—including math and writing, the sciences and the arts—MCLA students benefit from a number of key grants from organizations such as the United States Department of Education and the National Science Foundation.**

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MCLA continues to gain strength through its Title III grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The nearly \$2.2 million in funding, which is being distributed through the 2020-21 academic year for the Strengthening Institutions Program, is increasing undergraduate persistence rates—the percentage of students who return to college for their second year—as it supports student success and retention.

The program aims to eliminate achievement gaps between white and African-American, Latino, Asian and Native American (ALANA) students, as well as achievement gaps between Pell-eligible and non-Pell-eligible students. This funding is particularly important as the College closes the achievement gap in graduation rates between African-American and white students at a higher percentage rate than most of the other state universities in the Massachusetts State University System.

The Strengthening Institutions Program supports MCLA's mission to promote excellence in learning and teaching, which includes the new Math Drop-in Center and Writing Studio on campus. In addition, students in all disciplines now benefit from remarkable new software, Degree Works, which makes it easier than ever to plan their progress toward graduation.





### **Degree Works**

With the addition of Degree Works, students enjoy an easy-to-read, ongoing review that shows them which courses they have completed, as well as what's up next, so they may choose their best path. This "degree audit" software is customized to meet each individual's needs, and informs them of every available option to fulfill remaining requirements.

"Since decisions like choosing or changing a major have an important impact on financial aid, or how long it takes a student to earn their degree, Degree Works includes a 'What If' feature, letting students 'test-drive' different hypothetical situations to see the long-term effects, based on their actual current status," explained Monica Joslin, dean of academic affairs. "This helps students make the most fully informed decisions about their choice of program."

Degree Works also makes course registration easier by showing real-time updates regarding availability, and when students are signing up for the next semester's classes. The "Look Ahead" feature shows exactly how each course would fit into a student's overall progress toward the degree, to help them to select courses strategically. In addition, the interactive nature of Degree Works allows students to click on live data that indicates if and when a course will be offered during the next semester, and if seats are available.

### Math Drop-in Center

Located in the Feigenbaum Center for Science and Innovation, the Math Drop-in Center allows peers to tutor other students in math at all levels, and including in physics and chemistry. It's also a great resource for students who are studying for exams like the math portion of the Graduate Record Examinations (GRE) or Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL).

The Drop-in Center is a result of a meeting of the QUAC (Quantitative Understanding Across the Curriculum) faculty group—an interdisciplinary group of MCLA educators, including associate professor of math Dr. Elizabeth Hartung and assistant professor of math Dr. Erin Kiley, who wanted to create an easy and accessible way for students to get math help when needed.

439

students majoring  
in STEM







### **Writing Studio**

The Writing Studio provides a place for the entire campus community—from students to faculty and alumni—to meet, collaborate and create. Located on the first floor of Murdock Hall, this vibrant and generative space solidifies MCLA's commitment to writing, hosting conversations about writing in its many forms.

"It tells our students and faculty members—in addition to alumni and prospective students—that writing matters, and that we value the conversations which are already happening on campus, about how to best prepare for the writing situations presented to us in the 21st century," said Amber Engelson, Ph.D., assistant professor of English/Communications, MCLA's Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) specialist, and the studio's co-director.

### **STEM Scholarships**

Thirty-two students who major in biology, physics, chemistry, environmental studies, computer science and mathematics benefit from a nearly \$640,000 National Science Foundation Scholarship in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (S-STEM) grant that provides them with annual scholarships through the STEM Pathways Program.

This program directly addresses an area of national concern—the shortage of graduates in this country who are trained in STEM-related

fields—as it allows academically strong STEM students who may not otherwise be able to afford college to prepare to help Massachusetts companies continue to advance knowledge that produces life-changing innovations.

### **Teaching to Learn**

MCLA continues to collaborate with North Adams Public Schools and Williams College to improve undergraduate science education with funding from a nearly \$811,000 grant from the National Science Foundation.

The four-year project, Teaching to Learn: Improving Undergraduate Science Education Through Engagement in K-7 Science, provides opportunities for undergraduate students to participate in experiences developing and teaching science lessons in North Adams elementary school classrooms.

The program, some parts of which will conclude on Aug. 31, is under the direction of Principal Investigator Dr. Nicholas Stroud, associate professor of science/technology education and Evelyn H. and Arlindo Jorge Professor of Education at MCLA. This program has allowed undergraduates at both MCLA and Williams to work with teachers in North Adams Public Schools and college professors to develop science units based on Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering standards, and to teach those units to students in grades K-5.



# To Serve and Support:

## Elected officials with strong ties to MCLA

From North Adams mayors to state representatives, MCLA is fortunate to enjoy the strong support of our local elected officials. All staunch supporters of the College's mission, as well as of our faculty, staff, and students, State Rep. John Barrett III (D-North Adams), former North Adams Mayor Richard Alcombright, and North Adams Mayor Thomas Bernard are generous not only with their advocacy, but also with their time.



Barrett is a proud alumnus who received his Bachelor of Science degree in education from the former North Adams

State College, now MCLA, in 1969. He went on to earn his master's degree in education from the College in 1972.

A lifelong resident of North Adams, Barrett served as the city's mayor for 26 years, from 1984 through 2009. During this time, he led the city's economic development and revitalization, including the opening of MASS MoCA in 1999. His advocacy continues in his role as state representative, filling Rep. Gailanne Cariddi's seat following a special election held after

her passing in 2017. He received an honorary Doctor of Public Service degree from the College in 2000. Barrett also is a recipient of the College's Distinguished Alumni Award, and has served on the MCLA Board of Trustees since 2016.



Alcombright, who was mayor of North Adams for eight years, from 2010 to 2017, was actively engaged with the campus in conversations related to safety, as

he worked with local police and MCLA's public safety officers to ensure the neighborhoods surrounding the campus were safe for students and residents alike. When it came to discussions of economic development, he partnered with MCLA for conversations at the state level.

A familiar face on campus, Alcombright attended all of our Accepted Student Day events, where he took time to speak with prospective parents and students about the values of an MCLA education. He also was an active leader and volunteer during annual community service days in partnership with the city and the College. Through his leadership, MCLA and local residents have come together

for over 25 years to clean up and build community through volunteerism.

As a member of our campus community from 2006-14, Bernard played a significant part in moving MCLA forward through several vital roles.



