

# The Mount Observer

“Voices of the students of Mount Wachusett Community College”

## Is It “Bye-Bye” for WiFi?

Students and President acknowledge unstable internet

By Daniela Perez

OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

When it comes to submitting online assignments, having reliable access to the internet is essential for college students.

Many areas on the Gardner campus have little to no cellular signal and in most parts of the school the WiFi can be slow or may not connect at all.

One of the places on campus that rarely has any signal is the basement of the school where Media Arts and Technology labs are held and where MRT students work on projects. The MRT computers are always offline and students have a difficult time connecting to the internet through their own laptops or cellphones.

John Cusolito, audio major, said that he “can’t look at BlackBoard to view assignments or grades.”

Another audio major, Brock Levine, said that the WiFi “either works or it doesn’t work at all and shows the error message.”

Cusolito and Levine want



Photo by Thomas Hill Jr.

**WiFi reception is spotty in certain areas of the college, making it difficult on students trying to work on laptops or other mobile devices.**

a more reliable internet videos.

connection to be provided in the basement for media students to be able to use their skills and abilities to their fullest.

Students aren’t the only ones who experience wireless woes. Professors have also had difficulty during class when trying to show educational

“Certainly there have been times when the equipment has failed – sound quality, connecting to internet files, too much buffering time,” said English professor Susan Blake.

However, Blake reassured that “our AV/IT staff have always been really responsive to these

problems when they happen.”

Blake uses the computers in her classroom to show students TED Talk videos among other content. “What I see more often with students is their inability to get WiFi for their laptops, tablets, and phones,” said Blake.

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**“Bye-bye, WiFi” >>>**

## Break the Silence

Students and staff work together to reduce mental health stigma

By Casey Merritt

OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

Student Heather Burke, President Vander Hooven, and Professor Sheila Murphy share the goal of helping students find a method to cope with their mental illness.

Burke says her illnesses held her back “from getting involved at the college, hanging out with friends, and going to the library.”

Refusing help from faculty and staff at the college, Burke’s

way of coping is through a grounding exercise called The Five Senses.

“I look for five things in five colors, five for each color because it’s more private,” she said.

Once her illnesses started to have a stronger negative effect on her school life, Burke decided to move out of her mother’s house and into a group home. She says her move has improved her mental state and has made her feel more independent. She

now takes online classes rather than attending in person to reduce the amount of absences she would otherwise have.

President Vander Hooven has taken note of the increasing number of students who attend The Mount while suffering from mental health issues. “I’ve been trying to get funding from the state to help support these students in order for them to be successful,” he said.

Vander Hooven suggests students try journaling to vent

out any negative thoughts. “It’s relaxing and therapeutic,” he said. He also suggests students talk to someone, whether they are someone at the college or outside. Having someone to talk to can be the biggest source of strength for students.

Vander Hooven says any student is more than welcome to talk to him about their mental health if they feel uncomfortable talking to anyone else.

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### PREVIEWS



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#### Welcome Back!

# Back to School

## Older students discuss the struggles of adult education

By **Jurrell Pabrezis**  
OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

Between having a job and a family, adults who return to school may have more obstacles to overcome than younger students.

Derek Allen, 32, takes online classes because of his full-time overnight job. "I'm switching majors; I can't just take online classes. I may have to find a different job," said Allen.

Despite obstacles, Allen knows that when he graduates he won't have to worry about both work and school. Allen's advice for older students is to "stay focused and know that there's a finish line."

Alex Joyce, 25, wanted to enter the workforce right after high school, saying, "I thought I'd work for a few years before starting college. I just wanted to work and save some money."

Seven years after high school Joyce is finally ready to graduate. "I'm just happy to have a college degree. Having that degree will be helpful for any job I apply for," said Joyce.

For adults struggling with the transition back into student life, Melissa Manzi, mental health professional, offers counseling for all students in room 104.

According to Manzi, it's the older students who come back to see her, more so than younger students, due to "maturity" and "having a different mindset."

When asked about adult students having to balance work, home, and school, Manzi stated "I'm amazed at what they can handle." Though she loves counseling all students who seek advice, Manzi has an interest in adult students. "Every adult has a different story. They're older, they make it count," said Manzi.



Photo from Unsplash

## Break the Silence

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Professor Sheila Murphy has come across many students suffering from mental health issues. Although she doesn't suffer from these problems herself, she's empathetic for those who do. "I've had people in my life that suffer and I understand what they're going through," she stated.

Murphy says when she notices students' grades dropping, she makes sure to check in with them. A few students have dropped out of her classes in order to improve their health before returning. If they are admitted to a hospital, Murphy advocates for them to withdraw from the class or offers an incomplete to give them an extra 30 days to complete their work.

"I think a lot of the time,

students disclose to me so I know what's going on and how to follow up with them. I will refer them to someone to get help if needed."

The best advice she has to offer students is to seek someone they are comfortable talking to about their illnesses.

She stated society treats mental illness more negatively compared with physical illness, making it harder for students to want to talk.

"People with mental illness need to look beyond society and seek help even if they think people may not understand them, because there is help available," she said.

Last semester, Murphy's abnormal psychology class ran an Anti-Stigma and Mental

Health Awareness Campaign. Five information tables were set up on campus over the course of the semester about different mental illnesses with anti-stigma messages as their theme.

Students were able to learn about addiction, mood disorders, suicide, self-harm, PTSD, schizophrenia, and anxiety. Students who participated signed a pledge to help destigmatize mental illness. Murphy's class managed to collect over 400 signatures for this pledge.

Any student looking for someone to talk to about mental health or their future is welcome to meet with Murphy in her office. "I won't be their therapist, but I will listen and get them the appropriate help."

## Bye-bye, WiFi

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President Vander Hooven noted that the school is aware of the challenges getting internet access to different parts of the building.

The main campus was built during the early 1970s and used an architectural style that relied heavily on concrete. Levine also suspected that the lack of a strong signal is due to the construction of the building and not the actual provider, DSCI, who partnered with TPx in 2016.

Vander Hooven said, "Concrete walls are everywhere as you can see. This was done well before the concept of wireless internet connectivity."

Vander Hooven mentioned how a lack of connectivity is not an issue inside of his office, but that he has experienced these issues when attending meetings on campus. He acknowledged that it is "an annoyance."

The college will be investigating ways to improve connectivity on campus using a college-wide strategic plan that will also provide a direct IT plan.

"I will say that we are aware of the connectivity issues and, while costly to improve, this is going to be an area of emphasis with the coming five-year strategic plan for the college," said Vander Hooven.

