

# ALUMNI CONNECTION

SUMMER 2006



Above Sarah L. Monson, Trudy Monson, and Kim B. Monson

## Giving back to HCC

Read about the Monson family's tribute  
to Robert E. Evans, Jr. on page 8

**HOLYOKE**  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Futures Inspired

# Director's Letter

The Alumni Connection is published three times a year by the Holyoke Community College Alumni Office, Holyoke, Massachusetts, and is distributed without charge to alumni and friends of HCC. Third-class postage is paid at Springfield, Massachusetts.

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#### Class Notes:

News and photographs from alumni should be addressed to the Alumni Office, Holyoke Community College, 303 Homestead Avenue, Holyoke, MA 01040.

#### Letters:

Readers are invited to submit letters and stories concerning HCC and its alumni. Contact the alumni director by phone (413) 552-2253 or email: jbrown@hcc.mass.edu (put "HCC Alumni Connection" in the subject line").

#### Class Notes/Change of Address:

Please submit the reply form on page 14, or call the Alumni Office (413) 552-2253.

#### 2005-2006 Alumni Council:

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##### Second Vice President

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##### Secretary

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Eddie Corbin `68

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Dawn E. Donatini-Rivera `89

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Pamela Murray, alumni trustee `95

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Karen Thompson-Brown `05

Vandelyn T. Wright `83

The Alumni Council, a group of key alumni volunteers, oversees alumni initiatives. To learn more about joining the Alumni Council, please call Joanna Brown, (413) 552-2253.

## Dear Alumni,

It's official: HCC alumni are among the best in the land. Alumni Council President Gloria Lomax and I have known this in our hearts for some time. A recently completed national study of alumni associations confirms it.

The study, which will be published later this year, found that only 200 of an estimated 1,500 community colleges in this country have active alumni associations. Right away, that puts the HCC's Alumni Association in an elite category. The study then singles out HCC from among a field of approximately 170 community colleges as one of five "best practices" institutions in the nation.

Simply put, that means that HCC alumni **give back** to the college that gave them so much.

Gloria and I learned about the results of this study in February, when we gave a talk about our work with the HCC Alumni Association before an audience at the Council for Resource Development conference in Raleigh, North Carolina. Conference attendees included alumni directors, deans, and vice presidents of development. More than one vice president asked me about "cloning" Gloria. I'm not too surprised. Gloria's passion for HCC speaks volumes about the strength of our alumni leadership and alumni involvement.

HCC alumni are setting new standards for alumni involvement in community colleges. More than 1,500 of you have already contributed and pledged \$230,000 toward an unprecedented \$500,000 five-year fund raising goal. If you haven't already, I hope you will join Gloria by becoming an **active** member of our HCC Alumni Association. Please plan to attend one of our upcoming events (page 16) and add your name to our alumni email list (page 14).



Director of Alumni Relations  
Joanna Brown

*P.S. Gloria Lomax's letter on page 4 announces a new scholarship, established in memory of Professor Miriam Sajkovic, a beloved philosophy teacher. If your life was touched by Miriam Sajkovic, I hope that you will help to establish this scholarship with your contribution.*



Director of Alumni Relations Joanna Brown

## Planned Giving:

### Today's commitment to tomorrow's legacy

Many of you have told us that Holyoke Community College has changed your life, that you would like to express your gratitude with a large gift to the annual appeal. The thing is, you can't swing it on this year's budget.

There is something you can do **today** to build a legacy at HCC in the **future**.

Consider making a planned or deferred gift to HCC.

A planned or deferred gift allows you to manage your current finances, while contributing to HCC's future. Several alumni have told us that this option allowed them to donate more to HCC than they ever thought possible.

Unlike annual cash gifts, a planned gift is funded not by your weekly paycheck, but with real estate, securities, or personal property. The size of your gift is up to you, but many have found that their donation can be larger because it came from a rarely touched revenue source.

Planned gifts can take many forms. Some provide immediate lifetime income for the donor and/or spouse and a deferred gift to HCC. Others allow HCC to derive income from an asset like an annuity for a period of years, after which the asset is passed to heirs who benefit from a substantial estate tax savings.

The easiest way to make a major planned gift to HCC is by naming the college as a beneficiary in your will. While HCC always welcomes cash gifts, our first concern is that all donations be made with the best interests of you and your family in mind. If you wish, we will work with you to create a bequest that fits your needs and your vision for HCC's future.