He began work in the Office of Advancement as the director of corporate, foundation, and government relations, before going on to serve as the executive assistant to the president—a position in which he advanced many initiatives related to public higher education advocacy events, strategic planning, and accreditation. And, as the director of business affairs in the division of Administration and Finance, he collaborated with presidents and chief financial officers across the state university system to propose a funding formula to the Department of Higher Education and the state legislature to guide annual appropriation decisions. As mayor of North Adams since January 2018, Bernard remains a steadfast supporter of the College.

## State Rep. Gailanne M. Cariddi: A Tireless Advocate

Not long after Gailanne M. Cariddi (1953-2017) was elected to the Massachusetts House of Representatives for the First Berkshire District in 2010, one of her first official efforts was on behalf of the College was her successful bid to gain legislative approval for directional signs on Route 90 and 91 that point the way to MCLA. She recognized the College as a valuable economic development partner. As such, she was a strong advocate for MCLA Gallery 51, and succeeded in garnering earmarks in support of its work toward boosting arts and culture in North Adams.

A tireless advocate for her constituents and the Berkshires she loved, Cariddi had a strong desire to serve others. Warm and gracious, she was a great example of one who devotes their life to public service, as she worked tirelessly on behalf of her community.

One of Cariddi's gifts was the ability to bring together diverse people for a common cause. In 2016, she convened and hosted a Northern Berkshire Economic Development Conference at MCLA, attended by key business and elected leaders—from around the region and across the state—to participate in important discussions relative to economic development in our region. Previous to this event, she also collaborated with MCLA to host a conference



Left to right: Rep. Tricia Farley-Bouvier, Rep. Gailanne Cariddi, Rep. Paul Mark

for women in leadership positions throughout Berkshire County.

For more than two decades, she served North Adams as a city councilor, including several terms as its president. As our local state representative, Cariddi was on several state government committees, which included her position as vice chair of the Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government, and chair of the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture.

A frequent participant in local volunteer efforts such as MCLA's yearly Community Day of Service and Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service, Cariddi never sought the limelight. Resolute and extremely effective, she established herself as an influential force as she worked the halls of the State House on behalf of those she served. MCLA is grateful for her efforts, and was proud this year to posthumously award her an honorary Doctor of Public Service degree.







# Giving Matters:

## New gifts and scholarships propel the institution

MCLA was the beneficiary of a number of very generous donations this year that allow us to expand our scholarship offerings and move the College forward in some exciting new directions.

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### **Alma Benedetti '37**

Alma Benedetti established a generous bequest for the College in her estate plan. A popular alumna long associated with the College, she was the Alumni Association Board's only lifetime member. A 1933 graduate of Drury High School, she went on to earn her Bachelor of Science and Master of Education degrees at the College, and received an honorary doctorate degree in pedagogy in 1999.

Her early teaching career included positions in nearby towns, before she was appointed in 1956 as the art teacher for grades 1 through 6 for North Adams Public Schools, where she remained until her retirement in 1981.

She greatly enjoyed painting, gardening and reading, and exhibited her artworks in shows throughout the area. A lifetime member of the North Adams Gardening Club and the North Adams Tree Commission, she also belonged to Friends of the North Adams Public Library. We are very thankful for her gift, which will benefit the College in a manner that reflects her interests.

### **Angela Crowley '42**

Born in North Adams, Angela Crowley '42 attended local schools, including Drury High School. For Crowley, who lived in a house

across the street from the College her entire life, MCLA was more than her alma mater—in many ways it was an extension of her home, as she often was seen at the Freel Library, attending various performances, or simply strolling about the campus.

Throughout her career, Crowley taught as an elementary school teacher at the Mark Hopkins School—now the headquarters for MCLA's Department of Education. After earning her bachelor's degree in education at the College, she went on to complete her master's degree from the University of Vermont, in Burlington, and in 2000, MCLA presented her with an honorary doctorate degree in pedagogy.

MCLA is grateful for her generous \$50,000 donation, which will be used to further the work of the College.

### **Helen Sindermann '44**

Helen Sindermann '44 was born in North Adams and attended St. Joseph's High School. She went on to graduate from the College, earning her bachelor's degree in education, with highest honors. Although trained as a teacher, she instead devoted her career to travel as a flight attendant for American Airlines.

Sindermann left \$350,000 to MCLA, which represented the bulk of her estate. Because she designated her donation as unrestricted, the money could be used however the College deemed most necessary.

Her generous gift now allows MCLA to delve deeper into marketing research, a request of the campus community that emerged from the strategic planning process. For this priority need, we will develop cohesive messaging and branding to raise the awareness and profile of the institution.

## **MCLA announces three new scholarships for students**

1

### **Birge Travel Scholarship Fund**

For students who wish to expand their horizons through travel study, but may not have the financial means to do so, Lisa and President James F. Birge created the Birge Travel Scholarship Fund. After graduating college, Lisa Birge enjoyed an eye-opening and rewarding international travel experience. However, President Birge did not have that same opportunity to travel. As an undergraduate, his financial resources were more limited.



Both experiences led the Birges to the belief that it's very important for students to be able to access the knowledge and understanding that only can come from travel. With their \$50,000 pledge, they are helping to make the dream of travel for students like Katherine Duval '19 of Long Island, N.Y., a reality.

Over the spring break, Duval visited England as part of her "Arts of Medieval & Renaissance Britain" class. "For many students like me, the costs of college are already difficult to tackle. It is impossible to imagine funding an additional opportunity like a travel course," she says. "Seeing the living history of the country made my educational pursuits seem more urgent, and more alive."

Scholarships are available for any type of travel study—a semester abroad, a travel course, or even a field trip related to a class a student is taking, for credit or non-credit.

2

### **Gailanne M. Cariddi Memorial Scholarship**

Along with MCLA Foundation Board Director Julie Arnold, Berkshire native Roz Field has donated \$10,000 to endow a scholarship fund in memory of her longtime partner, Gailanne M. Cariddi, who passed away in June 2017 as she served her fourth term as a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives for the First Berkshire District. Cariddi found great satisfaction in bringing people together. Through this new scholarship fund, she will help students join our MCLA community.



A friend to the College, Cariddi was always ready to assist MCLA when needed. Also a familiar face on campus and around the community, she was an active participant of our Community Days of Service and Martin Luther King Jr. Day activities, and greatly enjoyed talking with students about how our State Government works. In May, she received a posthumous honorary doctorate degree in public service from MCLA.