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Send your stories, poetry, artwork, photography, or other content to  
mountobserver@mwcc.mass.edu



# Everybody's Working for the Weekend!

## Students get hands-on experience with work study program

By **Seth Mitchell**

OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

Work study positions offer students the opportunity to make some extra money and are highly recommended.

Sean Doyle, student, has a work study as a delivery boy offered on the Gardner campus. He works every Tuesday and Thursday and his duties consist of delivering materials and packages and filing order forms and receipts.

"If you're seeking involvement in the school a work study is definitely a good fit for you," said Doyle.

One of Doyle's favorite parts about his work study is that he can do homework or study in his down time. It gives him the opportunity to get his schoolwork done while still receiving a paycheck. "It is a work study, so while I am not working, I take

advantage of the other time to study," said Doyle.

"Go to Student Services and ask about available work studies," advised Doyle.

Sara Williams, Program Manager of the TRIO SSS Programs, has been a work study supervisor for four years. "One of my favorite parts of being a supervisor is being able to mentor my students. It has been great to see them grow throughout the semester," said Williams. Being approved for a work study is competitive but the experience is beneficial for students.

Williams has two students who are participating in work studies under her wing. Mostly involving office work, the work study students help others navigate the Visions office, answer the phone, and participate in frontline support.

Deborah Nichols, Financial

Aid, runs the work study program. According to Nichols, the number of hours a student can work is based on the financial aid they receive; the higher the aid, the less they are able to work.

Nichols added that the program is in the process of being revamped. The program was handed over to her from Scott Faris who retired. "There are currently 44 students in the work study program," said Nichols. Due to the competitiveness, getting an interview will not guarantee a job.

"Work study jobs are great for the retention rate; they give students a reason to continue their education," said Nichols. She mentioned that students who are working hands-on with some of the faculty and staff are more inclined to stay because of the student-mentor relationships they form.



Photo from Unsplash

# Welcome Back MWCC Students

## A message from President Vander Hooven



Photo courtesy of MWCC

Greetings and welcome to the Fall 2019 Semester!

I want to welcome all students, both new and returning, to the Mount for a new year. As I age, I might say this every year but this was a fast-moving summer! It seems like the 4th of July was a few days ago. I am so excited to have all of the students and faculty back on campus. You create such a great energy on campus. It's also a lot more fun to have a full campus.

I also want to thank you for choosing MWCC in your steps toward reaching your academic and personal goals. The faculty and staff are ready to assist you as you pursue your journey. I also know,

from personal experience, that there will be obstacles along the way. Reaching your goals will not always be easy and you will need support to be successful. I can easily recall the many mentors, teachers, and friends I had along the way who enabled my success. But just having them available here at MWCC is not enough. You will need to ask! Asking for help to reach your goals is not a sign of weakness. Quite the opposite, it is the greatest sign of strength.

We look forward to serving you throughout the coming academic year!

Sincerely,

Jim Vander Hooven



# A Healthier Tomorrow

## Green energy advocates talk renewable energy and healthy food

By *Eliana Mello*

OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

MWCC supports the environment through their own green energy facilities, classes, and through partnering with organizations in the community.

Robert LaBonte, Vice Principal of Finance and Administration, said, "It's important that we show some leadership in initiating green energy on the campus."

MWCC has been involved in green energy since the 1970s, using electricity rather than oil in order to help with the oil shortage during that time. A biomass facility was constructed next to the gym in order to use a renewable energy source. Wood chips are used to heat the school rather than oil.

When burning wood for energy it is believed that "trees take up as much carbon as they put in," said LaBonte. The biomass facility replaced most of their electrical needs and the turbines were installed in March of 2011 to help with the remainder of the school's energy needs.

During the eight years with the turbines, they have produced

41 million kilowatt hours of electricity and the school has used 44 million kilowatts of energy. This means the school has produced around 94% of the energy used over the eight years, according to LaBonte.

At times, the turbines may produce more or less energy than needed. In these instances, energy is either taken from the grid to be used by the school, or the extra energy is distributed back into the grid to be used by the population.

The turbines have shown that locations farther inland can use wind energy as a source of energy, LaBonte explained. When planning for the turbines, the community was supportive towards the project, according to LaBonte, and the community has been continually supportive towards the renewable energy source.

MWCC offers a Natural Resources degree program in order to teach students about environmental occupations and natural resources.

The program is a two-year program that uses the greenhouse



Photo by Thomas Hill Jr.

**Fresh fruit served daily at the MWCC North Cafe.**

to teach students.

"It helps prepare students for that specific field," said Thomas Montagno, Biology professor and Chairman for the Natural Resources program.

The Biology 120 and 140 classes teach students the ins and

outs of running a greenhouse. These biology classes can be taken by any student. Students who are in a major that requires a biology class can take Biology 120 rather than an intro to biology class.

MWCC's greenhouse is about two years old and is computer controlled. It allows students to learn about plants in a controlled environment. Montagno said this was a good investment for the school and recommends other schools to get one only if they have a program that would support and use it.

"If we didn't have the greenhouse the NRD program wouldn't be what it is today," said Montagno.

The herbs and vegetables grown in the greenhouse are occasionally sold by the Green Society. This also helps students learn about the selling aspect of growing plants.

Montagno's biggest tip to help the environment is to recycle and to do it intentionally. The Green Society created a public service announcement to show what can and can't be recycled on campus. There are plans to show the video during freshman orientation in the fall.

MWCC has also been involved with teaching the

community about how to support the environment. The 8th Annual Food Gardeners Gathering, hosted by Growing Places on the Gardner campus, emphasized how participants can get involved in the local food system and increase access to healthy food.

According to Amy Yeagle, Executive Director at Growing Places, their mission is to "increase healthy food access and environmental stability for underdeveloped people in Central Massachusetts." Their focus is to achieve this in an environmentally safe way, Yeagle explained.

"It's about taking care of the earth as much as we are taking care of people to make them healthy," said Yeagle.

After circulating a survey throughout Fitchburg State University, Growing Places discovered that 15% of the people at the school purchase their food at a dollar store. Many people are unable to buy healthier foods because they can't afford it. Yeagle called the food system broken, believing we need to think outside the box in order to fix it.

"We need to be more thoughtful about our food all the way around," stressed Yeagle.



Photo by Betsy Torres

**Windmills, like those at MWCC, are one of many ways to generate "green" energy.**



# A Mission for Fair Admission

Transfer counselor shares thoughts on the future of higher education



Photo by Ken Lund from flickr

The University of Southern California (USC), one of the schools celebrities attempted to use their influence on to get their children admitted to.

