

The Mount Observer

“Voices of the students of Mount Wachusett Community College”

First-Generation Panelists Share Tips for Success

by Sophia Schlegelmilch

OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

Panelists shared their experiences as first-generation students in November at the Gardner campus in celebration of National First-Generation College Students Day.

Current MWCC students Nicole Leeper and Janice Bergeron served as panelists alongside faculty and staff members Laurie Occhipinti, Dean of the School of Liberal Arts Education, Humanities and Communications; Margaret Jaillet, Assistant Dean of the School of Health Professions, Public Service Programs and Social Sciences; Briana Pena, Career Development Coach; and Train Wu, Academic Counselor for the Department of Access and Transitions. The discussion was moderated by Gaurav Khanna, Director of the Visions Program.

Members of the panel recalled the struggles they had to face during their college education, which included



Photo courtesy of MWCC

MWCC Student Janice Bergeron talks about her experience going to college during a panel discussion.

food poisoning, learning disabilities, difficulty with transportation and time management, and experiences with poverty and gangs. Wu offered advice for students who might be struggling, saying, “You have to know your ‘why’ when you want to quit. Your why’s got to be big enough for you to stick around and to do what you intend to do.”

“The advice I’d give everyone,”

said Pena, “is believe in yourself and find your support system.” She and the other panelists recommended that students seek out friends, family, professors, and programs such as TRIO and Visions, for support.

“The Mount has such a large support system,” agreed Bergeron. “Ask for help. Don’t quit. There are so many people on this campus who can be reached at literally the snap of

a finger.”

All of the panelists agreed that their families played a role in inspiring them to overcome obstacles and finish college. Pena and Jaillet said their parents made education a priority in their lives, as did Occhipinti’s grandfather.

Wu, who came to the United States from Thailand at age 11, said he “did everything” for his mother, who never had a chance to get an education but worked hard to support him and his siblings.

Bergeron and Leeper said that their children gave them a reason to seek out higher education.

“This is a good opportunity for me, and for [my children] as well,” said Bergeron, a Human Services major and mother of five, “because I’m showing them, my children, that it doesn’t matter how long it’s been, that I can still succeed.”

Leeper, a Health Sciences major, also added, “It wasn’t just for my daughter, it was for myself, to prove to myself that I could do it.”

Massachusetts Inmates Get a Second Chance



Photo courtesy of mass.gov

North Central Correctional Institution in Gardner

by Sophia Schlegelmilch

OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

Even prison walls can’t hold back MWCC’s mission to serve the educational needs of the community.

Since 2016, MWCC has offered certificates in Small Business

Management to inmates of North Central Correctional Institute in Gardner and Massachusetts Correctional Institute in Shirley.

“The whole goal of Mount Wachusett is to transform people’s

lives,” said Stephanie Marchetti, Director of Academic Support & Testing Services, “and this really allows us to do that in a direct, obvious way.”

According to Marchetti, the Small Business Management Certificate was chosen because it best supports the goals of these inmates upon release, many of whom want to start their own businesses as carpenters, electricians, or other trade professionals. The credits earned through these classes also transfer easily into other business majors if these students want to further their college education after release.

In order to participate, inmates must qualify for a federal Pell grant as their tuition is paid in full by the Second Chance Pell Pilot Program,

a US Department of Education program that began in 2015 “to test whether participation in high quality education programs increases after expanding access to financial aid for incarcerated individuals,” according to the Department of Education website.

According to Marchetti, inmates are also required to apply to MWCC and qualify for college-level English through a placement test. They must be scheduled for release within 5 years and meet certain behavioral requirements. Participants can be removed from the program if they are violating the prison’s behavioral rules, but Marchetti said the programs have a very high retention rate.

For incarcerated students in the

Looking to Transfer? ComCom's the Answer



Image from capecod.edu

by Gabriela Villa
Observer Contributor

Transfer Advisor Sarah Pingeton urged students to relax about the transferring process and to consider transfer programs such as Commonwealth Commitment and Mass Transfer.

The most common challenge students face in the transferring process is not knowing where to start, said Pingeton.

“Once someone gets going it’s not that difficult of a process, and I’m happy to help,” she said. “It’s simpler than you think it is. And

yes, even you can do it. You can get your Bachelor’s degree. We’ll get you there.”

The main point for students to consider when deciding where they want to go is the fit, said Pingeton. “The school can be the right price, have the right program--everything you want--but if you get on the campus and just don’t fit there, it will be much harder to be successful.”

Most students choose to apply to only one school that they have their heart set on, most commonly UMass Amherst or Fitchburg State, Pingeton said. Both schools are under the

Commonwealth Commitment and Mass Transfer programs, which help to ensure students’ acceptance into certain colleges.

The Commonwealth Commitment is a transfer program that is available to students who never take semesters off, remain full-time students, and maintain at least a 3.0 GPA. It applies to every UMass or state school and freezes tuition costs, which normally go up every year.

This means that if students decided on Commonwealth Commitment their first year at MWCC, they would only have to pay the ‘18-’19 cost of tuition for their second year and the ‘18-’19 tuition cost at whichever college they decide to transfer to.

Mass Transfer is a statewide transfer agreement with a longer list of majors than the Commonwealth Commitment. If a student maintains a 2.5 GPA they are guaranteed to transfer to a college within the program as long as their GPA also meets that school’s requirements. The benefit of Mass Transfer is \$1,000 a year for the student.

Cost is another major factor that students should consider when deciding where they want to transfer. “They saved money here which is a great start, but I don’t recommend getting into \$100,000 worth of debt for 2 years of college,” Pingeton said.

Students can start thinking about where they want to transfer as soon as they start at MWCC, said Pingeton. The first semester is a good time to start, but students can still begin the transfer process at the beginning of their final semester.

Pingeton recommended taking tours of colleges, which she suggested doing before applying. Touring before applying can occasionally waive the application fee.

Pingeton said that she is happy to meet with anyone, whether their question is simple or complicated. There are also 2 designated transfer counselors in the Visions program and other advisors who are knowledgeable about the transfer process.

New Law in Mass has Passed at Last

by Sophia Schlegelmilch
OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

Ballot Question 3, a referendum on Massachusetts Public Accommodation Law, passed with almost 68% approval.

Question 3 asked voters if they agreed with the 2016 decision to add gender identity to the list of statuses protected from denial of service or accommodation in public places. The law also controversially included provisions to allow individuals to use spaces that are traditionally divided by gender, such as restrooms and locker rooms, in a manner consistent with their self-identified gender.

With enough “No” votes, the law would have been rolled back to a previous version which would no longer include gender identity in the

list of protected statuses.

In speaking before the election, Ayana Brodeur-Edmonds, President of the Student Sexuality and Gender Alliance, said, “It’s been very stressful for a lot of people. It could definitely change a lot and make things harder for people to get the services they want and need.”