Preference for this scholarship likely will be given to students from one of the communities Cariddi represented:

Adams, Cheshire, Clarksburg, Florida, Hancock, Lanesborough, New Ashford, North Adams, and Williamstown—as well as those who share her commitment to politics and/or the environment. *(For more about Cariddi, see page 47.)*

#### ***If you wish to contribute to one of these scholarship funds, or to create a new fund:***

Scholarships may be set up with a minimum \$10,000 donation. Additional donations to existing scholarships are welcomed, and we invite all to contribute to these three new scholarships. For questions or more information, please contact the Office of Institutional Advancement at (413) 662 5224 or [advancement@mcla.edu](mailto:advancement@mcla.edu).

3

### **Denise C. Richardello '77, M.Ed. '81 Honors Scholarship Fund**

This new scholarship will benefit MCLA students who are members of the Honors Program and is designed to ease financial pressure on highly motivated students and encourage them to enroll at MCLA and complete the honors program. One scholarship per year will be awarded to an incoming first-year student and a second scholarship is planned to be awarded to a student currently enrolled in the MCLA Honors Program.



The fund is being established to recognize Denise's 40 years of service to the College upon her retirement. It gives a nod to her work focusing on recruitment and retention of students and honors her legacy.



# Forging Paths Together:

## MCLA celebrates the Class of 2018

**“While you forge a path to your destiny, remember to take the time to reach back and bring someone along with you. Check that the path you have forged remains worn and attemptable by others so that the next generation may follow you.”**  
—Stephanie D. Wilson, 2018 Commencement Speaker

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MCLA celebrated its 119th commencement with keynote speaker, aerospace engineer and NASA astronaut Stephanie D. Wilson, who grew up in Pittsfield. The second African American woman to go into space, Wilson received an honorary Doctor of Science degree. In addition, MCLA Executive Vice President Denise Richardello '77, M.Ed. '81, and State Rep. William “Smitty” Pignatelli (D-Lenox) received honorary Doctor of Public Service

degrees. MCLA also recognized former State Rep. Gailanne M. Cariddi (D-North Adams) with a posthumous Doctor of Public Service degree.

As keynote speaker and one of the day’s four honorary degree recipients, NASA astronaut Stephanie D. Wilson encouraged the Class of 2018 to examine how their work can make their the world a better place. “Hopefully, we have taught you how to establish a support network,

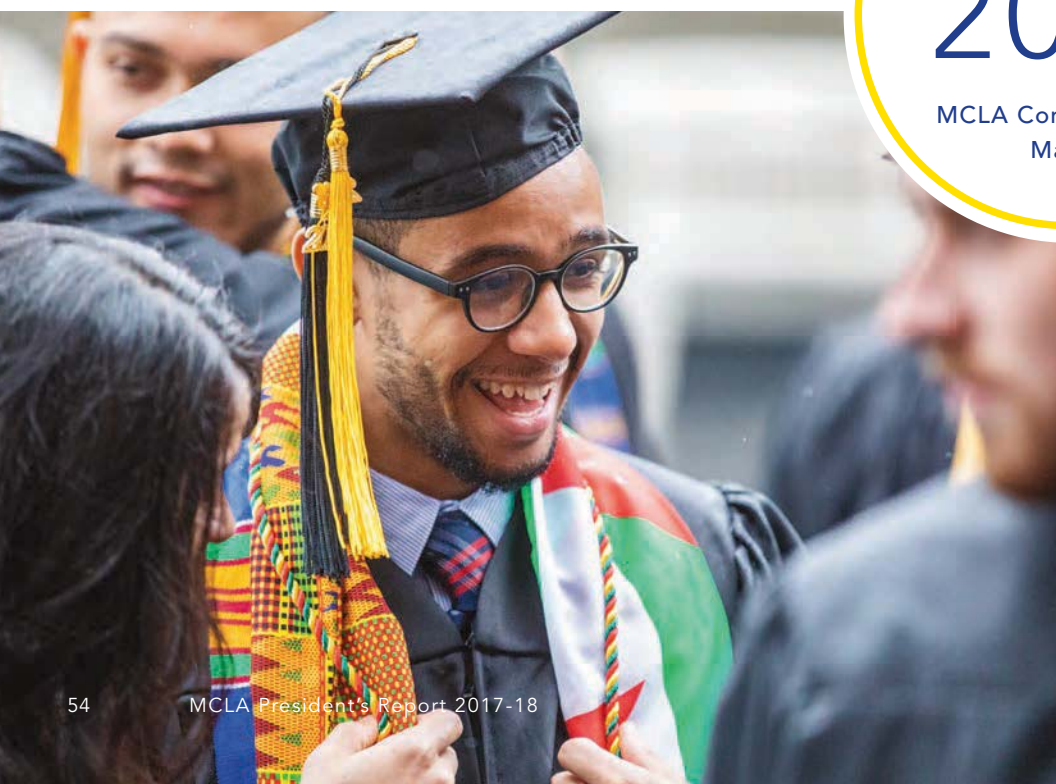
which advice to heed and which advice to discard,” said the astronaut and aeronautical engineer. “Hopefully, we have taught you to be steadfast and unmoveable in your hopes and your dreams and, hopefully, we have taught you that mentoring is instrumental in obtaining career success.”







Congratulations,  
Class of  
**2018**  
MCLA Commencement  
May 12









## Student

# Achievements:

**Shane Voci '17** and **Anthony Corbett '17** completed a COPLAC (Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges) digital course in "Conflicts in America: Case Studies in Peace-Making," taught remotely by professors at Georgia College in Milledgeville, Ga., and the University of Science & Arts of Oklahoma in Chickasha, Okla.

**Lindsey Vachon '20** led the charge to transform the College into the first pollinator-friendly campus in Massachusetts. As a result of her efforts, MCLA became the second Certified Bee Campus USA Affiliate in Massachusetts. Her project—through her involvement with MASSPIRG, which encourages students to become more active in their communities—came about after she learned of a "Save the Bees" campaign.



Lindsey Vachon '20 helped make MCLA the second Certified Bee Campus USA Affiliate in Massachusetts.

English major **Avery Woodbury '17** and sociology and philosophy major **AJ Coty '17** worked on a gardening project and donated the food they grew to those in need. They went on to participate in a National Geographic (Nat Geo) competition to expand their idea, "Berkshire Community Garden Network," with the aim of helping combat area hunger.

**Alexander Switzer '18** served as the "LCS (Littoral Combat Ship) Systems Integration Intern Engineer" with General Dynamics in Pittsfield, Mass. He also co-develops a zombie survival sandbox game, "Dead Matter."