Naming HCC in your will is attractive to many donors for the following reasons:

It is not immediate. A bequest is not payable until death, so it does not affect assets or cash flow during your lifetime.

Your intention to give to HCC can be made public or kept confidential. Anyone who establishes a planned gift can become a member of the George Frost Society and will receive benefits of that membership (see below). You can also become an anonymous donor, if you wish.

It is revocable. You can change the provisions in your will at any time until death.

It is flexible and easy to establish. A bequest can deliver a specific gift to HCC (e.g., "I bequeath to HCC the sum of \$10,000") **or** it can deliver a percentage of the balance remaining in your estate after taxes, expenses and specific bequests have been paid (e.g., "I bequeath X% of the residue of my estate to HCC"). The latter option, known as a residual bequest, generally gives you more flexibility in your long-term planning.

It has tax benefits. A bequest can reduce your estate tax. Under the federal estate tax code, a charitable bequest is deductible, with no limit on the amount of the deduction. Charitable bequests generally are not subject to state inheritance or estate taxes. Often the tax savings can be substantial.

Planned gifts are most effective when they are integrated into an overall estate plan. They are most meaningful when they truly reflect your values and vision. A gift to Holyoke Community College can meet both goals.

When you are ready, Holyoke Community College's development staff is here to help you review your deferred giving options. We would be happy to review



**Development Officer Joseph April**

your estate planning goals and give you options for including HCC in them. For information or assistance please contact Joe April, development officer, at [japril@hcc.mass.edu](mailto:japril@hcc.mass.edu) or (413) 552-2746.

We urge you to seek the advice of your tax advisor, attorney, and/or financial planner to make certain a contemplated gift fits well into your overall circumstances and planning.

### The Frost Society

Created in memory of HCC's first president, Dr. George Frost, this society recognizes individuals who have made a provision in their estate plans for the HCC Foundation. Membership is offered to all who make such bequests, regardless of the amount. All donations are greatly appreciated. Frost Society members receive personal invitations to college events and are recognized in the Foundation's annual report. With the recent addition of Heather Sabin '93, the Frost Society currently has 22 members. If you would like to join, please contact Erica Broman, vice president for institutional development at (413)552-2747 or [ebroman@hcc.mass.edu](mailto:ebroman@hcc.mass.edu).

# Annual Fund Update

## Dear Friends,

In the last edition of the *Alumni Connection*, I wrote to you about our association's pledge to raise at least \$500,000 for the college by June 2009. I am happy to tell you that we are almost halfway there! To date, we have recorded \$230,000 in pledges.

Those pledges are our *promise* to give back to HCC, a place that gave us so much. When \$500,000 in pledges are collected, we can all look forward to another delight: the clock tower at the Kittredge Center will be officially named the Alumni Clock Tower.

As I reflect on this ambitious goal, I am reminded of the late Miriam (Mim) Sajkovic, a beloved philosophy teacher at HCC. Something about Mim's spirit inspires me to think we can raise the \$500,000—and then some.

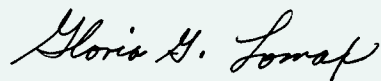
Mim was always present with you, and she was concerned about your well-being, even when you didn't have time to think of it yourself. I remember her walking into my office early one afternoon and giving me a lovely set of figurines. She said she wanted me to put them in my office window, where they would reflect the light. Every time I looked at those glistening statuettes, I would think of Mim and of everything that she represented at HCC.

I am not the only one.

Miriam Sajkovic's giving spirit has inspired her son, Alex Sajkovic '78, and one of her former students, Greg Schneider '90, to establish an endowed philosophy award in her memory. The two men, both HCC alums, have pledged \$10,000 toward the \$15,000 needed to establish the endowment. They are seeking to raise the rest from others who were touched by this remarkable woman. I know that some of you reading this letter will recognize yourself in their mission.

There is no better way to honor Miriam Sajkovic than to make a contribution to the Miriam Sajkovic Philosophy Fund. This is money that will annually reward a student for excellence in philosophy studies. If you make a donation this year, and sustain it over the next three years, it will help the Alumni Association reach its \$500,000 campaign goal.

If you did not know Miriam Sajkovic, there are certainly others who inspired you to succeed. I invite you to honor your mentors by making a contribution to an HCC campaign fund of your choice. If you wish to honor or memorialize a particular person, please tell us that person's name. We will publish both your names in our annual giving report.