The campaign against the law was led by a group called “Keep MA Safe,” who, according to their website at www.keepmasafe.org, oppose the law because it “endangers the privacy and safety of women and children in public bathrooms, locker rooms, showers, dressing rooms, and other intimate places” and could hold people criminally or financially liable if they try to stop someone from entering one of these spaces on the basis of their gender identity.

A 2016 report by Attorney General Maura Healy’s office concluded that “Misuse of sex-segregated facilities is exceedingly rare,” and that the law did not “protect anyone, regardless of gender identity, who engages in improper or unlawful conduct in a sex-segregated facility or elsewhere.” The report also instructed business owners to remove patrons from their establishments or contact law enforcement in the event of such conduct.

The Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law published a study in September 2018 comparing crime statistics in Massachusetts to areas that do not have similar public accommodation laws. “Massachusetts’ public accommodations nondiscrimination laws that include gender identity do

not affect the number or frequency of criminal incidents in restrooms, locker rooms or changing rooms,” the study found. “In addition, reports of privacy and safety violations in these places are exceedingly rare.”

Brodeur-Edmonds agreed that evidence to suggest these kinds of incidents occur is lacking. She also argued that it would be more disruptive to the student body if transgender students are forced to use facilities that don’t match their gender presentation.

“Whether you’re male, female, non binary, transgender, everybody’s still human, so why can’t we allow everybody to have their basic human rights?” Brodeur-Edmonds added. “As long as nobody’s hurting each other, just let people be.”

Mass. Inmates

>>> continued from page 1

program, the learning environment mirrors the campus learning environment “almost exactly,” said Marchetti. “They are completing work at the same level of rigor as they would at a class on campus.”

Being inside the prison poses some unique challenges, however.

“The hardest part is trying to figure out how to run classes without the internet, for sure,” Marchetti said.

Instead, teachers use offline databases to simulate the internet-based work that the courses require. Travel between different areas of the facility is strictly controlled, so class schedules must be structured around those movements. “Sometimes, due to what’s going on in the prison, you can’t take in paper and pencils, you can’t take in paper clips, things can’t be stapled,” added Marchetti.

In spite of these challenges, Marchetti said the tutors love working in the prisons. “They can see the difference that it makes in the attitude of the inmates, that they have something to look forward to. They’re working on a goal. They can actually make realistic plans for when they get out.”

The first class of students graduated from the program, which takes twelve to eighteen months to complete, in summer of 2018. According to Marchetti, earning an education while they serve their time reduces inmates’ rate of recidivism, meaning they are less likely to reoffend. “It will change their lives for the positive, and the lives of their family members,” she said. “It is one less thing that they have to figure out how to do on their own when they get out.”

Come Work for Us!

Interested in becoming a member of the *Mount Observer* team?

Contact us at mountobserver@mwcc.mass.edu.

Work Study positions are available to those who qualify! See Scott Farris in Admissions for details.



Awareness Campaign Addresses Suicidal Pain



Image by amenclinicphotos ac on flickr

by Mark Revesai

OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

Leominster campus students taking Introduction to Psychology embarked on a suicide awareness campaign as part of their service learning that culminated in a display on the Gardner campus.

The students picked suicide

awareness because each one of them who participated had a story to tell about suicide and how it affected them individually and as a group. They wanted to talk about how people with suicidal thoughts were all around us, and we should listen to them and pay attention to what they have to say.

It is also important to understand the various triggers of suicide. Different occupations have their unique set of challenges. Depending on what an individual is engaged in they face a different set of challenges. For example, a new employee may become stressed because they do not feel that they have been accepted within the group of fellow employees.

Officer Casanova, a United States Army recruiter, said, “People in some occupations work above normal stress levels,” and he said that if they perceive that nobody is paying attention to them they could

become suicidal.

The group’s awareness campaign was showcased at the main campus in October and caught the attention of other students.

Suzanne Eglington, a Psychology student who led the campaign, lost a friend to suicide 30 years ago and she felt that carrying out the awareness was critically important. She said that no life should be lost through preventable suicides.

She said, “He reached out, but we thought he was kidding.” Eglington’s friend talked about not wanting to live because his parents were going through a divorce.

“He felt lost and nobody thought he was serious,” said Eglington. “We would like to make people aware that there are steps and plans they could make to ease the burden of suicidal thoughts.”

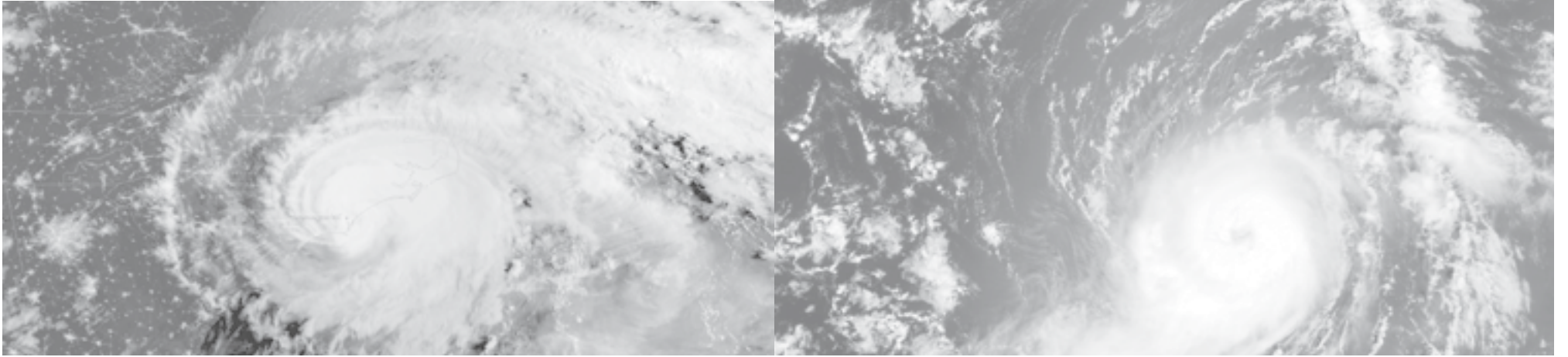
According to Eglington, it is important for people to know that they are not alone, and that it is

okay to speak out. “Knowing what I know today, I would have alerted authorities about my friend’s behavior and the way he spoke about wanting to die,” said Eglington. “Unfortunately, 30 years ago the help available today was not there.”

The class recommended that when someone is behaving oddly someone should befriend them, listen to them, and also initiate a plan for them. Recommending professional help and notifying loved ones was also part of the solution.

Shelly Nicholson, Psychology professor, said that she was proud of the students for their choice. Nicholson further stated that the material designed during the campaign was forwarded to Melissa Manzi, the Mental Health counselor.

