



Fulton-Montgomery
Community College

Futures Made. Here.



Donald F. O'Connell
Dec. 9, 1927–Oct. 6, 2014

Violet E. (Stegich) O'Connell
Jan. 7, 1928–Nov. 30, 2012

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O'Connells Make Largest Donation in the History of FM

FM proudly announced the receipt of the largest private donation in the history of the institution; a gift anticipated to exceed \$2 million. Generously given by the late Donald and Violet O'Connell, the money will directly benefit student scholarships.

SUNY Chancellor Nancy L. Zimpher said, "This is a significant gift from two hard-working and successful Montgomery County residents who clearly saw the tremendous impact that FM has—not only on the students, faculty, and staff it serves—but on the entire community."

Johanna Duncan-Poitier, SUNY's Senior Vice Chancellor for Community Colleges and the Education Pipeline, said, "Support from our local citizens to our colleges and universities are critical

to the individual campus, as well as the SUNY system as we strive to ensure quality and excellence across our programs and facilities. FM is a shining example of how community colleges can prepare students for their future by working with the local community to provide key investments. This gift will go a long way toward promoting an environment of access, completion, and success for FM students."

To honor the O'Connell's and their generous donation, the College's Classroom Building is now named O'CONNELL HALL.

"This investment will help so many students pursue their dreams, we could not be more grateful," stated Lesley Lanzi, Executive Director of FM's Foundation. ▲



Members of the O'Connell family, Board of Trustees, and Foundation Board gather for a photo at the press conference announcing the donation.





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Alumni News
Fall 2015

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TheTOWER has been created to maintain ties between FM and its alumni, to convey information about current campus events, and to communicate information to alumni about their fellow Raiders.

Please include your name and contact information with an items submitted to TheTOWER. Please send only **copies** of original articles or newspaper clippings, since items may not be returned. TheTOWER and FM will not be held responsible for items lost in the mail.

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General information about FM:
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www.fmcc.edu

Visit London, England in Spring, 2016

FM will be offering a new class during the 2016 spring semester, International Business: Study Abroad. According to Accounting and Business Instructor Mark Swain, this is a special topics elective that includes an experiential learning objective with a study abroad component to London, England, during the College's Spring Break (March 18–24, 2016). Swain says the trip will focus on two topics: Swain will be leading a credit bearing course in International Business while Joel Chapin, Professor of Fine Arts, will be leading a non-credit course on Art and Culture. This trip is open to students, as well as faculty, staff, and the community-at-large.

“Students will study similarities and differences in the cultural and business practices of the United States and the United Kingdom. Business students will be visiting and studying at least one London based corporation and attending a lecture from a business professor of Hult International Business School. Participants will also get guided tours of popular London sites, from the Houses of Parliament, St. Paul’s Cathedral, and a trip afield to the largest castle in Europe, Windsor Castle,” says Swain.

To view the complete itinerary, visit:
efcollegestudytours.com/professors-trip/1723018EA



Mark Swain
Accounting and
Business Instructor



Joel Chapin
Professor of Fine Arts

For more details, contact Instructor Swain:
mark.swain@fmcc.suny.edu. ▲

Honoring Dr. Pynadath, a Friend and Colleague

FM’s Foundation hosted a reception in conjunction with the unveiling of a plaque honoring the late Dr. Varghese D. Pynadath. The plaque commemorates Dr. Pynadath’s forty-six years of service as a Professor and Dean at the College.

Located in O’Connell Hall, President Swanger, along with Dr. Pynadath’s family members, unveiled the

plaque to more than 100 guests in attendance.

A commemorative scholarship to honor Dr. Pynadath is presently being set up by his family through the Foundation. To make a donation or to learn more, contact The Foundation Office at fund.develop@fmcc.edu or (518) 736-FMCC (3622), ext. 8020. ▲



Back row left to right: FM Foundation Board Chair Del B. Salmon, Esq.; Robert Bentley (Dr. Pynadath’s son-in-law); Elizabeth Serena Bentley (Dr. Pynadath’s daughter); Rosy Pynadath (Dr. Pynadath’s wife); FM President Dr. Dustin Swanger; FM Foundation Executive Director Lesley Lanzi; and FM Foundation Administrative Assistant Diane C. Boslet

Front left to right: Elijah Davis, Aliyah Marie, and Eliana Rose Bentley (Dr. Pynadath’s grandchildren).