By Aisha Schor

OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

Every year a multitude of students nationwide make the genuine investment and commitment to continue their education and attend four-year colleges. The process takes time, dedication, and

hard work. But a process that should be straight forward is growing in complexity and inequality. Between college admissions scandals and the rising cost of tuition, attending college is becoming increasingly difficult for students. This hits particularly

hard for community college and non-traditional students given that the obstacles they have to overcome to continue their education are often greater than the average student.

Transfer counselor Sarah Pingeton spoke about the college admissions scandal that involved numerous well-known celebrities, “We’re talking about a piece of our society that we shouldn’t be proud of. There’s many people who can buy their way into things that others work really hard for.”

Following an investigation, it was revealed that celebrities and wealthy parents were willing to cheat and scam the system to get their children accepted into elite colleges and universities across the country. Some took the route of bribing SAT/ACT test proctors into changing their children’s answers and test scores. Others claimed their

children played varsity sports, getting them admitted through fake sports scholarships.

As a counselor who works every day to help students get into four-year schools and pursue higher education, Pingeton’s advice to students was, “Persist. Just because other people get into elite schools through unethical means doesn’t mean you can’t get there through ethical means.”

Rachel Fortier, student ambassador and Media Arts major who works in the Admissions office talked about how she felt after hearing about the scandal. “I grew up with six siblings, and none of them felt like they could ever make it into college, myself included, so I felt very disappointed to see that other people don’t have to work as hard as I do to get into their dream school,” said Fortier.

With a passion for TV production and stop-motion animation, Fortier plans to

transfer after completing her associates degree. “I have applied to multiple schools: Michigan School of Art and Design, Emerson School of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, and LA Film School. Any one of these would be amazing, but for the exact career path in stop-motion I want to take, I hope Emerson accepts me,” said Fortier.

Like many high school and community college students who want to transfer and get accepted into college, Fortier is working hard to build a portfolio and get involved on campus to elevate her chances of getting accepted. “Hopefully I can gather up enough portfolio work to help me get into my dream school.” Fortier continued, “I am currently working on a stop-motion as well as a horror movie. Both are hard, but in their own ways.”

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“Fair Admission” >>>

## Editor’s Corner

# A Message From The Editor

Hello, readers, and welcome to my inaugural editor’s column. The September issue is a fitting opportunity to introduce this new feature, as we’re beginning a new semester and academic year, as well as beginning my first full semester as Editor in Chief of the *Observer*.

Our staff’s work on this issue began well before the first day of the semester, however, with staff meetings and email exchanges resuming the first week of August after our all-too-brief summer break, plus an influx of unedited copy which arrived shortly thereafter.

As I worked on editing the stories for this issue, attempting to convince my brain to exit vacation mode, the thought, “I still have to write something, too!” loomed large in the back of my mind. I had a few ideas

kicking around, but so far I had not been inspired with an idea I was excited to write about. Then I unexpectedly found myself thinking about mission statements. Did we even have a mission statement? Well, right below our name on the front page of each issue are the words “Voices of the Students of Mount Wachusett Community College.” That certainly sounds like a mission statement, even if it’s not official.

This realization radically changed my perception of our publication and my role as editor in chief after only a few moments of contemplation. To be perfectly honest, the first thing I did when I found out I had been promoted last semester was Google the phrase “what does an editor in chief do.” Though I have a number of duties, based on that

search I generally considered my primary responsibility to be “decide what goes into the newspaper.” This is still a functional description of my role, but my new consideration of our mission has shown me that my old working definition is not exactly accurate.

My team and I are responsible for a lot of decision making but, ultimately, we don’t exclusively decide what goes into the paper. That’s up to the students. We don’t single-handedly create all the content. We provide and maintain a platform to host others’ work. We, as an organization, are not the voice of the students of MWCC; we are the curators of their voices.

I conceived of this column as a way to open the lines of communication with our readers and content creators, to give

you more insight in to how *The Observer* is made. I don’t want us to appear to be some nebulous entity, or an extension of the PR department. We are an independent organization, for the students, by the students, and transparency is key to our relationship.

I want you to reach out and tell us what subjects you want covered, and what matters most to you. Share your opinions and perspectives. Not just the Professional Writing majors and those taking Journalism courses, but the whole student body. My sincere wish is to be able to give you access to this platform, to let your voices be heard.

So email us your submissions or story ideas. Write letters to the editor. Come work for us. Visit me in person in the newsroom. Don’t worry about your writing

ability. If you have something important to say, we can work with you to create a story that gets your message out there. I want to hear from you and I’m looking forward to it.

Sincerely,

Sophia Schlegelmilch,  
Editor in Chief

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Tuesdays & Thursdays  
11:00 – 12:30