A Dire Warning Concerning Global Warming



Images from Wikimedia

Hurricane Florence, left, passed over the Carolinas in early September, while Hurricane Michael, right, hit Mexico beach in Florida. Both left huge amount of damage in their wakes.

by Dylan Cernoia

OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

In the wake of the two hurricanes, Michael and Florence, that hit the East Coast in 2018, one professor said that these storms might be proof of a much larger problem.

Tom Montagno, Biology professor, said global warming is contributing to the severity of the two hurricanes that hit Florida. Global warming has many negative effects including melting polar ice caps, causing water levels to rise, and flooding. However, it also creates warmer oceans, which Montagno said, “fuels a hurricane.” “That’s why that last hurricane became a tropical storm to almost a category 5 hurricane in two

days,” said Montagno.

The reason warm water feeds hurricanes is because warm water is lighter than cold water and it is sucked into the vortex easier.

However, Montagno also said, “I don’t know that global warming is giving us more hurricanes, but I think the consensus is that they are more intense because the oceans are warmer.” He also pointed out that this is a global issue affecting not only the severity of hurricanes but also typhoons.

While severe hurricanes are symptoms of global warming, the cause is humanity. The most important thing for students to know,

Montagno said, is “To understand that it’s real, that it’s human caused, and that it will affect in some ways your life as you grow older.”

Montagno explained if, for instance, you travel a lot by car or plane, your carbon footprint will be bigger than someone who has a shorter commute.

However, the biggest contributor to global warming comes from companies specializing in fossil fuels. “Most of the Co2 comes from fossil fuels,” Montagno said.

Even if a company does not explicitly work with fossil fuels, often times they purchase products which contribute to global warming.

Even if the entire world stopped contributing to global warming by switching to renewable energy and more environmentally friendly products and practices, the situation would take some time to improve. Montagno said, “If we were to stop putting carbon into the atmosphere tomorrow, the Co2 level would still rise... it’s a kind of delayed process. It’s still going to increase and then it will start to decrease. How long will that take? That’s speculation.”

Even though some argue the cause and claim that other factors contribute to global warming, it’s undeniable that it’s occurring.

“We have to adapt,” said Montagno.

‘Reef’er Madness

by Cassie Roy

ASSISTANT EDITOR

The Great Barrier Reef, located off the coast of Australia, is almost at the end of its’ road as it bleaches away its’ remaining color.

The coral reef is approximately 500,000 years old. As of 1998, the reef was filled with beautiful colors that is a result of the 600 types of hard and soft coral that are stacked on each other to create the reef. Over the past 20 years, a process called bleaching has slowly replaced these colors with a solid white coating.

The process of bleaching occurs when the oceans waters raise in temperature, sometimes by just a few degrees. According to the great barrier reefs website, when the water gets too warm the coral excrete the algae that lives inside them which causes the coral to turn completely white. As a result, the coral is also no longer living. The reef currently

stretches about 1,400 miles long and losing this destroys the homes, food, and mating grounds for all varieties of fish.

According to Heather Conn, Paleontology professor, “It’s predicted that 90% will be gone in our student’s lifetime.” Conn visited the reef in its’ prime back in 1994 during a three-month study abroad program through her school. Her two children often beg her to take them before the reef is officially gone. “I want to remember it the way I saw it,” said Conn.

Climate change is happening before our very eyes. There is hope, however, of slowing down the process. “We need to acknowledge that it’s happening and really start changing what we’re doing; fix regulations so that we can stop climate change and slow the bleaching of our oceans,” said Conn.

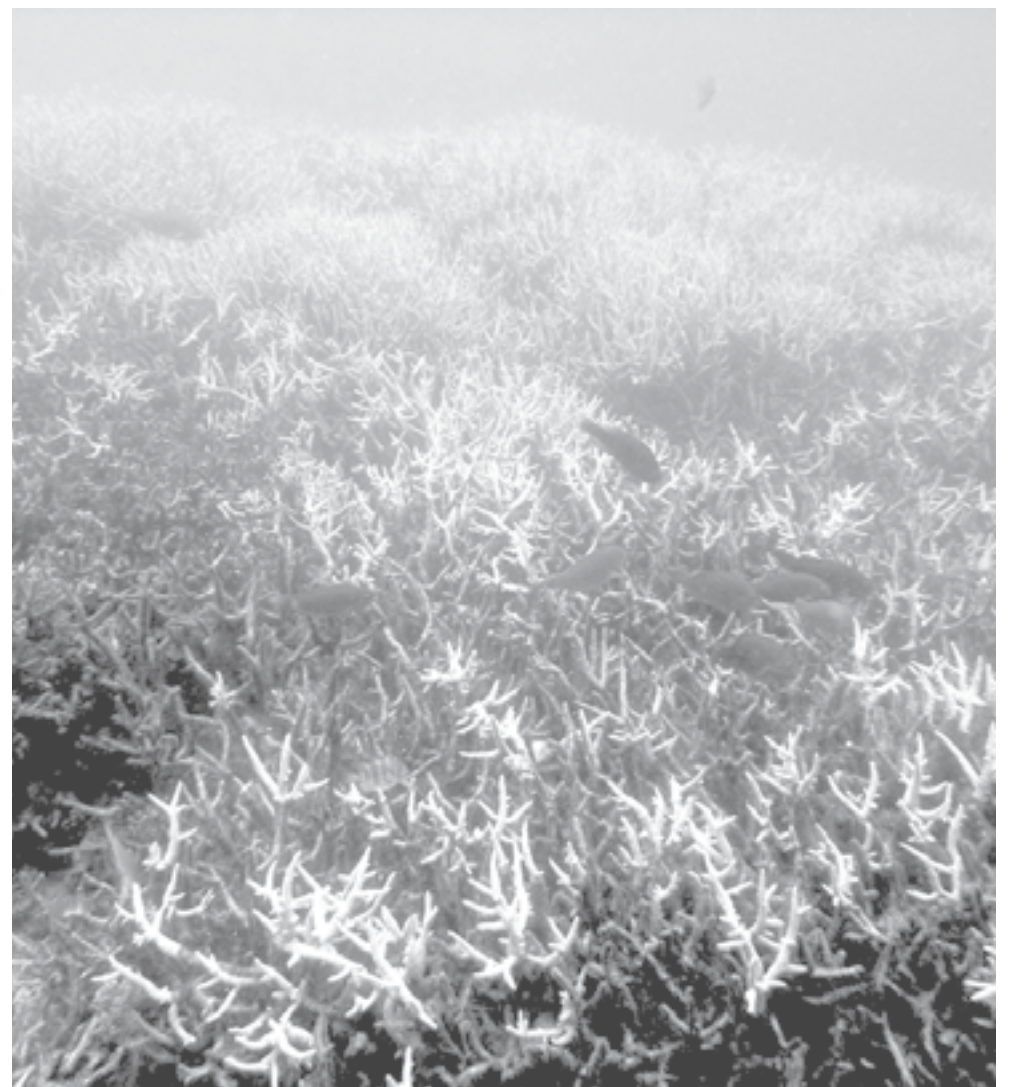


Image by Acropora, via Wikimedia

Coral bleaching is a serious issue affecting large amounts of the Great Barrier Reef, as well as other coral reefs throughout the Earth’s oceans.