Alumni Association President



**Alumni Association President  
Gloria G. Lomax '75**

## What's new?

Beginning June 1, the University of Massachusetts' Isenberg School of Management will bring its Professional MBA program to HCC's Kittredge Center for Business and Community. Formerly located in Springfield, the Professional MBA program will offer graduate-

level instruction in business for busy professionals and traditional graduate students alike. The 12-course, 37-credit, part-time, self-paced program builds up-to-date knowledge and skills for today's complex business environments and is accredited nationally and

internationally by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). For more information please visit [http://www.isenberg.umass.edu/MBA/PartTime\\_MBA/](http://www.isenberg.umass.edu/MBA/PartTime_MBA/)

## HCC Giving Levels

Benefits are accrued in a given fund year. The 2006 fund year runs from July 1, 2005–June 30, 2006.

**President's Circle**—\$5,000 or more (Gold) or \$2,500–\$4,999 (Silver)  
Benefits: Invitation to the annual President's Dinner prepared by culinary students and benefits listed below.

**Summit Society**—\$1,000–\$2,499  
Benefits: Invitation to Chef's Table Luncheons at the college and benefits listed below.

**Sheehan Society**—\$500–\$999  
Benefits: Invitation to exclusive viewing of city fireworks when hosted by HCC and benefits listed below.

**Phoenix Society**—\$250–\$499  
Benefits: Special invitations to all art gallery receptions at Taber Art Gallery and benefits listed below.

**Homestead Society**—\$100–\$249  
Benefits: HCC Alumni Association license plate frame and benefits listed below. Alumni who contribute \$100 or more per year for three years will also have a brick engraved with their name placed in the alumni donor brick display.

**Emerald Club**—\$50–\$99  
Benefits: Name published in HCC Foundation annual report and in alumni giving report.

**Cougar Club**—Up to \$49  
Benefit: Name published in alumni giving report.

**Note: The 2006 Annual Fund ends June 30. Please send your contribution by then to be included in the 2006 Giving Report.**

## 2006 HCC Alumni Fund and The Gift of Opportunity campaign

Enclosed is my 2006 contribution of:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_  \$25  \$35  **\$60\***  \$100  \$250  \$500  \$1,000  \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\*In honor of our 60<sup>th</sup> year, please consider contributing at this level or higher.

Please also enter my future pledges for *The Gift of Opportunity* campaign 2007-2009:

2007 \$ \_\_\_\_\_ 2008 \$ \_\_\_\_\_ 2009 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I/we wish to have my/our gift designated to the following fund:

**Campaign Funds:**

- The Gift of Opportunity Unrestricted Fund (wherever the need is greatest)*
- Kittredge Center Fund (equipment, furniture, and technology)*
- The Student Opportunity Fund (tutoring, mentoring, and work-study)*
- Library Resource Fund (restoring cancelled print and electronic resources)*

**Alumni Funds:**

- Miriam ("Mim") Sajkovic Fund*
- Alumni Equipment Fund*
- Alumni Scholarship Fund*
- Other Fund Designation:* \_\_\_\_\_

Alumni name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Graduation year or years attended: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_ Position/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

My/Our check is enclosed, payable to HCC FOUNDATION with a memo line of "ALUMNI." (2006 fund drive ends June 30, 2006)

My/Our gift will be matched by: \_\_\_\_\_ (Please send matching gift form)

Charge/Debit (circle one): AMEX MC VISA DISCOVER

Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Card Holder: \_\_\_\_\_

**If you do not want your name printed in the 2006 Annual Giving Report, please check this box.**

Please mail to HCC Foundation, 303 Homestead Ave., Holyoke, MA 01040. For more information please call (413) 552-2253.

# President's Bulletin



HCC President William F. Messner

## Bill's Bulletin

President William F. Messner shares news about all-college initiatives and the college's expanding involvement in the region.

As you can see from reading this edition of the *Alumni Connection*, HCC alumni support the college because the college supports them and their community. Events both on and off campus during the spring semester highlight a tradition of outreach and support.