Team Meetings:  
Wednesdays  
12:30 – 1:30





**Green**

**Thumbs**

**MWCC's CAMPUS GREENHOUSE**

*Photos by Betsy Torres*





# OPINION

# Rethinking the Political Spectrum

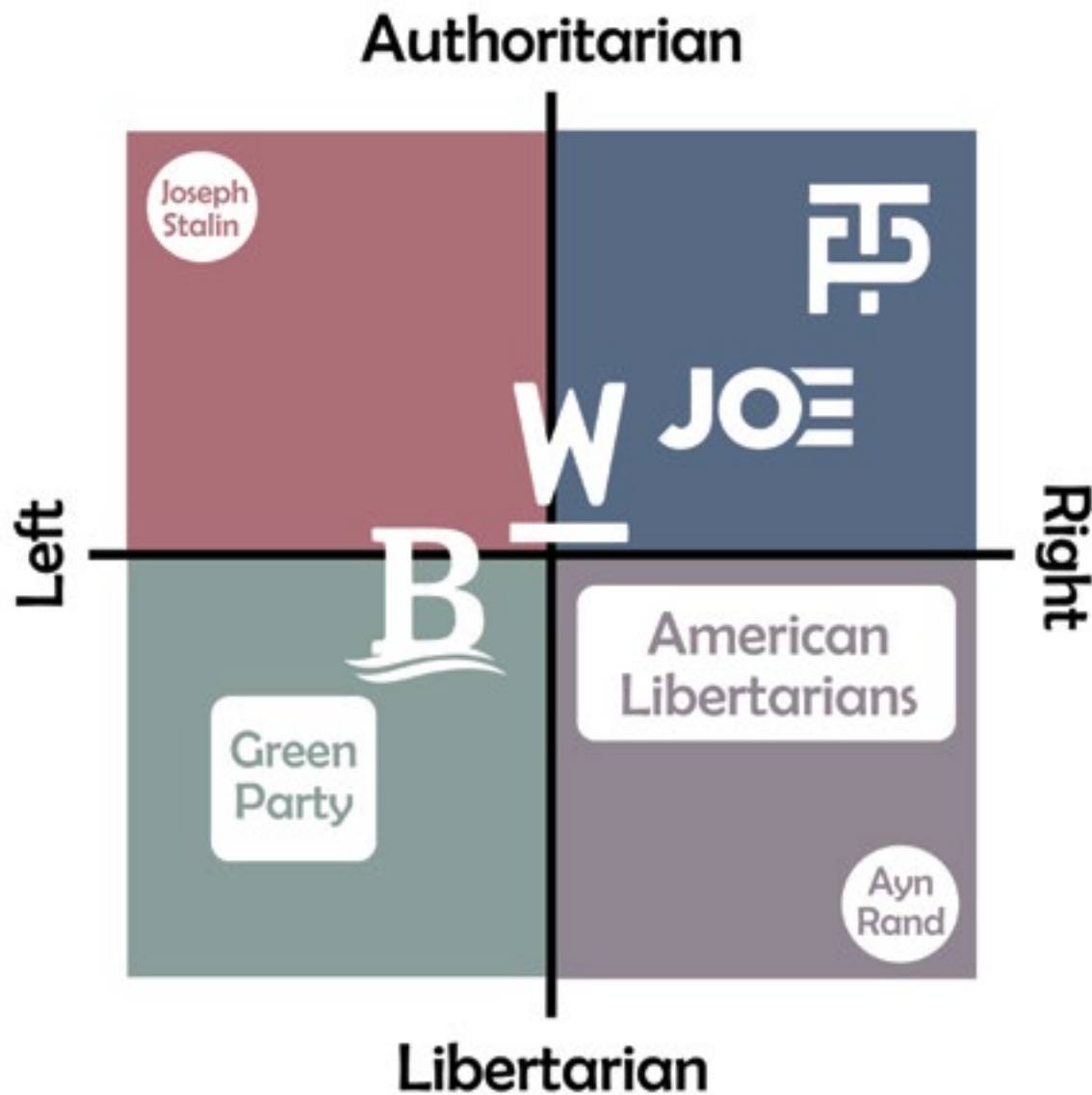
## Bringing attention to a new tool for broadening political perception

By *Dylan Hatch*

OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

Although the United States has always housed great ideological diversity, few ideas have traditionally been accepted in mainstream politics. As a result, popular American perception of the political spectrum has been incredibly narrow; simplifying the complex world of political theory into ‘left’ and ‘right.’ However, in today’s world of instant communication, political polarization, and widespread dissatisfaction with the status quo, various nontraditional ideologies have thrived. This makes the traditional left-right spectrum increasingly inadequate for mapping the complex differences between individuals. Therefore, in the wake of a more diverse political climate, it is crucial to reassess our perception of the political spectrum and our individual placements on it.

The Political Compass was created by political journalists and professors in the United Kingdom to provide a broader, more relevant method to map political ideologies. By dividing the spectrum into two axes (economic and social), the Political Compass accounts for differences which would be overlooked by the simplistic traditional range. The left-right spectrum assumes that those on the left are pro-government and those on the right are pro-markets; simply not accounting for socialist libertarians (such as Gandhi) and pro-market authoritarians (like Hitler). This assumption alienates many ideologies and fails to



Graphic by *Dylan Hatch*

map crucial distinctions. By utilizing two independent axes, the Political Compass provides a spectrum which is more specific, accurate, and encompassing of more ideologies.

### The Economic Axis

The economic scale (represented on the x-axis) reflects an individual’s level of preference between economic collectivism (left) and individualism (right). Since this placement is meant to be viewed in conjunction with the social axis (y), the economic scale is rather vague.

Those closer to the left generally support an economy based on cooperation (rather than competition) and equality, while those closer to the right generally embrace the concepts of markets and capitalism. This distinction is crucial to understanding ideological differences, yet it alone cannot provide a full understanding of the political spectrum.

Two individuals could agree that the economy should be collectivized while disagreeing about the means to achieve it; such as whether through an authoritarian government or

voluntary regional planning. Likewise, two individuals could agree that markets are central to an ideal economy; though they could easily disagree about the perfect level of government involvement. These differences cannot be mapped by the left-right spectrum, which equates all on the right as libertarians and all on the left as authoritarians. The spectrum necessitates a second axis to represent favorability towards authority.

### The Social Axis

To address this, the creators of the Political Compass

added a social axis (y) to map favorability towards government. Libertarians occupy the lower end and authoritarians are at the top. As the economic axis separates collectivists from individualists, the social axis distinguishes free-marketters from state-capitalists and democratic socialists from Stalinists.

In current American politics, the social axis is perhaps most visible in the rise of Donald Trump and the resulting shift of Republican doctrine. As Republicans reject the idea of limited government in favor of protectionism, a more powerful military, and stricter immigration policies, the party becomes more favorable towards government – raising their social placement on the Compass, even if their economic position remained unchanged. On the traditional left-right scale, these uses of government are unaccounted for. Ideological maneuvers such as these epitomize our need to reconsider the conventional left-right spectrum.

The website of the Political Compass ([politicalcompass.org](http://politicalcompass.org)) offers free, anonymous quizzes for anyone wondering their placement on the Compass, as well as thorough analyses of each quadrant and the placements of famous politicians. If you take the test, you will likely find that it works on global ideological standards, as opposed to the narrow spectrum of mainstream American politics. For fascinating discoveries such as these, I encourage you to take the Political Compass test and explore the sites’ offerings. Your results will likely surprise you.

## Come Work for Us!

Interested in becoming a member of the *Mount Observer* team? Contact us at [mountobserver@mwcc.mass.edu](mailto:mountobserver@mwcc.mass.edu).

Work Study positions are available to those who qualify! See Deborah Nichols in Financial Aid for details.

# Understanding the Black Lives Matter Movement

## A student's perspective and appeal for change

By Abreyana Moore

OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

The Black Lives Matter movement has always been around, it has just had different names. Some may know it as the Civil Rights Movement, or the March on Washington, or even Selma to Montgomery. These, in a sense, are all the same, with the same message and the same pain. On July 13th, 2013, three women of color gave birth to the movement we know today as Black Lives Matter.

The Black Lives Matter Global Network is a chapter-based, member-led organization whose mission is to build local power and to intervene in violence inflicted on Black communities by the state and vigilantes. The founders, Patrisse Khan-Cullors, Alicia Garza, and Opal Tometi are all strong members of their communities and have built this organization in wake of the murder of Trayvon Martin.