PROFILE

David Wyman: Political Poet Shares His Passion



Photo by Betsabee Torres

Professor David Wyman

by Alexa Russo

OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

David Wyman, English Professor, poet and father, offered advice for students who want to get published and who are looking for an audience.

Wyman said his poetry book, *Proletariat Sunrise*, was a “discovery” for him. He learned what his writing style was like and he said that he also gained new insights. His book contains things he thinks about, which Wyman says is not the mainstream poetry. Wyman writes political poetry, which is where he said he found his audience.

A discovery for him included a line of poetry from his book which reads, “In a climate where more and more identities are expressed by consumer choices.”

Wyman’s success lies with his daughter, who gave him inspiration on writing many of his poems. Before Wyman’s daughter was born, he began writing poems for her. He said, “I found my voice writing to my daughter.” The book is dedicated to her and she photographed the cover page. Wyman said, “It was a good father-daughter project.”

Advice for wanting to publish a book for students from Wyman is different from many of the

mainstream ideas. Wyman said, “Do not write to get published, write for yourself.” Wyman was rejected many times while attempting to get his book published, but he was finally able to find an audience and get published once he started to write for himself.

Wyman’s message to young writers who want to publish a book is to “Keep at it, don’t give up.”

“Do not write to get published, write for yourself.”

– Professor David Wyman

Wyman found his passion for poetry when he became a student at MWCC. Before this, he attended Leominster High School but enjoyed MWCC very much because he said there was an importance for literature and poetry. Wyman became infatuated with a poem he heard in class as a young student named “The Lovesong of J. Alfred Prufrock.” He said, “I didn’t realize poetry could make me feel like that.”

Wyman received an Associate’s degree from MWCC, then went on to Fitchburg State University. After that, he earned his teaching degree and taught courses in high school. He then earned a graduate degree at the University of Southern New Hampshire. Along with being a professor and an author, Wyman enjoys tinkering on his electric guitar, reading, and writing.

In addition to all his achievements, Wyman said he would want people to remember him as a good father and someone who tried to make a difference. He admits “it would be cool” to have made a contribution.

Mark Revesai: Setbacks, Hurt Backs, and Comebacks



Photo by Betsabee Torres

Mark Revasi

by Zach Pavlosky

EDITOR IN CHIEF

Mark Revesai, Accounting major at Nichols College, talked about the obstacles he’s had to overcome throughout his life and how he stayed positive despite the setbacks.

Revesai, 51, worked as an internal auditor back in his home country of Zimbabwe where he received his banking certification from the Institute of Bankers. In 2002, Revesai came to the U.S.

Revesai wanted to continue working in accounting at MWCC, saying, “Most auditors have accounting backgrounds and, therefore, it would be the best way for me to get back to the audit field.” However, they denied his credentials and he had no option but to start from scratch.

When asked how he manages to keep a positive disposition in the face of adversity, Revesai asserted, “As an immigrant, my choices were self-pity or doing something to improve myself. I chose to stay focused.”

In 2017, Revesai received his Associate Degree in Accounting.

Revesai also worked as a Certified Nursing Assistant and “liked it so much” that he gave serious

thought to enrolling in the nursing program. Ironically, he suffered a back injury. “That was the end of my career in the healthcare field,” said Revesai. His injury made it impossible to “work in the same capacity” and resulted in Revesai being unemployed for almost two years.

Revesai needed to find a “sedentary” job and being an Uber driver fit the bill. Revesai started his Uber driving career in 2014 in Boston, where he said he has met many “interesting characters with various backgrounds.” Some of those characters include doctors and even politicians.

When asked if he is content being an Uber driver, Revesai said, “Pretty much. My hope is to drive part-time, eventually.” Revesai believes driving is the “best job” because of the “flexible working hours” and said, “I have designed my driving schedule around my school schedule.”

Revesai mentioned how his family is “quite impressed, happy, and very supportive” of the progress he has made in his life.

For those who have struggled, or are currently struggling in life, Revesai offered words of wisdom in the form of a quote. The quote is from Roy T. Bennett and reads, “You are not the victim of the world, but rather the master of your own destiny. It is your choices and decisions that determine your destiny.”

Revesai lives in Leominster, MA and is a husband and father of two boys, the oldest of whom serves in the U.S. Air Force. Revesai enjoys playing and watching soccer and jogs. “At my age, pushing five miles can be hard,” joked Revesai.

Let Your Voice be Heard!

Send your stories, poetry, artwork, photography, or other content to

mountobserver@mwcc.mass.edu

Shopping for Christmas? You Don't Want to Miss This!

by Brittany Eldridge

OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

With the holidays rapidly approaching, professors and students provided advice on how to create low-cost holiday gifts using skills they learned in their classes.

Leslie Cullen, a Graphic Design Professor, said that graphic designers can use their graphic design software and fine art skills to customize t-shirts, greeting cards, mugs, bags, blankets, calendars, and virtually anything. Students can design their own greeting cards and print them on cardstock at their homes or by using a printing website such as *cafepress*.

com or *personalizationmall.com*. If the student has a family member with a favorite character or particular interest, then they can design a t-shirt based on that interest and print them through a printing website or local shop.

For those interested in digital gifts, Professor Cullen said that students can design their own CDs and videos. In addition, CDs can be kept in CD covers with sleeves customized specifically for the recipient. Students can use video software to design their own slideshows and preserve important memories captured in photos and videos.

Sophia Schlegelmilch, a student at MWCC, suggested that students make their own candy for the holidays. She makes saltine toffee (see recipe below) and gives the toffee to her relatives. She said to package the candy in wax-paper-lined holiday tins or in boxes from the dollar store.

Creative Writing students can use their poetry to create unique gifts. English professor Michelle Valois recommended that students use the poetry that they included in their class portfolios. She said that students in her Creative Writing courses create a portfolio that consists of 12 to 15

pages of original writing. Students can use Microsoft Word to create a small booklet or they can use a short poem to create a laminated bookmark.

Maureen Provost, an early childhood education professor, recommended that students design and distribute their own homemade coupon books. She added that coupon books are valuable because they include items that are free and from the heart. They can appeal to a variety of age groups and can involve activities that bring people together such as cooking together or going for a walk.