### The Kittredge Center for Business and Community

The Kittredge Center for Business and Community will officially celebrate its opening on May 19. This bright and shining structure has been 10 years in the planning and nearly two years under construction. It is a testimony not only to Michael Kittredge, the HCC alum who put forth \$1 million to build it, but to the dedicated efforts of many alums like you who helped raise the \$3 million needed to outfit the 55,000-square-foot facility. The five floors house an array of instructional facilities, including a spacious conference center and 20 classrooms that are fully outfitted with the latest technology. These are precisely the tools

needed to help faculty, staff and students achieve their goals. The center will also connect the private sector with the many training and professional development opportunities available at HCC. If you haven't already, come take a walk through this beautiful new building.

### The Family and Adult Learning Center

Through the good offices of the college's congressional delegation, HCC has received federal funding to establish a Family and Adult Learning Center in Holyoke. The center will address literacy levels and other basic education needs for Holyoke residents of all ages. The Peter Pan Bus Company will oversee construction of the center, which will be housed on the top two floors of the Multi-Modal Transportation Center on Maple Street. If all goes as planned, the facility should be operational in early 2007.

### Helping HCC students transfer with Jack Kent Cooke Foundation grants

HCC has partnered with Amherst College and Mount Holyoke College in two separate, successful grant applications to aid community college students who would like to transfer to highly selective four-year colleges. Funded by the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation, these grants provide financial support to community college transfers as well as programming and staff to aid students who are transferring to Amherst or Mount Holyoke colleges. This initiative builds on HCC's strong transfer tradition which HCC has already established over its 60-year history. It is intended to particularly aid lower-income community college students who have been underrepresented at these colleges.

### Connecting to the Latino community through ¡Avanza!

For the past three years, HCC has participated in ¡Avanza!: a community-based coalition which seeks to improve educational access for Latino youth in Holyoke. Over this past winter,

HCC staff have worked with coalition members to win additional support from the Kellogg Foundation. A grant application submitted by the coalition this spring seeks substantial support for the Holyoke School Department, HCC, and community-based organizations. If successful, the Kellogg Foundation will commit approximately \$1.5 million to our efforts over the next three years.

### HCC: Futures Inspired

Over the past year the college has worked closely with Educational Marketing Group, Inc., of Colorado (EMG) on market research, vision, and positioning. In January, after much work with campus and community members, EMG representatives presented an institutional vision statement to the college trustees. Based on that statement, the college has now developed an institutional tagline that captures the essence of the promise HCC makes to its students. That tagline is "Futures Inspired." In the coming months you will begin to see this tagline on HCC's stationery, publications, signs, and advertising. Faculty and staff who developed this tagline feel it captures the college's commitment to helping students with diverse educational goals. The college has also worked with a local Hispanic marketing firm, Bauza & Associates, to develop a Spanish-language tagline, "Encuentra lo mejor de ti" ("Find the best in you") for use in Spanish language materials.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Messner".

- William T. Messner

## Annual Alumni Summer Celebration

Wednesday, July 12, 5 to 8 p.m.

For the past four years, the HCC Alumni Summer Celebration has been our way of gathering together alums of all ages for a casual evening of good food, live entertainment, and just plain fun. This special event is one part cook-out, one part party, and one part live performance. Last year, throngs of alums attended the celebration, which was held in the campus center and featured live country music by Mark Normantowicz, '95.

As HCC prepares to celebrate its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we look forward to a great mixture of alums at the 2006 celebration, to be held in the air-conditioned campus center.

Normantowicz will return this year and will be joined by vocalist Geraldo Cotton '06, who will treat us with a mixture of Latin and jazz ballads. There will also be a plentiful buffet of American and Latin food, and activities for children of all ages.



**From the left (front row) Doreen Larson, Colleen Cameron '84, Dave Cameron; (back row) Len Larson, Myriam Quiñones '95, and Lourdes-Marie Torres '06 enjoy the 2005 Alumni Summer Celebration**

Attendance is free to alumni and guests, but you must register by July 3. Please register by sending an email to [jbrown@hcc.mass.edu](mailto:jbrown@hcc.mass.edu) with "HCC Summer Celebration" in the subject



**First row (l to r): Kathryn Diaz and Marie Brown '99, second row (l to r), Gina Diaz and Darlene Pease, at the 2005 Alumni Summer Celebration.**

line. Remember to include your name, your guests' names, and the ages of anyone under 18. You may also leave this information at (413) 552-2253.

## Alumni Riverboat Cruise

Friday, June 16, 6 to 7 p.m.

