

Westchester Community College Mount Vernon Extension Center Spring 2018 Newsletter



Inside this issue:

Women’s Mentorship Summit	1
Students Share: What’s Your Favorite Thing About the Mount Vernon Extension Center?	2
Mock Interview Workshop	2
Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month at Mount Vernon	2
Scholarship Workshop	2
Black History Month at Mount Vernon	4

SPRING ARRIVES IN MOUNT VERNON

Thank you for reading the Spring 2018 issue of the Mount Vernon Extension Center Newsletter. In this issue, we asked students, “What is your favorite thing about the Mount Vernon Extension Center?” They had lots to say, and we are proud to celebrate their success, victories, and feedback.

This issue also highlights special events and workshops at Mount Vernon this spring. To celebrate diversity, the Mount Vernon Activities Club sponsored special events for Black History Month, Women’s History Month, and Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month. In addition, the center held a mock interview workshop and a scholarship workshop, which were both well attended. Thank you for your readership and enjoy this issue!

MVAC HOSTS WOMEN’S MENTORSHIP SUMMIT

For the first time, the Mount Vernon Extension Center hosted an event in honor of Women’s History Month. Spearheaded by the leading ladies of the Mount Vernon Activities Club (MVAC), the Women’s Mentorship Summit brought students together with successful female leaders and professionals for an afternoon of mentorship. Mentors represented a variety of offices, functions, and backgrounds, from teaching faculty in the STEM field, athletic leaders, Mount Vernon Police Department’s Sergeant Jennifer Carpenter, and WCC’s own Chief Diversity Officer, Tiffany Hamilton.

The event was structured so that students and mentors met at small tables and were asked to discuss specific questions. Students then rotated to different tables to hear from different mentors about their experiences. Guiding questions asked mentors to reflect ...

Continued on page 4

STUDENTS TELL: WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE THING



Daryl Allen

"My favorite thing about the Mount Vernon Extension Center is the people. The teams at the front desk and the Academic Support Center are so helpful and friendly, and they always go above and beyond. The location is so convenient as well. I've had such a great experience here."



Helary Benedith

"My favorite thing about the Mount Vernon Extension Center is the professors. They are so engaging and always give us tips, advice, and take their time to explain things to us. They really believe in us as students, and that encourages us to be successful."



Lana Andrushko

"My favorite thing is Professor Sherly Moreau. It's my third semester and I've had other great professors, but Professor Moreau is so enthusiastic. She believes in us and expects a lot from us, which encourages us to do our best. She is supportive and gives us extra resources to help us."



Professor Ben Kwiatkowski, Environmental Science

"It's a great environment for education, it's a great location that's easy for people to get to, parking is excellent, and there are always great activities for students. The facilities are clean and the classrooms are great for teaching. But ultimately, my favorite thing is the students. They work so hard and never give up."



Sanjay Ramsundar

"I love being the president of the Mount Vernon Activities Club, and I've learned so much about leadership. I love meeting other students and planning events, and have even learned a lot about time management with help from my club advisors. Also, Professor Millie Pausco is the best professor I can imagine. She honestly taught me how to love math. She always says, 'we work smart, not hard!'"



Maybelline Thompson Smith

"As soon as I walk in to the lobby at Mount Vernon, someone is willing to help me. My classes are challenging but my professors always offer support. What I love most is the Academic Support Center. Even though it gets busy, tutors take their time and make sure you are learning. I never feel alone, and feel better after every time I visit."

MVAC SPONSORS MOCK INTERVIEW WORKSHOP

On February 26, the Mount Vernon Activities Club held a Mock Interview Workshop for students interested in gaining the skills needed to land a job or internship. Facilitated by Professor Gelaine Williams of Career Services, the workshop was attended by 15 students, who learned about how to prepare for and succeed during a professional interview. After reviewing important resources and engaging students in interactive interview preparation, Professor Williams challenged students to put what they learned into practice. The session concluded with attendees pairing off and simulating real interviews, trading off roles and providing constructive feedback for how to improve. We wish our students the best of luck in their upcoming interviews.



MOUNT VERNON HOSTS SCHOLARSHIP WORKSHOP

Every year, the Westchester Community College Foundation awards over \$1,000,000 in scholarships to students. On March 1, Julie McDermott from the Scholarship Office visited the Mount Vernon Extension Center to deliver an interactive workshop on how to complete the online scholarship application. Student and scholarship recipient Lamont McCrae kicked off the workshop with his own story, highlighting how receiving a scholarship helped him with finances in order to better focus on academics, and inspired him to apply for outside scholarships which he also received. Over 30 students attended, and Ms. McDermott stayed for hours working one on one with interested students. The feedback from students was overwhelmingly positive, and we look forward to many of our students receiving much needed scholarships for the 2018-2019 academic year. Thank you to the Scholarship Office and the Westchester Community College Foundation for your unwavering support for our students!

ABOUT THE MOUNT VERNON EXTENSION CENTER?