Students who study political science with Assistant Professor of Political Science Dr. Samantha Pettey worked with the North Adams Chamber of Commerce to present two political forums that allowed area voters to become better acquainted with the candidates running for mayor, the North Adams City Council and the city's school committee. They included **Samuel Broderick '18**, **Darnell Henriquez '19**, **David Leonard '17**, **Mackenzie McCarthy '18**, **Isaac Stewart '20**, **Justin Therrien '19**, and **Charlie Weissfellner '18**. In addition, **Logan Brooks '19** participated as a panelist in the meeting with North Adams City Council and North Adams Public School Committee candidates, and **Kaitlin Wright '18** moderated the city council school committee forum.

**Katie Howe '20** was appointed to the board of directors of a local nonprofit organization, The Haiti Plunge, Inc. As a youth board member, she works with other Haiti Plunge board members—including Spencer Moser, director of MCLA's Center for Service, who leads the Alternative Spring Breaks—to raise awareness of The Haiti Plunge on campus, and to interest other students in going to Haiti. Other responsibilities include attending board meetings and the organization's events and forums, as she spreads the word about its goals and intentions for the future. Following her first trip on an Alternative Spring Break in 2017, she returned to Haiti this past spring.



Katie Howe '20

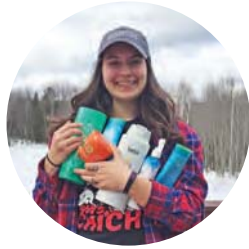
**Messaoud Kerris '18** produced a video that encouraged students to enter the campus's Second Annual Entrepreneurship and Innovation Challenge. Produced with a "Shark Tank" theme, the video was just one of a number of short pieces that the business administration major created. As MCLA's social media intern, he also worked to increase the College's online audience.



Justin Therrien '19

Interdisciplinary studies major **Justin Therrien '19** recently took another step toward his goal of earning a law degree. His paper, titled "Withdrawal from the Paris Climate Accords" was published in the *University of Chicago Undergraduate Law Magazine*. The paper analyzes the alliance of smaller governments, businesses, and other bodies that, despite the federal government's withdrawal, are committed to supporting the Paris Climate Accords.

**Abbi Luczynski '20** collected 2,874 "beauty empties" as part of DoSomething.org's "Rinse, Recycle, Repeat" competition, an effort to reduce trash in area landfills. The packaging she collected will be recycled into pelletized lumber to create items such as picnic tables, playground equipment and benches.



Abbi Luczynski '20

Accounting students **Jared Grise '18**, **Yuki Li '18**, **Alison Pansecchi '19** and **Christopher Tetlow '18** traveled to Boston to attend "The Next Step Workshop," organized by the Massachusetts Society for Certified Public Accountants (MSCPA), to which the students all belong.



From left, Christopher Tetlow '18, Alison Pansecchi '19, Jared Grise '18 and Yuki Li '18, attended "The Next Step Workshop," hosted by PricewaterhouseCoopers in Boston, Mass., on March 28.

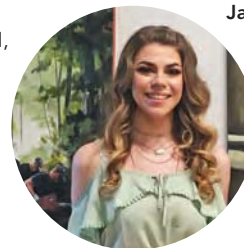
MCLA recently recognized the achievements of 10 business administration students when they were inducted into the Zeta Zeta chapter of the Delta Mu Delta national honor society on Saturday, April 7. The new members of Delta Mu Delta are **Oscar Castro '18**, **Kolumbia Cook '18**, **Taylor Jackson '18**, **Khalil Kareh '18**, **Stephen LaForest '18**, **Yueqi Li '18**, **Molly Elizabeth Murphy '19**, **Kate T. Reardon '18**, **Adam Trent Sams '18**, and **Christopher S. Tetlow '18**.

**Brittney White '18** received the 2017-18 Margaret A. Hart '35 Scholarship. A resident of Berkshire County for the past 16 years, she is a transfer student from Berkshire Community College (BCC) in Pittsfield, Mass. Particularly interested in genetic recombination, she majored in biology at MCLA.

**Molly Gurner '18**, **Halie Smith '18**, **Jacqueline Smith '18**, **Nicole Stearns '18**, and **Samantha White '18** presented this year's senior class art show, "The Human Condition," in MCLA Gallery 51.

As members of the "Advanced Museum Studies" class, **Mariah Baca '21**, **Nicholas Colabella '21**, **Jacob Davis '19**, **Nicole Patri '21**, **Stephen Payne '21**, **Adazae Shepherd-Edwards '18**, **William Taylor '20**, **Zoe Villane '21** and **Erica Wilcoxen '19** organized "Witness," an art exhibition for MCLA Gallery 51. The show featured drawings and videos by New York-based artist and educator Shaun Leonardo, whose works reference the deaths of Trayvon Martin, Freddie Gray, and Sean Bell, among other men of color.

**Halie Smith '18** painted a large mural of North Adams in MCLA's Mark Hopkins Hall, in the English/communications lounge, as well as another mural in Kidspace in MASS MoCA. She also completed a commissioned oil painting for the North Adams Public Library's youth section in memory of a longtime library supporter.



Halie Smith '18



Erica Wilcoxen '19 and Cassie Lavoie '18

**Erica Wilcoxen '19** and **Cassie Lavoie '18** completed a COPLAC (Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges) digital course, "Storied Landscapes," which allowed them to develop a comprehensive understanding of the historic Hoosac Tunnel, and to develop a tool for presenting history that others might access more easily as they learned about nature writing and developed digital tools such as website building.

As members of the Massachusetts Beta Chapter of the Alpha Chi Honor Society, **Allison Gregory '19**, **Michael Masley Hannett '19**, **Aaron Smith '18**, **Wren Williams '19**, and **Jennifer Wilson '20** traveled to Portland, Ore., to attend the national convention, where Hannett gave a presentation. Hannett also was inducted into MCLA's chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the national English Honor Society.

**Jacob Foley '19**, **Lianne Gallant '19**, **Laura Netti '19**, **Halie Smith '18**, **Shijie Wang '21**, **Jennifer Wilson '20**, and **Kaitlin Wright '18** traveled to the Mansfield University of Pennsylvania this past fall, where they participated in the Northeast Regional Undergraduate Research, Scholarly and Creative Activity Conference (NERURSCA).