Imagine feeling the cool breeze on your face as you look out on the Connecticut River and watch a lazy summer day drift by. The sun's shining, birds are chirping, and there's not another place in the world you'd rather be.

The Fourth Annual HCC Alumni Riverboat Cruise, June 16, promises to be all that and more. Join fellow HCC alums for lively conversations and delectable refreshments on board the Lady Bea, an air-conditioned cruise boat. The event is free to alums and a guest—thanks to the generosity of HCC alum Luke Brunelle Jr., '83, owner of Brunelle's Marina—but it fills up fast. To register, please call Joanna Brown at (413) 552-2253.



**HCC art teacher Beverly Wodicka and retired faculty member Walter Mozgala '68 enjoying our 2005 Riverboat Cruise on the "Lady Bea." To see more photographs, go to [www.hcc.edu](http://www.hcc.edu) and click on "alumni."**



**Florinda Peck '99, Claire Carocci '85, Lois "Tripper" Pare '93, and Director of Alumni Relations Joanna Brown, enjoy the 2005 River Cruise.**

## A tribute of their own

For 14 years, Robert E. Evans, Jr. '50, blazed a trail at Holyoke Community College - as the campus's first affirmative action officer, and, some would say, as the college's conscience during turbulent times.

"He was definitely a role model - a person of great dignity and grace," said Idelia Smith, who took over the reins from Evans to become HCC's assistant vice president of diversity. "He really understood the effect that poverty has on people and the difference that having an education could make in one's life."

**"Instead of saying  
'Can I do it?'"**

**I say**

**"How will I do it?'"**

**—Robert E. Evans, Jr.**

That legacy did not diminish when Evans retired from HCC in 1984. A fellowship bearing his name was created in 1993 to help graduate students from minority backgrounds who want to pursue a career in community college education. Each year, it provides professional mentorship and a \$2,000 stipend for a graduate student who agrees to work with educators at HCC.

In 2001, the college again recognized Evans with a Distinguished Service Award.

But it is in the people he left behind that Robert E. Evans, Jr.'s legacy shines most brightly. Today, more than three years after he passed away, his friends and family continue to bear witness to him.

His daughter, Gertrude "Trudy" Monson '97, still volunteers for Upward Bound, a federally funded HCC program that helps urban teens over the bridge from high school to a successful college experience. The retired Verizon employee pitches in wherever she is needed.

"I help out in the summer, when they have a summer camp at UMass and, well, whenever there's something going on," said Trudy, who is also a member of the HCC Alumni Council. "And I get Sarah (daughter Sarah L. Monson '02 a member of the Green Key Society) to come along and help out, too."

Evans' other granddaughter, Kim E. Monson '01, also volunteered for Upward Bound but now works as its program assistant. In 2005, when she was accepted into the prestigious Smith Graduate School of Social Work, Kim deferred acceptance for a year because she didn't want to interrupt her work with the young women she mentors.

"My students are really important to me," says Kim, 25. "They are my family. I talk with them all the time, and it's special because I am almost their age and I remember what it was like. I didn't want them to be left in the middle."

Trudy was at first a little unnerved by her daughter's decision, but Kim was resolute.

"Grandpa always said you need to do what will make you happy," Kim said. "And that's what made me happy."

Kim's generosity and pluck would no doubt make her grandfather proud, but he would also have applauded her longterm vision: Kim E. Monson will

begin her graduate studies at Smith this spring.

The father of seven, Robert E. Evans, Jr. always seemed to find a way to weave social work into an impossibly busy schedule. While holding a full-time job as a science teacher at the John J. Lynch Middle School, he was active in his church and with a variety of community organizations that sought to improve the lives of the poor in Holyoke. Trudy said her father was especially proud of his work with A.I.M, Inc., a grassroots Holyoke organization he founded that advocated on housing and employment





issues, provided tutoring, and ran a camping program.

"AIM used to have white volunteers who would apply for an apartment. Then they'd send a black person to apply for the same one," said Trudy. "You can guess what they found."

Robert E. Evans, Jr. was undaunted by mere hard work, and he expected the same of those around him. Trudy remembers complaining to her mother about getting a 'D' in her father's science class when she was a student in class. Her father was unmoved.

"He said 'You deserved an 'F' but I gave you a 'D' because you tried,'" said Trudy, laughing. "He was right, and that was the end of it."