Sophia's Recipe for Saltine Toffee

Ingredients:

Saltine crackers, approx. 1 sleeve
1 cup unsalted butter
1 cup light brown sugar
1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips
1 cup peanut butter chips
1 cup chopped nuts and/or crushed candy*

- 1) Preheat oven to 350° F. Line a rimmed baking sheet or jelly roll pan with parchment or aluminum foil. Place saltines side by side in a single layer covering the entire cookie sheet.
- 2) Combine butter and brown sugar in a large saucepan over medium heat and bring to a boil, stirring continuously.
- 3) Boil for 3 minutes while stirring continuously.
- 4) Pour mixture over saltines in baking sheet and transfer sheet to oven. Bake for 10-15 minutes.
- 5) Remove from oven and immediately sprinkle with the chocolate and peanut butter chips. Let stand for 5 minutes or until chips are melted.
- 6) When chips are fully melted, use a rubber spatula or a knife to smooth them into an even layer. Sprinkle with chopped nuts/candy.
- 7) Refrigerate until completely chilled, then remove parchment/foil and break the toffee into pieces.

**Experiment with different candies and nuts for different occasions. You can use holiday M&Ms or sprinkles to add festive colors.*

Original image by Tyler Delgado @photosbyty



PROFILE

Child Care Center Supports Student Parents

by Gabriela Villa

OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

The Garrison Center provides peace of mind for students with children.

Children from low income families or family members with disabilities get first consideration for the daycare, which individualizes the curriculum according to each child's needs.

Student parents don't have to be full-time students in order for their children to go to the daycare center, but depending on the number of classes they are taking the cost of the daycare center can be reduced.

There are eight full-time faculty members, three of whom are teachers, and many other student-teachers since it is a "lab classroom" for Early Childhood Education students. This means that there are two-way mirrors where students can observe children and teachers during classes and free play.

"Teachers are being watched and observed by future teachers themselves," said Emily Verock, Family Development Coordinator at the Garrison Center.

Teachers assess and observe each child which allows them to tailor the curriculum to strengthen their weaknesses and promote strength in their skills, according to Verock.

If fine motor skills are behind children are given the task of picking up cotton balls from a bowl

with tweezers and placing them into another bowl which strengthens their connection to the fine muscles in their hands. If a child displays strength in reading by sight-reading words or names they are given reading books and games to keep them engaged.

There are three teachers and up to eighteen children per classroom and students range from two years-nine months to five years old.

The center aims to provide at least one hour of outdoor activity each day for the development of gross motor skills, said Verock, but this is weather dependent. If the weather isn't suitable for outdoor activities, indoor obstacle courses are set up to get kids moving.

The center also has family literacy activities during "evening time", in which an author comes in to read a story then children do crafts and activities based on the books they read.

The center provides three meals a day: breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack.

The Garrison Center is open from 7 a.m.-5 p.m. For a full day (5 hours or more) the cost of child care is \$40; for a half day (under 5 hours) the cost is \$20. The cost for a full day is a sliding scale fee which depends on family income, or families can choose to pay privately.



Photos by Betsabee Torres

(above) A portrait of the Jim and Peggy Garrison, whose donations greatly assisted with the creation of MWCC's childcare center, sits proudly in the window of the center itself (below).



Alpha Beta Gamma: Down to Business

by Mark Revesai

OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

Networking and leadership opportunities are just a couple of benefits of becoming a member of the International Business Honors Society, Alpha Beta Gamma.

The chapter raises funds that are donated to different charities throughout the year including Relay for Life, the MWCC food bank, the Red Cross and the Gardner CAC food bank. Funds are raised by holding bake sales, raffles and other fundraising efforts.

Professor Linda Bolduc, the club adviser, said students benefit immensely by becoming members. The club is a part of the Greater Gardner Chamber of Commerce, which allows members to network with the business world and it is one of the most active clubs on the campus.

The main purpose of Alpha Beta Gamma is to provide its members with benefits like leadership opportunities through chapter officer positions.

Many opportunities await students who join such as: writing for the bi-annual official society newsletter, Honors Journal, distinctive membership certificates, and use of the Alpha Beta Gamma resume forms.

Students also get discounts on



Photo by Betsabee Torres

See the Alpha Beta Gamma bulletin board for more info on the organization and upcoming events.

car rentals, exchange of intellectual ideas at local chapter functions and at annual Leadership Conferences, networking opportunities with other business and professional students and student leaders, the opportunity for enhancement of employment prospects, over \$500,000 in scholarships for four-year degrees reserved for ABG members, graduation regalia, membership keys and more.

According to the MWCC website, Alpha Beta Gamma was founded in

1970 to recognize and encourage scholarships among students at two-year colleges and provide leadership training opportunities and career assistance to members. However, the club has been at the campus since 1990, said Bolduc, touting that it has staying power.

Once a student is inducted into the society, they become lifetime members. Membership gets noted on the student transcript, and the student is recognized at graduation. To join ABG, a student must demonstrate

academic excellence by attaining a 3.0 GPA or higher in a business program and must have completed 15 credits toward the degree. Professor Bolduc, who is the chair of the Business Department, gets a list of the newly eligible students and emails them with an invitation to join.

The current Alpha Beta Gamma President, Lisa Caron, said a membership drive is impeded by the fact that students must meet the set criterion to be invited. As a community college, students do not stay at the campus and are busy balancing work and family and that makes it difficult for them to commit to weekly meetings. She said, however, "Active participation can take many roles."

Caron noted that while it is hard to attend every meeting, member students could assist by manning tables for fundraising efforts.

This year eleven students were inducted during the 2018 induction ceremony. There is a one-time induction fee of \$42 that students pay.

Flexible payments are available, but members must pay the fee by the time the induction ceremony is held. All 2019 inductees have until spring 2019 to pay their dues. This is a national fee that goes directly to the national headquarters.

FINISH WHAT YOU STARTED!



Transfer Information Session Dates

Sunday, December 2, 2018, 10:30 AM - 3:00 PM

Tuesday, February 19, 2019, 8:00 AM - 2:30 PM

BAYPATH.EDU

588 Longmeadow Street, Longmeadow, MA 01106 413.565.1331 transfer@baypath.edu



ADHD Students Want Change ASAP



Image by amenclinicsphotos ac on flickr

Children with Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) often struggle with the kind of focus required for traditional school work.

by Gabriela Villa

OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

Hyperfocus, hyperactivity, the ability to think multiple thoughts at once, and spontaneity are the markers of creative genius, so why do we treat ADHD children like a problem?

Children with ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder) are challenging parents, teachers, and the entire educational system to rethink the way learning is conducted.

We currently have an educational system that forces children to focus on only what it wants them to focus

on, stealing their focus away from what could make them passionate, happy, and creative.

Attention is so important that companies pay millions of dollars for 10 seconds of our attention. What we put our attention on defines our experience of life.

So, who are we to force children to focus on anything other than what makes them happy? Really, what gives us the right?

According to The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the number of children in the U.S. 4-17 years of age who had an ADHD diagnosis by a health care provider,

as reported by parents, was 7.8% in 2003, 9.5% in 2007, and 11.0% in 2011.