TheTOWER FACULTY FOCUS • Sharon P. Poling

Sharon P. Poling, Professor and Director of COCAL and Experiential Learning, is a lifelong resident of Gloversville who loved growing up in a small town close to her Italian extended family (her mom came from a family of 9; her dad, a family of 7). She attended Gloversville schools, graduated in 1970, and immediately continued her education at FM.

“I was the first generation in my family to attend college,” said Sharon. “I have two brothers who also attended FM which

FM’s vision is to be recognized as a model community college that offers quality education, excellence in student support, innovative approaches, and programs that reflect our values is in evidence on our campus.”

provided each of us with transfer opportunities to attend four-year institutions. I attended SUNY Potsdam majoring in Interdisciplinary Social Sciences in order to teach secondary Social Studies. I earned my permanent teaching certification after completing 30 graduate credits from various colleges. In 1997, I completed a Master of Science in Education from SUNY Oneonta in order to be considered for FM’s COCAL Director position. I had been the Assistant Director and upon the retirement of director Judy Campbell I needed to earn a Master’s degree.”

Sharon says when she was growing up, career exploration for girls was limited. “We pursued the traditional occupations—homemaker, secretary, nurse, and teacher. Teaching seemed the best fit at the time and it still is.”

Sharon’s first teaching position was in a parochial school, the former Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in Gloversville. From there she went to work in Workforce Development for Fulmont Development Facility in Fonda and eventually as an employee of Fulton County as an Occupational Assessment Counselor under the former Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA). “It was through this position that I offered workshops to FM’s Project LIFT program and was approached to apply for the position of Assistant Director of a new innovative

program—COCAL (Collaborative Career Learning). It was the perfect fit for my background in education and workforce development! If I were to have designed a dream job...this is it!” said Sharon.

As Director of COCAL and Experiential Education, Sharon experiences gratification in knowing that she provided the guidance that helped someone, such as a dislocated worker, return to the workforce with a new skill set. “And of course I’m grateful for the people, the students and my colleagues. I truly love FM; everyone here puts the ‘community’ in college.”

“FM is dynamic,” she continues. “Changes in curriculum are constant to meet today’s need for technology-driven and healthcare programs. Our vision ‘to be recognized as a model community college that offers quality education, excellence in student support, innovative approaches, and programs that reflect our values’ is in evidence on our campus.”

At FM, Sharon has been a member of the Executive Board of the Fulmont Association of College Educators (FACE), the faculty union, for as long as she can remember. “I have served as secretary, Student and Academic Services Faculty representative (formerly NTP), vice-president, and president, my current position. I have also served on Student Life, the College Senate, Academic Policy, Tech Prep Liaison, the committee that wrote our first sexual harassment policy, Middle States, and the 50th Anniversary Gala—I brought the NY Players to FM!”

Sharon married John (“Cap”) in 1976. They met after he graduated from high school.

He was one year Sharon’s senior and also attended FM. According to Sharon, Cap will tell you that she followed him to Potsdam to which Sharon says, “I guess he would be right!” They have two children. Justin graduated from FM and went on to SUNY IT earning a B.S. in Electrical Engineering Technology. He is a



50th Anniversary Gala



Sharon P. Poling

project estimator for a civil heavy construction company. Their daughter Jenna Davis has an M.S. in Music from Boston University. She previously taught music for the Johnstown School District and is currently a stay-at-home wife and mom to her husband Austin and daughter Alissondra. “They are expecting my second grandchild!” exclaims Sharon.

When asked if she could change anything about her life, Sharon responded, “I would love to break out in my best Frank Sinatra rendition of *My Way*—‘*Regrets, I have a few...*’ But #1 I can’t sing and #2 I would prefer to break out in *New York, New York* which is how all good times end in our family...and FM has been my family.”

After 32 years of service at FM, Sharon will be retiring in 2016. ▲



TheTOWER ALUMNUS FEATURE • Bryan Kosiba Class of 2012



Bryan (right) being sworn in as a Police Officer by Amsterdam Police Chief Gregory Culick.

Bryan Kosiba enrolled at FM after graduating from Broadalbin-Perth High School. Hearing great things about the program, he majored in Criminal Justice.