Those unyielding standards were leavened with a healthy dose of compassion. Evans knew what it was like to be spread thin. While juggling jobs as a janitor, a laborer, and a fabric dyer, Evans managed to earn degrees from the former Holyoke Junior College, the University of Massachusetts, and Springfield College.

Reflecting on his dogged commitment to education, he once explained:

"Instead of saying 'Can I do it?' I say 'How will I do it?'"

If he were remembered with those words alone, Robert E. Evans, Jr. would leave a worthy legacy. But his family recently decided that there should be another reminder of his life at HCC.

Trudy Monson and her mother Agnes E. Evans, 85, have agreed to donate \$3,000 to HCC, allowing the college to dedicate a room in the new Kittredge Center to their late father and husband. Trudy admits that, at first, the amount seemed frightening.

"But then I was volunteering for the HCC [fundraising] phone-a-thon, and I thought: 'I haven't given back,'" she said. By spreading out payments until 2009, Trudy said, her family was able to give more.

The plaque will read:

"Agnes E. Evans and Family in Memory of Robert E. Evans, Jr. '50"

Agnes, Trudy, Sarah, and Kim were happy to have an opportunity to add their own tribute to the many that

## "Agnes E. Evans and Family in Memory of Robert E. Evans, Jr. '50"

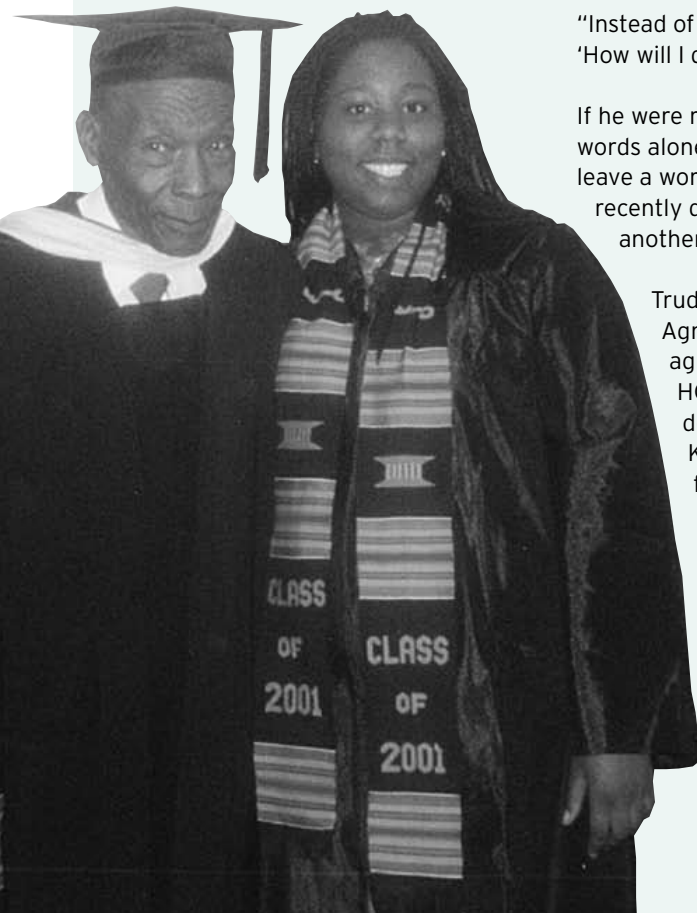
Robert E. Evans, Jr. earned in his lifetime. But there were some lingering familial tensions.

"My mother was a little bit upset about paying it over time, because she wanted to pay it all at once," said Trudy. "But we convinced her that, well, she's 85, and she needs to be a little more conservative."

Mustering some of her late husband's spirit, Agnes replied:

"What better way to spend the money your father left me?"

— Kathleen E. Moore



**In this 2001 photo, Trudy Monson '97, Robert E. Evans Jr., '50, and Kim E. Monson '01 are seen celebrating Kim's graduation from HCC. That same day, Evans received HCC's Distinguished Service Award.**

## Event Photos



### Celebrating 10 years of Upward Bound

Former Director of the HCC Upward Bound program, Sonia Correa Pope, (front row, second from the left) is surrounded by students, staff and alumni of Upward Bound during the program's 10th anniversary TRIO dinner, held February 19 at Chez Joseph. The dinner also honored Elaine Ironfield, Laura Coelen, and Congressman John Olver, all supporters of the program.