Jamil Sanders (left)

“As a security guard for the center, I am always impressed with the events sponsored by the Mount Vernon Activities Club and how they inspire and unify students. My favorite thing is seeing our students every day, who are all so different but all care about their education.”



Justin Rivers (right)

“My favorite thing is how much academic help the center provides. At the Mount Vernon Academic Support Center, the tutors are very patient and always break things down for me so that I can understand. I like seeing the same faces often.”



Princess Agyepong

“If I had to describe the Mount Vernon Extension Center in one word, I would say ‘welcoming’. I love the energy. Everyone - from the front desk to security, to tutors and professors - are so friendly and encouraging. But they push you to do your best. I visit the Academic Support Center often and can’t say enough good things about it. I recommend it to my classmates all the time.”



Rafael Gonzalez

“I love the Mount Vernon Extension Center because every day, I get to interact with some of the most pleasant people at WCC. Being from the Bronx, Mount Vernon is a convenient location and because of the flexible hours, I always get the help I need. The best thing is the help I receive from people who are invested in my success.”

Afnan Farea (left)

“Mount Vernon provides quiet space so I can study and focus, and I always find other students doing the same.”

Josephine Sanchez (right)

“I really like that we use a lot of technology in the classroom to help us learn. My professor always takes her time and makes sure we understand.”



Patricia Calero (middle)

“I’m very glad to have had a good professor who encourages us to ask questions. I love that so many people in my class are from different countries and cultures, and it makes it more fun to learn. Our ESL professor pushes us. This is the first time I have read a whole novel in English! I drive all the way from New Rochelle to be here because I prefer the Mount Vernon Extension Center. I feel safe and happy whenever I’m here.”

ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH EVENT OFFERS HENNA

For the first time, the Mount Vernon Extension Center celebrated Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month. On April 19, the student lounge at Mount Vernon was transformed for the themed event Arabian Days. Students in the lounge were transported to the ancient Middle East through music, decorations, food, and a professional artist offering mehndi, also known as henna. Sponsored by the Mount Vernon Activities Club, this event encouraged students to explore in a new cultural experience, to ask questions, and to celebrate our diverse world. Students enjoyed showing off the intricate artwork covering their hands, many of them learning about this practice for the first time. They even asked the henna artist many questions about the tradition. We look forward next year’s celebration of Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month.



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DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE KEN JENKINS SPEAKS AT BLACK HISTORY MONTH EVENT IN MOUNT VERNON



On February 12, the Mount Vernon Extension Center hosted an interactive workshop titled “Beyond Black History”. This event was featured as part of a month-long celebration of Black History Month at Westchester Community College. Held in the lecture hall of the Mount Vernon Extension Center, the room was packed with almost 50 students, faculty, and members of the Mount Vernon community.

Professor Glenetta Phillips, Program Specialist for the Center for Applied Learning and Co-Chair of the Black History Month Committee, welcomed guests to the event and invited them to attend other events during the month.

Next, keynote speaker Kevin McGill, Professor of Communications at WCC and Tier 1 Manager of the Veterans Supportive Services Program at Westcop in Mount Vernon, delivered his presentation. “Beyond Black History” challenged attendees to consider lesser-known black historical figures and influencers, and introduced their stories and accomplishments to an eager crowd. He also discussed the importance of recognizing black history outside of the month of February, and why it should be taught year-round at all educational institutions. The keynote presentation was followed by a dynamic question and answer session. When a question was posed about highlighting women in the study of black history, the crowd was fortunate that in attendance was Tiffany Hamilton, Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Westchester Community College, who delivered a poignant and inspiring response.

Next, a special guest addressed the crowd. Deputy County Executive Ken Jenkins congratulated attendees on taking time to participate in this event, and encouraged them to continue and enhance their civic engagement. Mr. Jenkins shared his own experiences growing up in Mount Vernon and climbing through the ranks in public service as a black man. Now, as the second most senior individual in county government, he shared both the honor and pride he feels to be the first black person to hold this position. He involved the audience by asking many questions and invited them to share their own experiences. He challenged them to exercise their rights and to aim high, offering special congratulations and encouragement to students in attendance.

Finally, both speakers were awarded special gifts, presented to them by student leaders, to thank them for such a successful and exciting evening. The event unified students, faculty and the greater Mount Vernon community and we look forward to supporting future events in honor of Black History Month.

CONTINUED: MVAC HOSTS WOMEN’S MENTORSHIP SUMMIT

Continued from page 1

... on their female role models, the advice they would give to their college-aged selves, how they practice self-care, the importance of mentorship, and more. Following the structured questions, students and mentors enthusiastically continued to engage in discussion, exchanging contact information and promising to keep in touch.

Students who attended were overwhelmingly inspired by the experience, and thanked mentors for taking the time to speak with them. MVAC Vice President Jessica Moreira messaged mentors following the event, reflecting that “It was amazing to hear the advice and stories

of such strong and successful women...You are all truly an inspiration.” Mentors also left feeling energized by student attendees, and encouraged students to reach out to them in the future. The event was a resounding success, and MVAC is already planning the March 2019 Women’s Mentorship Summit.