Though the movement has a strong following, some people are not happy with what it stands for, saying that it takes away the value of other lives. There has also been retaliation against



Photo by Fibonacci Blue from flickr <https://www.flickr.com/photos/fibonacciblue/23051729395/>

### Black Lives Matter protest march

police, leading police to start the Blue Lives Matter movement. Other communities have also started their own similar movements, such as, "Trans Lives Matter," "White Lives Matter," "Muslim Lives Matter," and "All Lives Matter".

The injustice to African Americans has reached another all-time high and people are fed up. People who are African-American/Black are twice as likely to be killed by a police officer while unarmed compared to a Caucasian/White individual.

Out of the 2.3 million people who are incarcerated in the United States, an estimated 1 million of them are African-Americans/Black.

69% of the victims of police brutality in the United States who are African-American/

Black were suspected of a non-violent crime and were unarmed.

It is time that America makes a change and sets an example for the rest of the world. Before the problem gets worse let's work on making changes in our own community.

# Fair Admission

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When asked why she thinks the issue received so much publicity, Fortier believed it was in part generational saying, "I think the thing about our generation is that we are more outspoken, which can be good and bad, but at least we're giving our culture a voice."

The question now is how elite colleges will redeem themselves from the scandal and if there will be serious reconsideration as to how students are admitted. Pingeton brought up the higher education bubble and explained that there's more to admissions than letting in the students with good grades. "Higher education is predicted to have a pretty big crash in the next seven years," warned Pingeton. This crash could result in many college closures and/or school

mergers - trends in the U.S, and Massachusetts in particular, are already seeing. "This makes me nervous it won't change because the students who can bring the money to help keep a college open could be the ones to get admitted, making them harder

coming to an end, affecting admissions in the process. "The College Bubble is Starting to Burst," a *CommonWealth Magazine* article, explained how both economic and societal changes may force colleges to change how they're run.

recently closed in Massachusetts (Hampshire College, Wheelock, Mt. Ida, and Newbury College) it's no surprise that the state is looking for a solution to the growing issue. "Massachusetts has suffered the greatest number of closures and mergers. If

cause for the higher education bubble saying, "Much of the long-term financial decay of our colleges can be attributed to their dependency on student loans. Most of the \$3 trillion in loans issued to students so far has gone to colleges as free money." Hildreth continued, "What became a burden for students became a bubble for colleges. Free money caused the number of colleges to double, enrollment to triple, and tuitions to soar-but not graduation rates."

With prospective college students being deterred from continuing education due to its high price tag, and recent grads not being able to pay off their student debt, a cultural shift and new approaches to higher

**"We're talking about a piece of our society that we shouldn't be proud of. There's many people who can buy their way into things that others work really hard for."**

**- Sarah Pingeton, MWCC Transfer Counselor**

and harder to say no to," said Bob Hildreth, the author of the article, is the founder of three non-profit organizations that work to get low-income students into college.

A closer look at the higher education bubble begins to reveal evidence that higher ed as it's known today could be

With four colleges having

and harder to say no to," said

this trend of college closures continues it will cause deep economic disruption in our state," wrote Hildreth.

Hildreth also explained how student loan debt is the root

continued on next page >>>



# Tried and True Training Tips

## Experienced trainers offer advice for athletic success

By *Marie Rodriguez*  
OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

New and exciting athletic events are held every season and there are some fundamental training basics that beginners should be aware of.

When it comes to gear first time athletic event participants should take into account the importance of dressing appropriately.

Ryan Lyesiuk, Accounting major, is a passionate runner and enjoys participating in 5k marathons. He strongly advised first-time athletic event trainers to invest in a comfortable pair of long distance running sneakers.

"Some beginners may think that the popular lightweight running sneakers are a good idea, but you need more cushioning and stability in a running shoe," said Lyesiuk.

Lyesiuk explained that the lightweight options may be comfortable when running on a treadmill for short distances, but when it comes to marathons or multi-course events, the feet will crave more comfort. Training in comfortable long-distance running sneakers will help the feet get used to how the sneakers will perform for the upcoming athletic event.

Lyesiuk also advised prospective runners to invest in a hydalite shirt - a lightweight



Photo from pixabay

fabric that protects the skin from the sun - for summer events. "You can always remove a layer once your body starts to warm up from moving," said Lyesiuk.

Nico Morales, alumni, has participated in many obstacle courses and mud runs with his close friends. He recommended foods to eat before and after a physical event.

"It's important to eat a few hours before so you don't run out of energy or run to the bathroom instead of the finish line,"

advised Morales. "I will usually eat carbs like pasta or fish with a side of rice."

He also recommended wearing a fanny pack to hold a sports drink or water. "I do this to stay hydrated during the course instead of carrying a bottle in my hand if the event allows this," said Morales.

After the event, Morales advised to eat within a half hour after passing the finish line. He suggested eating carb-packed foods like granola bars and

bananas.

Abby Jenkins, fitness trainer, has completed multiple 5k marathons and reminded beginners of the importance of stretching after completing an athletic event as well as practicing running up hills.

"I can't stress enough how important it is to stretch after you complete an event," said Jenkins.

Overstretching before a marathon is unnecessary as "the body loosens up as you go." She explained that the calves, quads,

and glutes would be very tight after running for a long period of time, so stretching afterwards would help with soreness.

"Running up hills will help you gradually increase your speed while challenging the cardiovascular system which is important in long distances," said Jenkins.

With these professional tips, aspiring athletes now have the necessary tools to prepare for the many finish lines ahead.

## Fair Admission

>>> continued from previous page

education seems inevitable. "Colleges thought that with free money covering a large portion of their tuition increases they could keep raising prices," said Hildreth. "They were wrong, and after a decade of discounting tuition sharply to attract students, colleges find their net tuitions have remained flat."

Pingeton has hope for the future of college admissions saying, "I think we're seeing a cultural shift where people are much more in support of alternative schooling paths. I

don't think students are any longer getting the message 'the only option is college.' Instead, you're seeing encouragement to get a trade or go to community college."

This cultural shift and new message is what's going to cause four year schools to change their practices. "I think being regarded as a college or university that plays fair and offers something to all students will be what serves colleges better in the future," said Pingeton.



Photo from pixabay

Yale University, another college caught in the admissions scandal.



# Brie Larson Shines Bright in *Captain Marvel*

By *Eliana Mello*

OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

*Captain Marvel* introduces a powerful female lead that many will love.

Brie Larson plays a realistic and relatable female character compared to another female superhero movie, *Wonder Woman*. Wonder Woman was strong and sure of herself, making few mistakes and lacking character development.

When Captain Marvel gains access to her full powers, she is sloppy as she learns how to harness her new strength. In comparison, when Wonder Woman accessed her Godly strength, she fully understood and perfectly executed her abilities. Wonder Woman seemed too out of reach for people to fully relate to her. This makes Wonder Women seem idealized

where Captain Marvel, though she has superhuman abilities, has imperfections, something that makes her human.