"I enjoyed every class I took but I really got the most out of my courses with Criminal Justice Associate Professor Paul Giudilli. He made a lasting impact on me," says Bryan. "Professor Giudilli had experience working in a Police Department for twenty years in Houston, Texas, where he held several different positions. Because of his

vast experience, he was always able to relate the material in class to a current event which allowed students to easily make the connection. His interest in and passion for the career was something he was able to pass on to several students; I know he got through to me. He always would advise students of new civil service exams announcements and helped us gain an understanding of what he or she needed to do to follow their dreams, giving them the best chance of success. I would say he was

one of the best professors I've ever had."

Currently, Bryan is a Police Officer for the City of Amsterdam. His long-term career goal is to one day be promoted to Detective or Sergeant, but for now, he is quite content in his current role.

To any person living in the Fulton or Montgomery County area looking to earn a higher education degree, Brian says to be sure to first look at FM. "It's just great to have a college, full of highly knowledgeable and experienced faculty, located so close to home. Even if someone is looking into transferring sometime down the road to another college, FM is the perfect place to start. If someone is not sure what they'd like to study, then FM is definitely the place to start. With the help of advisors and the guidance of faculty, a student will know what field they should be pursuing; they just need that push that will be given to them at FM."

Being a young officer, Bryan realizes he still has lots to learn by being on-the-job, but he notes, "Thanks to my education from FM and my life experiences I'm gaining daily as a Police Officer, I'm confident I'll reach all of my career goals." ▲

TheTOWER ALUMNA FEATURE • Kayla Duesler Class of 2008

Kayla Duesler moved to Gloversville from Utica when she was 15 and graduated from Gloversville High School. A go-getter, Kayla worked several jobs to make ends meet, including delivering newspapers and pizzas as well as babysitting. Wanting to make something more of herself, she decided to enroll at FM to earn a college degree; she would be the

first in her family to do so.

"I wanted to be a Marine Biologist and knew that I could not afford to move to Florida, the Bahamas, or California for this type of schooling with no parents (Kayla's mother passed away one month prior to her high school graduation) or immediate family to help support me. I decided that FM would be my first step to accomplishing my dreams."

Kayla's thoughts changed after taking a course with Associate Professor of Psychology Dr. Paula Brown-Weinstock. "The way she taught the class, talked to her students, and her overall teaching methods absolutely complemented my learning style and I was instantly hooked on the psychology profession," says Kayla.

After graduating from FM in 2008, Kayla worked full-time for two years before continuing her education. She graduated from University at Albany with a B.A. in Psychology and enrolled in an online

program at Walden University, where she earned a Master's in Mental Health Counseling, graduating with highest honors and membership in the Chi Sigma Iota Counseling Honors Society.

Kayla plans to finish the required 3,000 post-graduate hours required by NYS before sitting for the licensure test for Mental Health Counselors. She is currently working at St. Mary's Healthcare as a Clinical Mental Health Counselor and Crisis Worker.

Kayla is also proud to be an FM alumna. Her advice to anyone considering attending FM is simple; "Do it"! She states: "You owe it to yourself to get a good education at a great rate. The professors are great, the class sizes are just right, you will build a great social network, and you will get the same, if not better, education than a larger, four-year institution would provide—and at a huge cost savings. Believe me, FM is the right decision—for anyone!" ▲



Kayla (right) with her friend Christine Williams. "We started and ended the Master's program together; we were each other's savior at times; When either of us was ready to give up, we were there to push each other through."

TheTOWER Fall Exhibits • Perrella Gallery

■ Alumni Invitational Exhibition Past, Present, Future

The Perrella Gallery featured the works of 19 artists who are alumni of the College's Fine Arts program. This exhibition was the fourth Alumni Exhibition since the Gallery's inception in 1999 and occurs every five years as part of the Gallery's offerings. The artists graduated between 1970 and 2015.

Joel Chapin, Professor of Fine Arts and Perrella Gallery Director, sought alumni who have made a commitment to continue to produce art. He says, "It is rewarding to see the diversity and quality of art made by this group, all of whom had FM as a starting place for their artistic training."

■ Fiber Currents / Current Fiber

Twenty-one artists from across the U.S. are represented in this exhibition which closes December 18. "These artists have all exhibited in major national and international venues, garnering honors, awards and recognition for their personal creative approaches. Most have been published in multiple art books," said Chapin.