As more and more kids start to show symptoms of ADHD, and parents and teachers work harder to get kids to focus on certain classes, these adults are being put in a position where they are forced to ask themselves the question, ‘Who are we to tell young people what they must learn?’

In some ways ADHD allows children to be true to themselves. They cannot do what they don’t want to do, and they cannot focus on anything other than what interests them. They are rebels who by nature do not conform to society’s rules, and therefore pressure society to bend for them.

ADHD children succeed with praise, encouragement, clear and simple instructions, few distractions, and an outlet for them to be able to express their hyperactivity.

To accommodate these needs, a school system could emphasize encouragement and positivity to its teachers, have them set clear and simple instructions for homework and classwork, have teachers post homework online so students don’t fall behind if they were absent or not paying attention when homework was announced, and allow for

students to get up and move around in the classroom rather than be locked in their seats.

According to The National Bureau of Economic Research, ADHD students have lower math and reading scores and a higher likelihood to repeat grades. ‘‘We’ve always done it this way’’ is not an argument that will hold up with the growing number of ADHD children who will continue to suffer under the current model of schooling. The system will be challenged.

A child does not come into the world to be another shape in a cookie-cutter world; they come into the world with their own unique talents and ways of seeing things. They come into the world to shake things up, each generation different than the last. And that is exactly what ADHD children are doing; they are shaking up and revolutionizing the way education is conducted.

When people are allowed from childhood to learn as they want to learn, and their learning is self-initiated, they will flourish in ways society has never before seen, and the world will be a place where people are doing what they love doing because they will have known no other way. My hope is that we live long enough to see it.

#MeToo Movement: Awareness on Campus

by Briana Shelly

OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

The #MeToo Movement has approached its one-year anniversary and is continuing to touch the lives of both men and women throughout society every day. Many people may have thought that this social movement was going to die down, however, they are sadly mistaken.

Originally brought to light in 2006 by social activist Tarana Burke, it was brought back by actress Alyssa Milano last year on Twitter when it became a trending topic.

The impact that this movement is having is affecting all of us, not just the victims and the predators. According to an article in the *New York Times*, 201 men have either

lost their jobs or major roles due to sexual harassment or advances. There have been 124 replacements: 54 women and 70 men.

The #MeToo movement is not just happening in the workplace, but also in schools, clubs, and house parties. Sexual harassment is happening all too often and is being brought to light in one of the most courageous ways.

As a victim of sexual assault myself, the #MeToo Movement gave me an outlet where I could feel free to discuss what happened in the hopes that it can relate to another man or woman, but not let the assault take control over my thoughts and emotions.

Sheila Murphy, a Sociology

professor, thinks that the #MeToo Movement is a great thing and hopes to see it continue in the near future.

‘‘It allows women now to understand that they are not alone and this isn’t something that has to stay hidden or be ashamed of.’’

Murphy has been teaching both sociology and psychology for over twenty years and also runs a pledge stigma for mental health awareness as well.

Murphy added if others continue to reach out and share their stories, she feels that this can reduce the stigma that is associated with sexual assault. By getting people educated and aware of what sexual assault is, how to report it, and to feel comfortable when doing so, this can allow the

movement to continue in the right direction.

In the future, perhaps there could be a club or a meeting group referencing sexual assault scenarios and discussing it amongst students. Murphy mentioned that there used to be a rape counselor that would come by the college about once a month, but that has come to a stop. Why?

Nowadays, sexual assault is being discussed everywhere from the classroom to social media. As long as both men and women continue to stay educated about the topic, the more awareness can be shed on the sensitive subject that is always important to discuss, not just ‘‘sometimes.’’

Face Your Fear: Tips on Giving a Speech

by Dylan Cernoia

OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

Picture this: You have a massive speech to give and close to 100-125 people are there waiting for you to come out and speak. You shuffle your notes, take a few steps out up to the podium and, just as you are about to speak, you freeze.

According to *The Washington Post*, around 25% of Americans are fearful of such a scenario. I have been doing public speaking for about 10 years and I was involved with several different speech tournaments throughout that time. I'd like to share some tips that I have learned through my many failures and successes.

1. The audience doesn't see the speech the same way.

I always love to start out with this because it's easily overlooked. When you freeze for a second as you struggle to remember what you wanted to say next, it isn't as bad as you think. Trust me that the two seconds you spend without speaking feels completely natural to your audience as it gives them a second to process what you just said. The audience also doesn't know if you jumble up a sentence that you wrote down because, unlike you, they haven't heard this speech 70 times! Even if you make what seems like a massive mistake, remember that the audience is comprised of people who are afraid of public speaking themselves and often will give you grace for your mistakes.

2. Watch how you speak.

I have listened to many speeches and given just as many and something I notice when someone is uncomfortable speaking is a quiet voice and a fast pace. How you sound is a huge part of speaking, massively impacting how the audience receives what you say. Often, when someone is uncomfortable, they will talk in a whisper and speak faster than a speeding car. I hear it so often that honestly at this point it's become somewhat of a pet peeve of mine. Always try to speak so that the people in the back of the room can hear you, and never be afraid to slow down. Speaking slower allows time for your audience to process the things you've said.

3. Stories are the way to communicate.

I have listened to so many boring speeches that I only try to remember the most boring speeches I've heard for laughs later. The speeches that I think of as good speeches now are stories. The best speech I ever heard was a simple story.

To this day I could still tell you all about that speech even though I watched it over three years ago. So why did I remember it? It was a story. The entirety of his speech revolved around this man quitting his job. Just think about your own life. If I asked you to give me the basic principles of a class or the basic story behind a TV show, which would you remember more easily?

4. It's okay to be scared but not to be terrified.

Fear is a practical emotion. I once heard it said that it is one of the three emotions that can cause us to do something. That said, it should never control you in any aspect of your life especially when delivering a speech. Fear can be a natural caffeine, boosting and heightening your senses, giving you a better memory, and helping your presentation go well.

However, too much fear could cause you to choke on your words mid-speech and give you that irresistible urge to run away. To keep fear from becoming terror, just remember that it's just a presentation. You've prepared, and that in roughly ten minutes, it will all be over and at that point you can briefly excuse yourself from the room to go and reward yourself.

So now back to the story at the beginning. That wasn't just a fun anecdote. It actually happened to me. I stood in front of a room of roughly 100 people and couldn't remember my opening line to my speech and stood there for probably a minute trying to remember it. But honestly, that is probably one of my proudest speech moments. It certainly shouldn't be as it was probably one of the worst speeches I had ever given but I am proud because, while it would have been easier to give up, I persevered.

So, get out there and try to do some public speaking, especially if it scares you. Public speaking is one of those things that, while you may only give a few speeches in your life, it really does help when getting a job, giving presentations during class, and just handling yourself in higher class social situations.

Test Taking Aids for Breathtaking Grades

by Dylan Cernoia

OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

With finals rapidly approaching, Henrietta Martin, a tutor, shared some advice on how to study for and take tests.