**Tianna Darling '18, Noah Henkenius '21, Rose Mastico '18, Michael McAndrew '18, Emily Resabala '20, Kaylyn M. Swenson '20, and Samuel Winkley '18** participated in the Commonwealth Honors Conference on April 27 at UMASS-Amherst.

Women's soccer player **Megan Richardson '19** was awarded MCLA's Sue Getchell Award, which is presented each year to the top female scholar athlete. She was an all conference first team selection and led the conference in saves, and serves as the president of the Student Athlete Advisory Committee.

**Oscar Castro '18**, who plays men's soccer, was the winner of the Louis Parisien Award, presented annually to the top male scholar athlete. He was an All MASCAC selection, as well as the United Soccer Coaches Scholar for the All East Region.



Oscar Castro '18

MCLA's Athletes of the Year were **Kaylyn Holliday '21** (soccer/softball) and **Logan Rumbolt '21** (baseball) who received the underclassmen awards. The upper class awards for top athlete went to **Mariza Sfakianaki '18** (women's tennis) and **Liam Nolan '18** (baseball).

Most valuable players for each of MCLA's sports teams were **Megan Richardson '19** (women's soccer), **Reese Dwyer '21** (golf), **Mariza Sfakianaki '18** (women's tennis), **Julie Gambill '21** (women's cross country), **Jeremiah Jones '19** (men's cross country), **Mele Enomoto '18** (volleyball), **Adam Conquest '20** (men's basketball), **Emily Moulton '18** (women's basketball), **Mackenzie Cutler '18** (lacrosse), **Romeo Grey '19** (men's soccer), **Aaron Goldsmith '19** (men's tennis), **Kara Adams '20** (softball), and **Liam Nolan '18** (baseball).

Twitter poll winners were men's basketball player **Noah Yearsley '21** for best performance in the MASCAC semifinal vs. BSU, and best moment went to volleyball player **Mele Enomoto '18**, who collected a 1,000th dig in a game vs. Williams College. And, athletes with the top individual grade point averages were **Nick Disanti '20** (baseball) and **Bri O'Rourke '17** (volleyball).

**Samantha DeCarlo '21** was the recipient of the Newman Civic Fellow Award, and **Connor Ogborn '20** received the Lorraine B. Maloney Award from MCLA's Center for Service and Citizenship.

Intramural award winners were **Ryan Wanek '21**, who received the Randall Warren "Unsung" Hero Award, and **Oscar Castro '18** and **Miesha Adams-McLean '18**, who received the James T. Amsler Service Award.

Students recognized by the Student Government Association (SGA) were **Samantha Giffen '18** and **Jacob Boillat '18**, who received the Distinguished Service Award; **Taylor Jackson '18**, who was named as the Club Executive Board Member of the Year; **Sarah Groux '18** and **Connor Ogborn '20**, who were awarded the Diane Collins SGA Scholarship; **Shannon Esposito '18** and **Eva Weeks '20**, who received the Leader Achievement Award; and **Lilly Broman '21**, who was presented with the Social Change Agent Award.

Residential Programs and Services recognized **Madison Taber '21** with the Heather B. Fischlein Memorial Scholarship, and **Katherine Howe '20** with the Outstanding Resident Student Scholarship.



Rosy Gil Diaz '18 with Gov. Charlie Baker

MCLA's Office of Student Affairs honored **Rosy Gil Diaz '18** with the "29 Who Shine" award, and the Vice President's Award was given to **Sychiah Johnson '17**. In addition, the following students were recognized as Outstanding Student Leaders: **Miesha Adams-McLean '18, Giovanni Arana '21, Kircys Canela '18, Shannon Esposito '18, Oscar Castro '18, Sarah Pudney '18, Mikaela Serrano-Moore '18, and Edith Sherburne '18.**





## Faculty and Staff

# Achievements:



Dr. Elizabeth Hartung

**Dr. Elizabeth Hartung**, associate professor of mathematics, was an invited speaker at the Ontario Combinatorics Workshop, held at the University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada. She also spoke at the Canadian Discrete and Algorithmic Mathematics Conference, held at Ryerson University in Toronto.

In addition, Hartung attended the Geometry of Redistricting workshop and conference, held at Tufts University in Medford, Mass., where she joined mathematicians from all discipline areas, as well as computer scientists, civil scholars, lawyers, sociologists, civil rights activists, and those who draw redistricting maps. Together, they focused on the mathematics of redistricting and voting rights.

Associate professor of business **Dr. Thomas Whalen** completed his new book, "Complexity, Society and Social Transactions: Developing a Comprehensive Social Theory." The impetus for the book—which was published last fall by London publishers Taylor & Francis, a division of Routledge—began back when Whalen was a doctoral student in the leadership program at Gonzaga University in Spokane, Wash.

**Diane Scott**, assistant professor of arts management, traveled to Queen Margaret University in Edinburgh, Scotland, to speak to professors from across the United



Diane Scott and Dr. Lisa Donovan in Paris

States and Europe on design thinking, at the 36th Annual Association of Arts Administration Educators Conference. Her session, "Designing Design Thinking into Arts Administration Courses," was attended by professors of arts management and arts administration.

Scott, along with **Dr. Lisa Donovan**, also took 10 students to experience Paris, France, over the spring break as part of Scott's travel course, "Paris and Comparative Cultural Policy."

**Dr. David Cupery**, assistant professor of political science, led 11 students on the first-ever spring break trip to Cuba. There, they were immersed in the rich diversity and the controversies that surround this Caribbean island as they stayed with host families, attended a lecture at the University of Havana, experienced the culture, and visited historical sites. This travel allowed them to gain a deeper understanding of issues related to Cuban history, politics, culture, and society.

This past spring break marked a milestone for English professor **Dr. Rosanne Denhard**. For the tenth time, she brought a class of students to England, where they experienced its history and culture. As part of her "Arts of Medieval & Renaissance Britain" course, they explored landmark sites, a variety of British art galleries and museums and took in some theatrical productions.



Dr. Rosanne Denhard

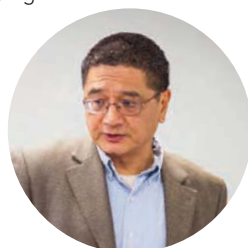
History professor **Dr. Frances Jones-Sneed** and **Dr. Ely Janis**, associate professor of history, visited sites honoring the country's civil rights history with a group of students on a bus tour of 12 cities in the American South over spring break, retracing some of the most important sites of the 1960s' Freedom Movement.