Captain Marvel is also a tough soldier in the movies. Like Bruce Banner and Captain America, Captain Marvel has been trained to suppress her emotions and not let them get in the way of the greater good. Some feel this makes her seem cold, with many commenting on how she should smile more. However, it is evident in the movie that Captain Marvel laughs and makes jokes. She also takes saving the human race very seriously, destroying thousands of enemy spaceships on her own.

The special effects of this movie are something never before seen in the Marvel franchise. Captain Marvel is surrounded with a glowing light

as she flies. The light also seems to interact with her movement, making the light seem realistic and as if it is really surrounding Brie Larson.

However, the special effects makeup was lackluster. The Skrull makeup is something audiences have seen many times before. These aliens were the traditional green color and had pointy ears. This made them look more reminiscent of elves than of an alien race. The makeup was done skillfully and looked fairly believable but it wasn't something new or exciting. The design has been overused and seemed sloppy.

Overall, this movie provides a likable new addition to the Marvel franchise. Many women will feel represented and be able to relate to Captain Marvel's struggles in the movie.



**Captain Marvel**

*Image from flickr; Property of Disney and Marvel Studios*



*Central Massachusetts' Premier Theatre*

## THEATRE AT THE MOUNT

### New Theatre Workshops: Acting, Dance and More!

*Contributed by Theatre at the Mount*

Beginning September 23, Mount Wachusett Community College Lifelong Learning and Theatre at the Mount will be hosting all new theatre and dance workshops taught by experienced Theatre at the Mount professionals.

Acting "FUN"amentals introduces students to basic acting principles, theatre games and improvisation to bring characters and stories to life. Kids build performance skills, boost stage presence and confidence while discovering the real joy of performing on stage! Sessions for Kids (grades 1 through 4) and Juniors (grades 5 through 8) run on Mondays, beginning September 23 for 8 weeks. Instructor: Melissa Gates

Musical Theatre Dance is perfect for students who are new to dance or interested in developing their dance skills for performing in musical theater. Learn basic dance technique, spatial awareness, musicality and dance terminology. Boost your stage presence and confidence and let your light shine! Sessions for Juniors (grades 3 through 6) and Seniors (grades 7 through 12) run on Saturdays, beginning September 28 for 8 weeks. Instructor: Nicole Couture Skorb.

Beginner Tap for teens and adults is ideal for beginning dancers or those who have a little experience (less than 1 year) and is a great way to get your feet moving.

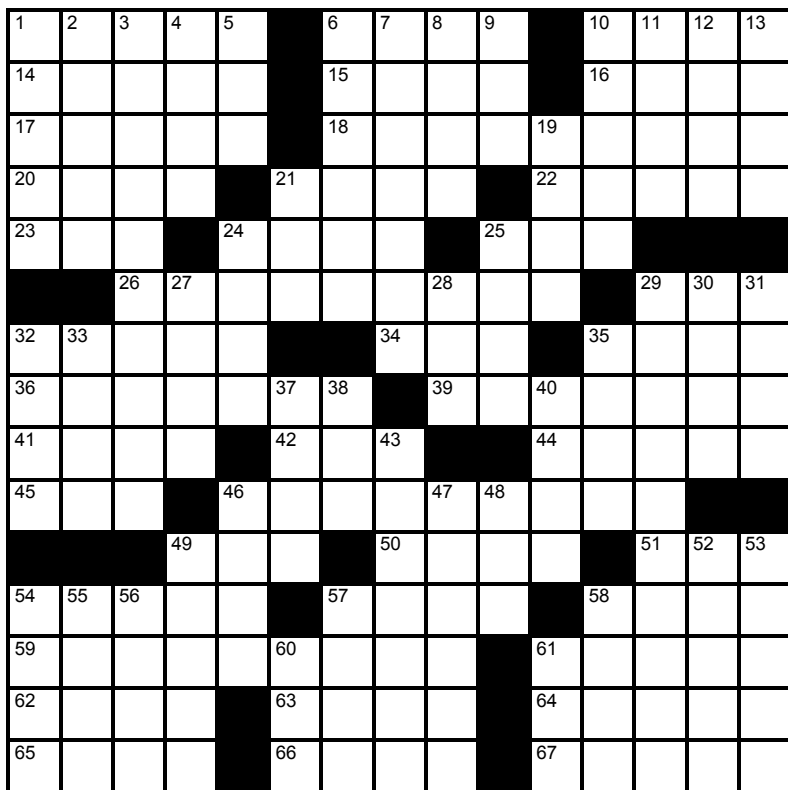
Focusing on solid technique students will learn basic tap skills and use them to create unique tap combinations. Dust off your tap shoes, let loose and tap your cares away! Classes are held on Mondays, beginning October 7 for 8 weeks. Instructor: Nicole Couture Skorb.

Advanced Beginner/Intermediate Tap for teens and adults offers a challenge for students who have prior tap class experience (1 to 2 years) and a solid background in the basic vocabulary of tap. Students can add more advanced skills and vocabulary and develop a stronger foundation of tap technique. Dust off your tap shoes, let loose and tap your cares away! Classes are held on Mondays, beginning October 7 for 8 weeks. Instructor: Nicole Couture Skorb.

Program fees are \$79.00 for 8-week programs. Register online at: [www.mwcc.edu/noncredit](http://www.mwcc.edu/noncredit)

For additional information, contact Professor Gail Steele at [g\\_steele@mwcc.mass.edu](mailto:g_steele@mwcc.mass.edu)