Curated by Judith Plotner of Bleecker, each selected participant employs interesting techniques and a unique vision and approach to the fiber medium. Plotner has spent the last 25 years living in the Adirondacks after relocating from New York City. Her work bears the influence of both urban and rural living. She has an extensive art background and has worked in fiber for the last 35 years.

"FM was honored to have Judith Plotner curate this exhibition for the Perrella Gallery, now in its sixteenth year. This exhibition is a rare opportunity to see contemporary fiber work in our region," says Chapin. ▲



Academic Advisor Christie Crawford viewing a work in the College's Alumni Art Show.



Judith Plotner speaks at the reception.



Professor Joel Chapin Curator Judith Plotner

TheTOWER 2015 Distinguished Alums

On Friday, November 20, the Foundation of FM honored **Susanne Guttenberg, Class of 1977**, and **Dave Northrup, Class of 1966**, at its Ninth Annual Distinguished Alumni Awards Dinner and Scholarship Recognition Ceremony held at Johnstown's Holiday Inn.

The evening included keynote speaker Rick Frasier, President of Frasier Enterprises Inc.; recognition of FM's Scholarship Program donors and student recipients; and, special recognition of Paul Guttenberg, one of the key people in helping to promote and establish Fulton-Montgomery Community College. ▲



*Above: Susanne Guttenberg and Dave Northrup
Right: Paul and Susanne Guttenberg (center) with four generations of family*



TheTOWER PERSPECTIVE • Girl Power

By Electrical Technology Student Molly Voss— Class of 2017



Molly Voss

From a young age my mother has always preached “Girl Power” to me. She had a lot of books about famous women in history and she embedded in me the idea that even though I’m a girl, I can still do anything a boy can do; I could aspire to be anything, the world was mine for the taking.

When I was around eight years old, I decided that I wanted to join the children’s wrestling team at the local YMCA. I wasn’t the only girl to sign up for the class, but I was the only girl who ever showed up! My mom supported my new hobby, and even defended me to other moms who were somewhat judgmental and confused as to why she would let me pursue a “boys’ sport.” Despite the chatter on the sidelines, I’m proud to say I was one of the best in the class. Once I started at the middle school, a friend of mine and I tried to join the wrestling team, but the coach told us it was for “boys only.” We were both really disappointed, but it hasn’t stopped my motivation to just be myself and pursue the hobbies and life that I want.

I decided to pursue a degree in Computer Technology at FM because I’ve always loved working with computers. I really enjoyed the C++ class that I took in high school; it opened me up to the idea of becoming a computer programmer. I love writing code, and I especially love feeling accomplished after I’ve successfully completed a working program.

As part of the Computer Technology program, I am taking some Electrical Technology courses, too. This semester, I’m the only female in a class of about 40 students. Despite that, I don’t feel any discomfort in the class. I haven’t experienced any discrimination and my gender hasn’t been an issue—or even a topic—so far. Only once, on the very first day of class, did another student make a comment about how the professor probably won’t have a hard time remembering my name because I am the only girl! I took no offense to that. In fact, I like the idea that being the only female in the class is in some ways an advantage. Sometimes the other students point out that I’m ahead in the material and I’m quick with the labs, and I’m really proud of that.

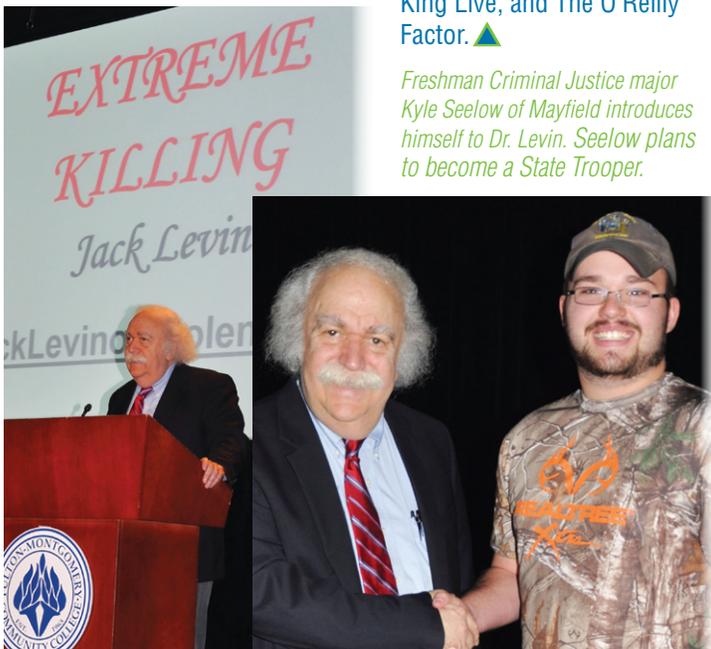
Finally, a word of advice to young girls and any females out there who are considering entering a male-dominated field. Things have come a long way and there’s no good reason that anyone should sell themselves short. Pursue whatever career you have interest, talent, and sincere motivation to work hard at accomplishing. The only thing that could hold you back are your own limitations and fears. ▲