When studying for a test, Martin suggested that students always check that the notes they have been taking throughout the semester are accurate, either by talking with the professor or a fellow student. She also suggested that if a student is attempting to memorize something for a class, they use flash cards or another form of visual aid.

Martin also encouraged students to break up their studying over a

few days. Students trying to cram all of the knowledge in on one day tend not to remember it all, she explained. Martin also suggested that students find a friend either inside or out of the class to quiz them on the subject.

If students are nervous about a test, Martin suggested a few things. First, students should encourage themselves, telling themselves things like "You've got this" or "You've studied really hard for this" to help build confidence before a test. Martin also said that students need to remember to drink plenty of water before a test and always take a deep breath. Martin said that she would often repeat to herself,

"Twenty-four hours from now, this will all be over."

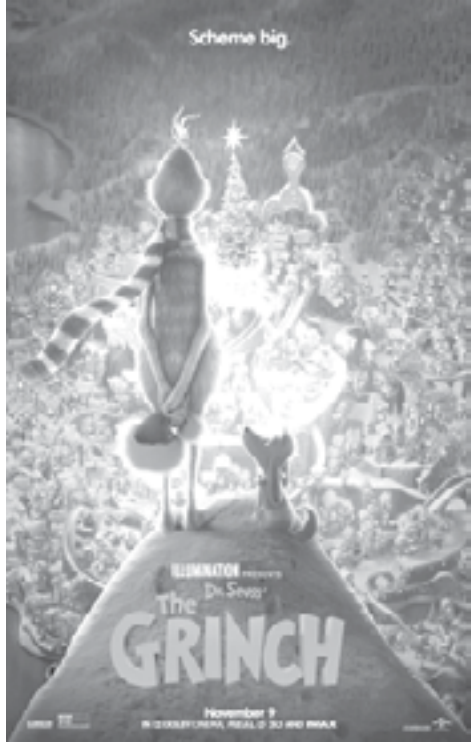
While taking the test itself, Martin also had some tips for students. She said that if students come across a question that is difficult and they don't fully understand it, then they should skip it for the time being and come back to it later. Doing this not only helps you save time but also allows for the opportunity to remember it further down the road. Martin noted that sometimes a quiz will ask a question only to answer it later on in the same quiz.

Finding a tutor is also an option with walk-in tutoring found in the Academic Support Center, located in

the library on the Gardner campus. Students who prefer to study at home can use the free online tutoring service, ThinkingStorm, to help them study with an actual live tutor. This service is available from 10 a.m.- 4 a.m., 7 days a week, with tutors in Math, Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Appointments can be set up for live chats.

For more detailed information about tutoring, visit the Academic Support Center's website: <https://mwcc.edu/academics/library-academic-support-center/free-tutoring/>.

The...The...The Grinch!



Poster from Wikimedia, via Universal/Illumination

The Grinch

by Cassie Roy

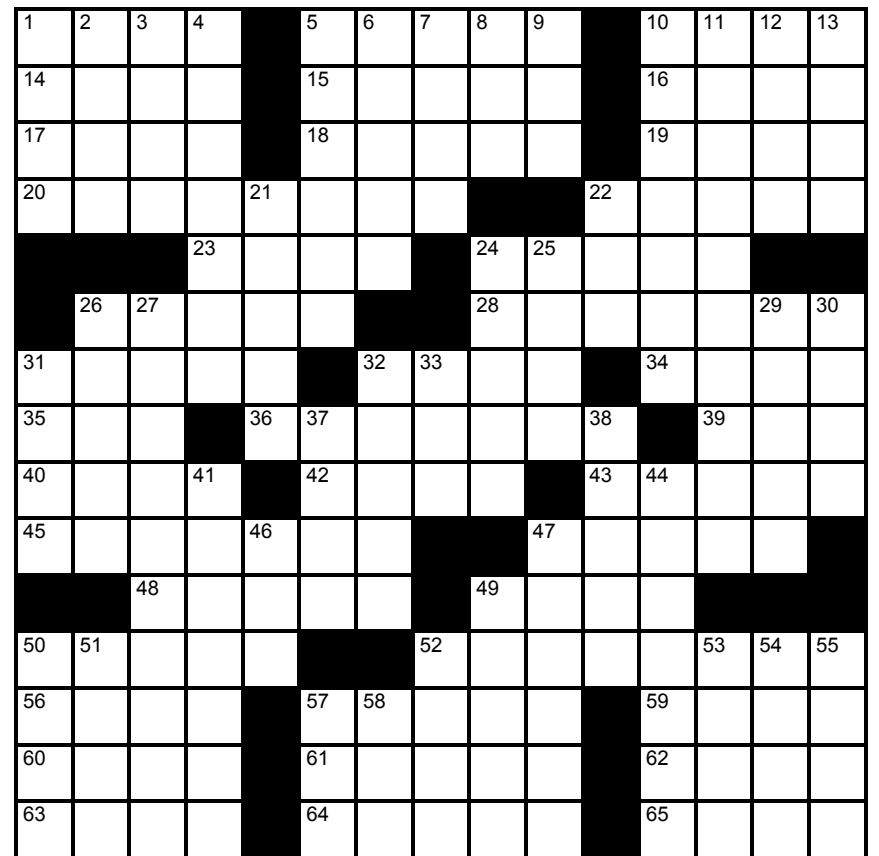
ASSISTANT EDITOR

The Grinch came out in theaters on November 9th. This is now the third version of Dr. Seuss' book to be made into a movie. This version is most like the original one that came out in 1966 where the movie is depicted in a cartoon style with the Grinch being slightly more family friendly.

The Grinch has a modern twist as Pharrell Williams, a rap artist, narrates the story and Tyler, the Creator produced the soundtrack. Instead of the songs being sung like the older versions, Tyler raps all of the songs in the movie. By doing this the producers, Janet Healy and Chris Meledandri, can connect to and keep the attention of a larger audience.

The Grinch focuses less on the Grinch and gets more in depth with Cindy Lou Who and her friends and family. It also introduces a few new zany characters that gives the movie some hilarious dialogue. The film teaches the important lesson of caring and selflessness in a less serious and more light-hearted way.

When it comes down to it nothing could ever beat the feeling of snuggling up in a Christmas blanket with a cup of hot chocolate and watching the classic *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*. However, if you're looking for a wonderfully comical modern day twist on the movie we love so much with a soundtrack you can't get sick of, then I highly recommend you go see the movie immediately.



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Across

- 1 Elec. units
- 5 Gave up
- 10 Nail
- 14 Orca prey
- 15 Cheer up
- 16 Singer McEntire
- 17 Orient
- 18 Range
- 19 Foreboding
- 20 Crepes
- 22 Glide
- 23 Leg part
- 24 Daisylike flower
- 26 Bed cover
- 28 Pickle
- 31 Strict
- 32 Hindu frock
- 34 Marquis de ____
- 35 Pastureland
- 36 Muscle
- 39 Sandwich inits.