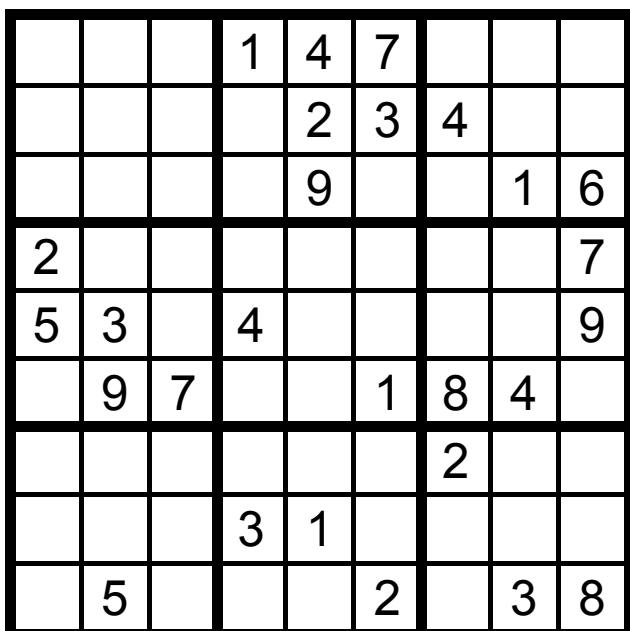




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- |                                     |                               |                                |                            |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Across</b>                       | <b>36</b> Plains Indian       | <b>Down</b>                    | <b>31</b> Energy units     |
| <b>1</b> Boils                      | <b>39</b> Engraving           | <b>1</b> Cut back              | <b>32</b> Cover a road     |
| <b>6</b> Betsy or Diana             | <b>41</b> Ivy                 | <b>2</b> Offering              | <b>33</b> Fleur-de-lis     |
| <b>10</b> Chose                     | <b>42</b> Craft               | <b>3</b> Alcohol               | <b>35</b> Buckeye State    |
| <b>14</b> Actress Darnell           | <b>44</b> Dagger parts        | <b>4</b> Blue-pencil           | <b>37</b> Detest           |
| <b>15</b> In the know               | <b>45</b> Time zone           | <b>5</b> Pouch                 | <b>38</b> Gold (Sp.)       |
| <b>16</b> Intense anger             | <b>46</b> Pantry              | <b>6</b> Turn                  | <b>40</b> Dog breed        |
| <b>17</b> Garret                    | <b>49</b> Piece out           | <b>7</b> Off the boat          | <b>43</b> Anguish          |
| <b>18</b> Sleeping sickness carrier | <b>50</b> Swear               | <b>8</b> British machine gun   | <b>46</b> Remove cream     |
| <b>20</b> Picture                   | <b>51</b> Fed. agency (Abbr.) | <b>9</b> Rummy                 | <b>47</b> Equally          |
| <b>21</b> Comic actress Madeline    | <b>54</b> Puppeteer Lewis     | <b>10</b> Tire part            | <b>48</b> Director Howard  |
| <b>22</b> Comforts                  | <b>57</b> Kitchen appliance   | <b>11</b> Klutzes              | <b>49</b> Delete           |
| <b>23</b> Evil spell                | <b>58</b> Piece of cake       | <b>12</b> Leer                 | <b>52</b> Elevate          |
| <b>24</b> Vote                      | <b>59</b> Sailboat            | <b>13</b> Auto starters        | <b>53</b> Speckles         |
| <b>25</b> Jacob's offspring         | <b>61</b> Broadcast medium    | <b>19</b> Bench                | <b>54</b> Glance over      |
| <b>26</b> Gypsy                     | <b>62</b> Porters             | <b>21</b> Range of vision      | <b>55</b> Nimbus           |
| <b>29</b> Dutch commune             | <b>63</b> Letters             | <b>24</b> Passport endorsement | <b>56</b> Solar disk       |
| <b>32</b> Printing types            | <b>64</b> Summit              | <b>25</b> Mosquito             | <b>57</b> Viva voce        |
| <b>34</b> Age                       | <b>65</b> Not any             | <b>27</b> Record               | <b>58</b> Hindu frock      |
| <b>35</b> Terminated                | <b>66</b> Close friend        | <b>28</b> Action word          | <b>60</b> Medical org.     |
|                                     | <b>67</b> Assistants          | <b>29</b> Having bad thoughts  | <b>61</b> Music co. inits. |
|                                     |                               | <b>30</b> Blemish              |                            |

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



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**THE MOUNT OBSERVER**

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**THE EAST WING GALLERY**  
MOUNT WACHUSETT COMMUNITY COLLEGE, GARDNER, MA  
FALL 2019 EXHIBITIONS, GALLERY TALKS & EVENTS



**Concepts in Clay**  
An exhibition of ceramic work by  
**Maryanne Benns**  
September 3 - October 26

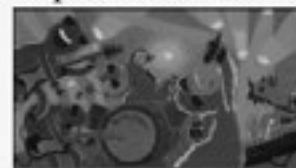
< *Tinkled*, 2018, earthenware, underglaze, paint, fabric and metal, 18 x 15 x 8 inches



Recent Work by  
**Karen Evans**  
September 3 - 25

< *Lush Pasture*, 2019, oil on canvas, 24 x 20 inches

**Graphic Novel & Children's Book Illustrations**



from R. Michelson Gallery  
**October 2 - 31**

Gallery Talk by Rich Michelson  
Wednesday, October 23 at 3:00 p.m.  
< *Janett Krosoczka, All Through the Towns You've* from "Pink Farm"

Thanks to the generous support from the National Endowment for the Humanities grant.



*Walking wonders* the multimedia work of  
**Nancy Sepe**  
November 12- December 8

Reception: Friday, November 22  
4:30 - 6:30 p.m.

< *Rock, Scissors, Paper*, 2018, metal, wood, paint, digital video, 15 x 8 x 5 inches



**Exhibition of Student Work**  
from *Discovering III and Passing It All*

**December 18, 2019 - January 25, 2020**  
Reception: Wednesday, December 18  
3:00 - 5:30 p.m.

< *Nick Letz, Business Something*, 2019, acrylic on canvas, 30 x 24 inches



# STUDENTS

# STUDENT LIFE

## September 2019 Student Life Calendar of Events

9/4 First Day of Classes	9/4 Student IDs 12pm-3pm Room 151	9/5 Student IDs 8am-2pm Room 151	9/9 SGA Meeting 12:30pm Murphy Room	9/9 Student IDs 9am-11am Room 151
9/11 CATS Programming Meeting 12:30pm W11	9/11 Post 9/11 Flag Ceremony 12:30pm Flag Pole by the Main Entrance	9/10 Student IDs 3pm-6pm Room 151	9/10 Work Study Job Fair 11:30am-2pm Commons Area	9/10 Duck Hunt 11:30am-2pm Commons Area Win Prizes!
9/11 1st Responder Thank You Cards 11am-2pm Student Center	9/12 Fall Fest BBQ 11:30am Outside South Café	9/13 Day of Caring 10am-1pm South Café	9/16 Corn Hole Tournament 12:30pm South Café	9/16 CATS Programming Meeting 12:30pm W11
 <p><b>Please see the reverse side for detailed information.</b> For further information or to inquire about an event, please contact the Student Life Office at <a href="mailto:studentlife@mwcc.mass.edu">studentlife@mwcc.mass.edu</a> or 978-630-9148.</p>				
9/20 Welcome Back Hike Wachusett Mountain 9am-1pm Preregistration Required	9/18 SGA Nomination Papers Due by 4pm to Room 151	9/18 Leadership for Life Kick Off! 12:30pm Murphy Room	9/17 Constitution Day 11:30am-1:30pm Student Center	9/17 Corn Hole Tournament 12:30pm South Café
9/23 SGA Meeting 12:30pm Murphy Room	9/24 Club President & Treasurer Training 12:30pm Multipurpose Room	9/25 Film: No Turning Back 12:30pm North Café	9/25 CATS Programming Meeting 12:30pm W11	9/25-9/26 SGA Elections on iConnect
 <p><b>Intramurals</b> <i>Open Gym</i> – Come try out all that Mount Fitness has to offer. Use the equipment, try a class, or swim in the pool, student ID required. September dates: 9/16, 9/26, 5am-9pm. <i>Pick-up Basketball</i>—Join us for pick-up basketball at Mount Fitness every Tuesday from 3-4pm. Student ID required.</p>				
 <p><b>Tea Time Speaker Series</b> Celebrating the LatinX Community in North Central, MA 11am-3pm Multipurpose Room</p>				
 <p><b>Pool Tournament Start</b> 12:30pm Student Center</p>				