**Spencer Moser**, director of MCLA's Center for Service and Citizenship, led nine students on an Alternative Spring Break to Haiti. In addition to sprucing up a school, they experienced firsthand how residents of the Haitian village of Brely live. There's no electricity or running water: their lives lack many of the modern advances of the 21st—or even the 20th—century that those in the States take for granted.

For the second time, anthropology professor **Dr. Sumi Colligan** brought nine MCLA students to San Francisco, Calif., a social justice model for LGBT communities, where they met a number of people whose lives exemplify the possibilities of shaping social change.

History professor **Dr. Kailai Huang** took nine MCLA students to Japan over the spring break, where they visited Tokyo, the ancient capital Kyoto, and gateway to Japanese Alps Nagoya, the castle town Matsumoto and the seaside city Kamakura. In addition, a long layover in Beijing, China, on their way to Japan allowed them to tour the Forbidden City and the city's central district.



Dr. Kailai Huang

**Tara Barboza**, assistant professor of accounting, accompanied her students on a trip to Boston to attend "The Next Step Workshop," organized by the Massachusetts Society for Certified Public Accountants (MSCPA) and hosted by PricewaterhouseCoopers.

**Dr. Samantha Pettey**, assistant professor of political science, delved into local politics when she and her students worked with the North Adams Chamber of Commerce to present two political forums. The events, hosted by Greylock WORKS, allowed area voters to become better acquainted with the candidates running for mayor, as well as seats on the North Adams City Council and the city's school committee.

**Melanie Mowinski**, associate professor of visual art, completed the "50 Card Project," a response to the 2017 Presidential Inauguration. Each week she sent a new card, via mail and email, to interested recipients. Others viewed her creations online. In January, all 50 cards were on view in MCLA Gallery 51's first exhibition of 2018: "The 50 Card Project."

**Dr. Dale Fink**, associate professor of education, published his article, "Even if They're Being Bad, Maybe They Need a Chance to Run Around: What Children Think about Recess," in the *Journal of School Health*. It is the very first article to inform the field about what children think about teachers who take away their recess privileges.

**Michael Obasohan '11**, assistant director of diversity program and MCLA's Multicultural Education Center, created a new group for students on campus, the Men of Color Initiative.

In addition, Obasohan led four students to the National Student Leadership Diversity Convention in New Jersey. This conference focused on diversity and inclusion initiatives across college campuses, as well as trends in higher education, with ways to create support for our students.

Obasohan and **Dr. Kerri Nicoll**, professor of sociology, social work and anthropology, were named Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) co-chairs last fall. They now lead the group's diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, along with current student chairperson Stevelyn Desire '20.

**Dr. Lisa Donovan**, professor of fine and performing arts, was named as the "Best Professor in the Berkshires" by the *Berkshire Eagle*, as part of the newspaper's annual "Best of the Berkshires" designations.

A national expert on arts integration, Donovan is in demand across the country to share her knowledge of the field with other educators and educational organizations. This past year, she presented as a faculty

member of the Higher Order Thinking Schools Institute in Connecticut. She also gave a keynote address at the "Creativity at the Core Conference" in San Jose, Calif., and was a featured presenter with the Virginia Arts Partners in Richmond, Va.

**Dr. Lisa Donovan** received a \$75,000 Art Works Collective Impact grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) for the creation and launch of an arts education blueprint for Berkshire County. This work is being done in collaboration with the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation's Creative Commonwealth program, funded by the Barr Foundation.

In addition, Donovan is a co-project director for the launch of the Berkshire Regional Arts Integration Network (BRAINworks), which was awarded \$739,780 (in collaboration with the North Adams Public School District), to support arts integrated professional development for Berkshire County educators and partner them with cultural institutions and arts educators in schools.

Lastly, Donovan served as principal investigator for a \$50,000 planning grant from the Mellon Foundation to work with a team of faculty to plan for a digital map that will catalog humanities resources through a pilot program of cultural asset mapping and plan opportunities to bring expertise, professional development, pedagogy exchange, and other meaningful engagement of the humanities to MCLA.

Undergraduate Research co-chairs **Justin Golub**, assistant professor of biology, and **Dr. Jenna Sciuto**, assistant professor of English, led a recording-breaking 16th Annual Undergraduate Research Conference (URC) in April, where 249 students offered 148 presentations, making it MCLA's largest research conference to date.

Sciuto also received a 2018-19 American Association of American Women (AAUW) American Fellowship Publication Grant for her book project, *Policing Intimacy: Law, Sexuality, and the Color Line in Twentieth-Century Hemispheric American Literature* (University Press of Mississippi).



Dr. Anne Goodwin

**Dr. Anne Goodwin**, chair of the biology department and professor of biology, and **Eric Doucette**, assistant professor of biology, traveled with a group of biology and environmental studies majors to the Northeast Natural History Conference in Burlington, Vt., where the

students presented faculty-mentored research that involves organisms found in the region.

On April 27 and 28, Goodwin along with **Dr. Erin Kiley**, assistant professor of math and **Dr. Nicole Porther**, assistant professor of community health, participated in the STEM Pedagogy Institute in Durham, N.H., where they engaged in conversations about STEM pedagogy.

Honors Program co-directors **Dr. Susan Edgerton**, professor of interdisciplinary studies, and **Dr. Zachary Finch**, associate professor of English/communications, took seven students to participate in Massachusetts' 24th Annual Statewide Undergraduate Research Conference at UMASS-Amherst, where they presented their original research in a variety of fields.

As the sponsor of the Massachusetts Beta Chapter of the Alpha Chi Honor Society, **Dr. Graziana Ramsden**, professor of modern languages, took five students to the national convention, which took place this year in Portland, Ore.

**Sgt. Laura L. Lefebvre**, in the Office of Public Safety, earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in interdisciplinary studies from MCLA, and was honored during this past May's Commencement Ceremony.

Public Safety Dispatcher **Sierra Holland** received her Bachelor of Arts degree in interdisciplinary studies from MCLA this past May.

**Natty Burford**, assistant director of student activities, is a member of the Berkshire Leadership Program (BLP) through One Berkshire and Berkshire One Foundation, and as such is focusing attention with the BLP Class of 2018 group on the Rally for Roots Rising. The group meets weekly to learn about topics such as culture, tourism, economic development, education, work force development, energy in the environment, and much more. The purpose of the group is to develop a network of leaders in the community to create change.