Down

- 40 Ifs and buts pals
- 42 S shaped molding
- 43 Stories
- 45 Giant
- 47 Confronts
- 48 Cove
- 49 Pants measure
- 50 Beef cattle
- 52 Laurel & Hardy producer
- 56 Cheers
- 57 South Korean city
- 59 Gall
- 60 Poker term
- 61 Seed
- 62 Heb. calendar month
- 63 Freshwater fish
- 64 Nobleman
- 65 Look after

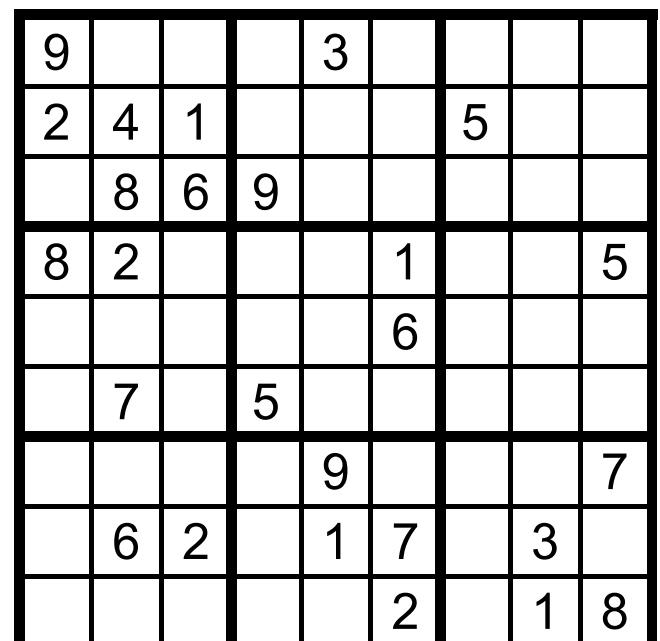
Down

- 1 Fast, if not faster inits.
- 2 Plateau
- 3 Anguish
- 4 Loafer
- 5 Bier
- 6 Toastmaster
- 7 Couples
- 8 Second sight
- 9 Scot. river
- 10 Agents
- 11 Extraordinary
- 12 Assist
- 13 Zealander
- 21 Concerning
- 22 Fr. saint (Abbr.)
- 24 Concur
- 25 Transport
- 26 Office worker
- 27 Auto necessity
- 29 Stagnates
- 30 Webs

- 31 Dross
- 32 Visual perception
- 33 Hotshot
- 37 Memorization
- 38 Step
- 41 Pollen attractors
- 44 Circus performer
- 46 Than (Ger.)
- 47 Angel type
- 49 Sao ____, Brazil
- 50 Omani, for one
- 51 1934 Anna Sten movie
- 52 Time of day
- 53 Adjutant
- 54 Tribe
- 55 Animal group
- 57 Cry
- 58 A Gabor sister

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, each row, column and box must contain the numbers 1 to 9. There is only one possible solution.

See Back Page for Solution



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Each student will have about five minutes of mic time—depending on how many students show up and want to read. Arrive early to sign up.

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Solution

9	5	7	1	3	4	8	2	6
2	4	1	7	6	8	5	9	3
3	8	6	9	2	5	7	4	1
8	2	4	3	7	1	9	6	5
1	9	5	2	8	6	3	7	4
6	7	3	5	4	9	1	8	2
4	1	8	6	9	3	2	5	7
5	6	2	8	1	7	4	3	9
7	3	9	4	5	2	6	1	8



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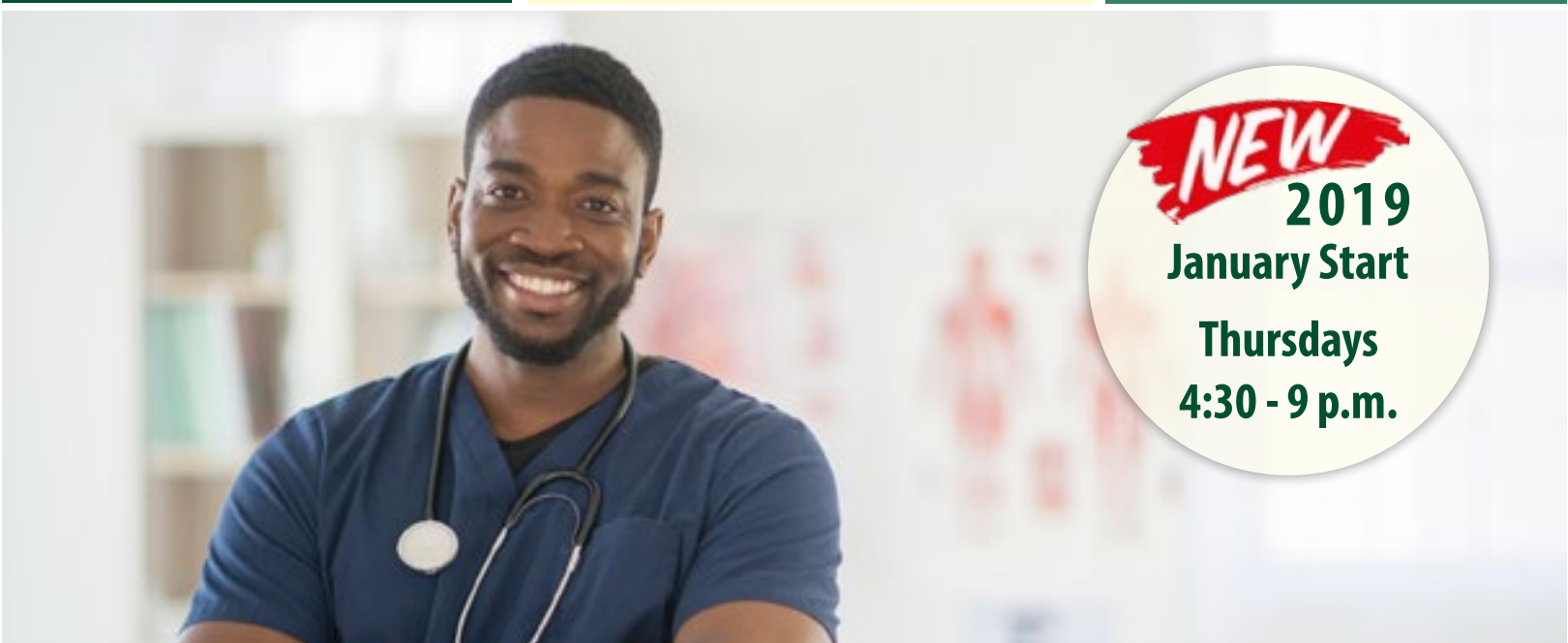
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