**Nomination papers to run for a seat on the Student Government Association (SGA) are now available** in the Student Life Office, at the SGA booth or on-line at <https://connect.mwcc.edu>. *Completed nomination papers must be submitted to the Student Life office by Wed., September 18th at 4pm.*

**Student Photo IDs** Please bring one of the following photo IDs: a motor vehicle license or permit, a military ID, passport or a state issued identification card. ID cost is \$10. Returning students who already have an ID should stop by the MWCC library on the Gardner Campus or the front office on the Burbank, Devens or Leominster campus to have your ID validated for the fall semester at no charge.

**CATS Programming Meeting** (Campus Activities Team for Students) – 12:30 pm, Room W11. Come and join in on the fun of planning and running activities for MWCC students (i.e. Seany Karaoke, Fall Fest). For more information, contact the Student Life office at [studentlife@mwcc.mass.edu](mailto:studentlife@mwcc.mass.edu). 978-630-9148 or stop by the office located in the Student Center. Open to all MWCC students.

**Intramural Activity – Open Gym** - Try a class, take a swim, shoot some hoops, lift some weights, etc. Wearing appropriate clothes and footwear try out the Fitness & Wellness Center at no cost from 5am-9pm. Anyone under the age of 18 needs a parental signature.

**Intramural Activity – Basketball** – Tuesdays, 3-4pm. Appropriate clothing and footwear are required. Players under the age of 18 need an adult signature to participate.

**Student Government Association Meeting** – 12:30 pm, Murphy Room. Come see them in action and consider running for a seat on the SGA. Meeting open to all.

**Patriot Day Events** – Various times and locations. Join us for a variety of events throughout the day as we remember the events of 9/11.

**Duck Hunt** – 11:30am-2pm, Commons Area. Find a numbered rubber duck and turn it in to win a prize.

**Work Study Job Fair** – 11:30am-2pm, Commons Area. Meet prospective employers, learn about available jobs, find out if you are eligible for a Work Study job.

**Fall Fest Welcome BBQ and Activities Fair** - 11:30am – 1:30pm, Patio by South Café (or inside in the case of inclement weather). Come and enjoy the music of *Grupo Fantasia*, the BBQ, henna tattoos, caricatures, cotton candy, various novelties and the Student Club Expo. Novelties begin at 11:30am (free while supplies last). BBQ and Expo begins at 12:30pm (free food while supplies last). Open to all MWCC students, faculty and staff. Sponsored by the Student Life Office, CATS (Campus Activities Team for Students), and the SGA (Student Government Association).

**Day of Caring** – will take place on the Gardner Campus. Save the Date! For more information, contact the Brewer Center for Civic Learning and Community Engagement, 978-630-9219, or [mnicholson5@mwcc.mass.edu](mailto:mnicholson5@mwcc.mass.edu)

**Corn Hole Tournament** - South Café, 12:30pm. Register in the Student Life Office and play to win a cash prize, \$50, \$30, \$20.

**Constitution Day** - 11:30 am – 1:30 pm, Student Center. Register to vote, pick up a pocket Constitution, participate in the SGA constitution quiz to win a prize, or enjoy a free piece of cake (while supplies last). Sponsored by the Student Life Office, the SGA, CATS, and the Center for Civic Learning and Community Engagement. Open to all.

**Welcome Back Hike** – 9am-1pm, Wachusett Mountain. Preregister in Health Services.

**Club President & Treasurer Training** – 12:30pm, Multipurpose Room. Preregister to attend this training for club officers and advisors.

**Film: No Turning Back** – 12:30pm, North Café. After losing his wife and house to Hurricane Mitch in Honduras, Pablo (Jesus Nebot) illegally immigrates to the United States in an attempt to offer a better future for his five-year-old daughter Cristina (Chelsea Rendon). A few months later, it is Cristina's birthday and Pablo borrows his boss' truck to surprise his daughter at school and take her to watch the movie Tarzan. On the way there, a dog jumps into his path and Pablo quickly jerks the wheel. He loses complete control of the truck and a tragic accident occurs. Wild thoughts frantically cross his mind - he has no license, is an illegal immigrant, and has fatally injured a little girl. If he waits for the authorities to arrive, this accident could cost him what he values the most: his daughter and the betterment of her life.

**Student Government Association On-Line Elections** – Simply log on to iconnect (<https://connect.mwcc.edu>) between Wed., Sept. 25, at 8 am and Thurs., Sept. 26, at 2 pm to vote.

**Free Pizza for Evening Students** - 4:00 pm--while food lasts. Cafeteria Hallway. Sponsored by the Student Life Office and CATS (Campus Activities Team for Students).

**Pool Tournament Start** – 12:30pm, Student Center. Preregister to play in the month long tournament to win cash prizes. \$50, \$30, \$20.

**Tea Time Speaker Series** – 11am-3pm, Multipurpose Room. Celebrating the LatinX Community in North Central Massachusetts. Contact Sharmese Gunn at [s.gunn@mwcc.mass.edu](mailto:s.gunn@mwcc.mass.edu) for details.

**Fall 2019 Leadership for Life program**- a series of eight short presentations or service opportunities on topics that will help you feel more comfortable and be successful at MWCC. From the first one in September to the last one in December, *Leadership for Life* will help you. Upcoming workshops are being held: September 18, October 2, 16, 18, 30, November 13, December 11. Most workshops are held from 12:30 to 1:30 pm in the Murphy Room. **For more information:** Contact Sarah Savoie in Student Services at [ssavoie7@mwcc.mass.edu](mailto:ssavoie7@mwcc.mass.edu), 978-630-9855 or stop by room 141.

# Autumn



Events are held on the Gardner Campus unless otherwise noted.