**Dot Houston**, associate athletic director, volunteered at the Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association (MIAA) National Girls and Women in Sports Day celebration at Gillette Stadium in Foxboro, Mass., this spring. Sarah McKenna, vice president of Fan Services & Entertainment for the Boston Red Sox, was the guest speaker. Houston serves on the MIAA Girls and Women in Sports Committee, and was an organizer and reader for the program.

**Laura Mooney**, director of athletics, continued her service on the NCAA Division III Management Council, NCAA Division III Membership Committee and NCAA Playing and Practice Seasons Subcommittee. Mooney also will present on "Creating a Culture of Accountability" at the National Association of Division III Athletic Administrators (NADIII) Summer Forum.

**Jenn Labbance**, director of student activities, was certified as a master facilitator of the National Alpha Sigma Tau. This initiative offers member development programs, offering personal and professional growth for collegiate sisters. Throughout the year, class facilitators such as Labbance guide their class through structured, interactive programs that teach pre-selected competencies.

Labbance also presented two workshops at the National Association for Campus Activities (NACA) Northeast Regional Conference held in Hartford, Conn., with co-presenter Shannon Esposito '18, on "Advising from the Student's Standpoint: One Style May not Fit All" and "Taking Time Out from Being Involved: Time Management for the Over Involved Student."

**Dr. Gerol Petruzella**, associate director of MCLA's Center for Academic Technology, had his chapter, "Death in Ancient Philosophy and the Sandman Series," accepted for publication in Seelow, David, ed. *Panels, Pedagogy and Practice: Essays on Teaching Comics and Graphic Novels in the 21st Century* (McFarland Press). He also is a voting member of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Ethically Aligned Design v. 2 Standards Workgroup, a project of the IEEE Global Initiative on Ethics of the IEEE Global Initiative on Ethics of Autonomous and Intelligent Systems, drafting global standards for the ethical design of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies.

In October 2017, Petruzella was a presenter at CanvasCon WPI, at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, where he offered "Hybrid Philosophy: Designing for Adult Learners." And in early 2018, he was a participant and respondent in the Critical Code Studies Working Group, sponsored by the Humanities and Critical Code Studies (HaCCS) Lab at the University of Southern California and Digital Arts & Humanities Commons at the University of California in Santa Barbara.

**Griffin Labbance**, area coordinator for the Flagg Townhouses, and **Brendan Cody**, residence director for Berkshire Towers, gave a presentation at the MCLA Leadership Conference. In addition, Labbance served on the conference planning committee for the 413 Residence Advisor Conference in February, when he also gave a presentation. Labbance also gave a presentation at the North East Affiliate of College and University Residence Halls (NEACURH) spring conference in March.

**Dr. Anna Jaysane-Darr**, an assistant professor in the Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work Department, was awarded a grant from the Spencer Foundation for her project, "Therapeutic Labor and Global Autism in the Western Cape," for which she will be traveling this summer to Cape Town in South Africa.



## The Wizards Behind the Curtain

They're summoned to offices across campus to set up new laptops, cell phones, and networks. They're also lying in wait in Murdock Hall's garden level, keeping their doors open for students, faculty, and staff with technology issues that need a quick solution. You may only see them when you need them, but they're always there, and the systems they run keep MCLA working.

"These are the wizards behind the curtain," says Ian Bergeron, associate dean of information technology at MCLA. Among many other tasks, the 13 full-time IT staff, plus part-timers and many student workers, keep MCLA online, keep college devices stable, and make sure our data is available only to those who need it.

"We support things all the way out to the (public safety) cruisers," says Bergeron. And of course, IT also includes media services— Aaron Bienek and Forrest Houghton can be found at nearly every campus event, from Commencement to nighttime Student Government Association events. Technology encompasses much more than just computers now—considerations need to be made for mobile devices; streaming; networks and software used for student enrollment and retention; and even heating and cooling campus buildings. And most of it—literally hundreds of applications—runs in the background.

"The goal is not to have them worry about the technology," says HelpDesk Manager John Clark. "We want it to be supported, and easy to access, and there are multiple layers to that."

A major layer: Anticipating the needs of an ever-changing population. College students have always been ahead of the curve when it comes to new tech, and the turnover for tech trends is getting quicker every year. So IT sends out surveys and tries to anticipate future needs—and reserve enough bandwidth for those needs. For example, new MCLA students move in with Smart TVs and "Internet of Things" items like Bluetooth light bulbs and electronic assistants, but they still want access to traditional TV channels. IT makes sure there's enough space on the network for everyone's anything, going by or above Federal Communications Commissions broadband guidelines.

Another layer to this, of course, is tech help. Between 12 and 14 student workers are employed at the HelpDesk every semester, working alongside full-time staff to diagnose issues and give their clients some calm in the middle of a crisis.

HelpDesk Consultant Lorenzo Cristofolini '21, a McCann Tech grad, ultimately wants to be a



A select few of the College's IT staff.

professional programmer. "This was actually my first job," he says of his IT gig, which has been a good opportunity to learn things like Canvas, academic software used by MCLA faculty and students.

The IT staff take their roles seriously—if you've worked on campus, you're familiar with the customer service-oriented survey sent out after every IT visit. "You've got to love what you do," says Tracy Pierce, a database specialist. "If you don't, your counterparts can see that."

There are so many moving pieces when it comes to technology—and many different levels of user ability to consider. "If one of those pieces falls down, it can ruin an entire class, or an entire interaction between a student and a faculty member," says Clark. "That's why we need to be here."



# Dedicated Service:

## Retirees

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| <b>Diane Balduzy</b> , Sociology/Anthropology/Social Work | 40 years   |
| <b>Ellen Barber</b> , Education                           | 22.5 years |
| <b>Laura Brown</b> , Administration & Finance             | 19 years   |
| <b>Ronald Duprea</b> , Facilities                         | 39 years   |
| <b>Joseph Ebiware</b> , English/Communications            | 32 years   |
| <b>Andrew Hoar</b> , Fine & Performing Arts               | 33 years   |
| <b>Jeff Hooper</b> , Administrative Systems               | 20 years   |
| <b>Frances Jones-Sneed</b> , History                      | 22 years   |
| <b>Rita Karhan</b> , Counseling Services                  | 24 years   |
| <b>Carol Kordana</b> , Administrative Systems             | 22 years   |
| <b>Bruce LaPerle</b> , Facilities                         | 18 years   |
| <b>Mark Mancini</b> , Facilities                          | 10 years   |
| <b>James "Seamus" Morrison</b> , Administration & Finance | 32 years   |
| <b>Charles Oakes</b> , Administration & Finance           | 20 years   |
| <b>Denise Richardello</b> , President's Office            | 40 years   |

## A Career Dedicated to MCLA

It was particularly fitting that Denise Richardello '77, M.Ed. '81, Hon. D.P.S. '18 concluded her career at the College the same way she began—with a walk across the Commencement stage. More than 40 years ago, she began what would be her life's work at the College. In May, she accepted an Honorary Doctorate of Public Service as she completed a career filled with achievements as a result of her leadership, expertise, and dedication to MCLA.