TheTOWER • Dr. Jack Levin

Extreme Violence Expert Addressed Students

On Thursday, October 22, students filled the theater for a free Student Activities Board-sponsored presentation by Dr. Jack Levin on understanding serial and mass murder. Dr. Levin has been featured on NBC Nightly News, ABC World News Tonight, CBS Evening News, 20/20, 48 Hours, and Dateline NBC and most national talk shows including Today, Good Morning America, Oprah, Larry King Live, and The O’Reilly Factor. ▲

Freshman Criminal Justice major Kyle Seelov of Mayfield introduces himself to Dr. Levin. Seelov plans to become a State Trooper.



TheTOWER • Volleyball

Great Season for Raiders Volleyball

The Lady Raiders Volleyball team had a terrific season; they headed to the Regional Semi-finals against #1 seed Monroe Community College. Although FM played well, Monroe was able to pull out the win and defeated the Raiders in three straight sets.

Mountain Valley Conference (MVC) Player of the Year Jenna Putnam and MVC 1st Team Player Carly Howe were named to the All-Tournament Team. The Raiders ended their season at 22–9 overall and 10–0 in Conference play. Coach Rachael Salvione was named MVC Coach of the Year and led her team to win the Conference for the first time since 1997. ▲



Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall Coming to FM

FM is proud and excited to announce the College has been selected to showcase the Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall. From September 8–12, 2016, the Wall, which is a three-fifth scale of the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C., standing six feet tall at the center and covering almost 300 feet from end to end, will be displayed on campus.

There are 58,272 names listed on the wall, exactly as it is in Washington, D.C. The Wall lists only those Veterans in the U.S. Military who served in the designated war zone. While this is an event being hosted by FM, it will very much be a community

and regional event. Volunteers will set up the wall (which takes approximately 5–6 hours) as the Wall arrives in several trailers with a motorcade escort.

The FM Veteran Club has agreed to take on a large part of the responsibility of fundraising for the expenses, as well as providing volunteers for coordinating the event and volunteering over the four-day visit next fall.

For more information on how local organizations or individuals can get involved, contact Christie Crawford, Academic Advisor, at (518) 736-FMCC (3622) ext. 8163, or at Christie.Crawford@fmcc.edu. ▲

Below: Veteran students and staff, FM's Veteran Support staff, administration, and guests, gather for a photo after the "Thank You for Your Service" luncheon in the College's Large Lounge.



Rad Tech Students Win Statewide Student Quiz Bowl

by Radiologic Technology students Heidi Renzi and Rachel Shannon

On October 22, 2015, the Radiologic Technology Class of 2016 set out to Corning, NY, for the New York State Society of Radiologic Sciences (NYSSRS) Annual Conference. Throughout the three-day conference, the class participated in numerous lectures; student radiographers had the opportunity to meet and interact with radiologic technologist students enrolled in various programs from across the state.

The highlight of the trip occurred Saturday when three of FM's students competed in the NYSSRS Student Bowl for the first time. The Student Bowl consists of two rounds of 40 multiple-choice questions each related to the art and science of radiography. The questions are rapidly flashed on a screen where the students have 10 seconds or less to answer each question. During this intense two-hour competition, teams of students from New York State Radiologic Technology programs vie for first, second, or third place.

The members of the FM team included Zack Gordon, Heidi Renzi, and Rachel Shannon; Keelin Nares, Melissa Nasso,

and Heather Robinson were alternates; Program Director Cindy Close was their coach. At the conclusion of the event, excitement could not be contained with the announcement of FM's team capturing First Place! The NYSSRS conference was certainly an experience and opportunity the students and their teachers will never forget. ▲



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