Throughout her time at the College, Richardello served with six full-time College presidents in numerous roles. From admissions counselor to executive vice president, she devoted herself to making a difference to the campus, the community, and to the lives of others as she encouraged students of all ages to pursue higher education and careers filled with purpose and meaning. Her efforts will continue to be felt with the addition of the "Denise C. Richardello Honors Scholarship" (see page 51), which will benefit students in the Honors Program.



As the College's senior executive, Richardello provided leadership in the areas of enrollment management, marketing, communications, external relations, human resources, and strategic planning. With a keen attention to detail, she also provided oversight for many President's Office initiatives.

Her efforts both on and off campus led to increased enrollments for undergraduate and

graduate students alike. Drawing from MCLA's pool of talented young alumni, Richardello built a team of exemplary colleagues in the Office of Admission. Her guidance and direction led to great careers for this group of graduates, who follow her example and are well prepared to continue in her footsteps for years to come. Today, we thank her and congratulate her for a job well done.



# Economic Impact:

MCLA is pleased to continue contributing to the Berkshire economy—our students, faculty, and staff live here, eat here, spend here, and volunteer here, contributing \$150,000 worth of volunteer service hours in the region. Recent investments in our buildings, labs and equipment have enriched student opportunities for research, innovation, entrepreneurship, and other academic exploration. Gallery 51, located in downtown North Adams and run by MCLA’s Berkshire Cultural Resource Center, continues to draw thousands of visitors per year for art exhibits, special programs, poetry nights, and more. And we are consistently able to offer free, open-to-the-public lectures from intellectuals like Ta-Nehisi Coates, Ray Kurzweil, Cokie Roberts, and Gloria Steinem each year. We’re grateful to our community and the greater Berkshire region for its ongoing support, and proud to be here.

|                        | TOTAL        | TOTAL x MULTIPLIER VALUE |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| Operating Budget       | \$50,514,322 | \$101,503,479            |
| Employee Spending      | \$10,635,028 | \$21,370,025             |
| Undergraduate Spending | \$2,542,222  | \$5,108,341              |
| Graduate Spending      | \$64,770     | \$130,149                |
| Visitors Spending      | \$2,290,601  | \$4,602,734              |

All data is for the fiscal year 2017 unless noted.

**\$50,514,322**

**Total Operating Budget**

*Source: MCLA 2017 Audit*

**College Employees**

**306** | **120**  
Full Time | Part Time

**Employee Salary & Benefits**

\$25,321,496 Salary & Benefits

\$17,725,047 After tax (70%)

**\$10,635,028** Employee Spending (60%)

*Source: College employees from 2016-17 IPEDS Human Resource Survey  
Salary benefits from MCLA 2017 Audit  
Estimated employee spending rate from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*

**Undergraduate and Graduate Student Spending**

**\$2,542,222 + \$64,770 = \$2,606,992**

**(\$1,904 x 1,335.2 Undergraduate Students FTE)  
(\$300 x 215.9 Graduate Students FTE)**

*Source: 2016-2017 student spending data from MCLA Financial Aid office  
Undergraduate students FTE total from 2017 Massachusetts Department of Higher Education (DHE) annual enrollment file*

### Volunteer Hours

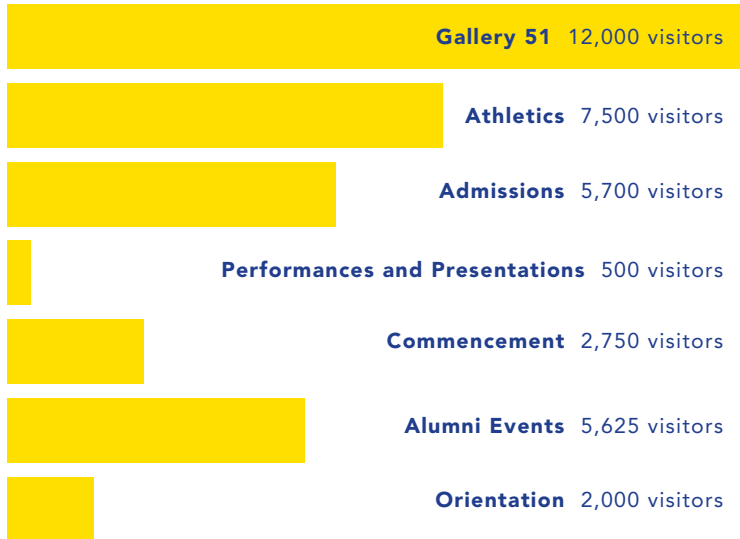
Service/Volunteer Hours = 2,676 + 2,364 = 5,040

Volunteer Time Value = \$29.88 (Massachusetts 2016 Value)

Service/Volunteer Hours Value = **\$150,595**

*Source: Student Volunteer Hours from the Center for Service and Citizenship  
Time Value from Independent Sector, Value of a Volunteer Hour 2016 State Value*

### Visitors



Total = **36,075**

Estimated per Visitor Spending: \$63.32

**Total Spending: \$2,284,269**

*Source: Visitors counts from department reports/estimates 2016-2017  
Visitor Spending from MASS MoCA Economic Impact by Center  
for Creative Community Development*

### Capital Projects

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| Feigenbaum Center for Science and Innovation | \$ 2,013,164 |
| Energy Performance Project (CIP)             | \$ 1,048,517 |
| Public Safety Building Renovation            | \$ 187,826   |
| Bowman Mac Lab                               | \$ 130,068   |
| Athletic Complex Lights                      | \$ 104,045   |
| Bowman Hall Renovation                       | \$ 87,510    |
| Venable Hall Water Infiltration Project      | \$ 85,127    |
| Softball Field Renovation                    | \$ 59,578    |
| Campus Center Pool Area Renovation (CIP)     | \$ 37,738    |

**Total Major Renovations: \$ 3,753,573**

*Source: MCLA 2017 Audit*







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Buffy Lord '98  
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COLLEGE OF  
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