### Kathryn "Kate" Lacey '96 tells Hollywood tales

Belchertown native Kathryn "Kate" Lacey '96 visited HCC on December 21 to share some of her experiences as a Hollywood casting agent. The former HCC theatre student went on to graduate from Emerson College and has built a successful career in Hollywood, but she credits her time in Pat Sandoval's theatre class with giving her the basics.



### Young at Heart Chorus wows HCC

Retired HCC speech and theatre instructor Jeanne Hatch, took center stage March 8 when she belted Lou Reed's "Walk on the Wild Side" during a performance by the internationally acclaimed *Young at Heart Chorus*.



### Certain to be Hurtin'

HCC put together a team of ambitious volunteers for the March 18 St. Patrick's Day road race. Under the team moniker of "Certain to be Hurtin'" the runners posted times ranging from 52 minutes to one hour and 18 minutes for the 10K walk/run. From left to right are: Michelle Robak, Mitchell Pysznik, Jen Dolan, Doreen Larson, Pat Sandoval '87, Bill Messner, Geoffrey Little and Mike Carney.

## “What could be more natural?”

Brian M. Burns '85 would never call it philanthropy.

“I was taught to give back,” says the soft-spoken HCC alum, a sergeant in the campus security force. “If you don't see it, you don't spend it, so it works out well.”

What “works out well” for Burns is the establishment of the Eleanor V. Burns Scholarship fund. Each month for the last five years, Burns, 42, has had \$100 deducted from his take-home pay and delivered to the fund, which will eventually award scholarships in memory of his late mother, a 23-year employee of the HCC registrar's office. Once the fund amasses \$15,000, it will disburse scholarships from the accrued interest.

“It (the scholarship) will go to someone who is like my mother,” Burns explains. “Someone who is busy bringing up a family and trying to go to school.”

“Busy” may be an understatement to anyone who knew Eleanor V. (Connor) Burns. A lifelong Holyoke resident and mother of nine children, Burns routinely began her days with a 6:45 a.m. mass at the Blessed Sacrament Church.

“Then she'd come home and get breakfast for her kids and her husband,” said Burns, the ‘baby’ of the family. “She never complained.”

No one would have begrudged Eleanor a little well-deserved rest when her youngest child, Brian, began kindergarten in 1967. But leisure was not in her nature.

“She was in her 50s when she went to work at HCC. I think it was down on Sargeant Street then,” said Brian. “She wasn't looking to go back to work, but

George Frost (HCC's first president) begged her.”

It didn't take long for Eleanor Burns to find a new family in the hustle and bustle of the registrar's office.

“Eleanor was a light that brightened the office and made working a daily experience to look forward to,” wrote Victor E. Thomas, Sr., Eleanor's boss. “I will never forget what she would tell me on occasion: ‘I enjoy going to work. That is where my friends are.’”

Brian Burns remembers his childhood was a little chaotic at times, but never dull. A ready supply of older siblings pitched in when his parents were busy, which was often the case. William H. and Eleanor V. Burns were very involved in community activities, including the St. Patrick's Day festivities.

“I remember counting the paper ballots for the Colleen contest in our basement,” Brian says, chuckling. “We were always busy then. St. Patrick's Day was our high holidays.”

It was not unusual for Eleanor to stay late at the registrar's office, where students came to her with transcript queries. It was not in her nature to leave before the job was done. His mother seemed invigorated by the youthful energy that surrounded her each day.

“She loved to be around the kids,” he says. “They called her Mrs. B. She was definitely a mother figure.”

The Burns family is understandably proud of their mother's simple legacy of hard work, family, and warmth. In 2000, when she passed away, they decided to extend that legacy through an HCC scholarship in her memory.



**Eleanor V. Burns and her youngest son, Brian M. Burns '85**

“Brian came to me and asked if he could put away \$25 a week for this scholarship,” said Vice President for Institutional Development Erica Broman. “I told him that it might take awhile to get to the \$15,000 needed to endow a scholarship, but he said he didn't care, that he would keep taking money out of his paycheck even after we reached \$15,000.”

Thanks to Brian's monthly donations and the William Burns Memorial Golf Tournament, the scholarship fund is more than halfway to its goal. Launched in 1993, the tournament was named after the beloved family patriarch, former Holyoke Tax Collector William H. Burns. Each year, proceeds from the tournament are added to the Eleanor V. Burns Scholarship fund. Brian's siblings also chip in whenever they can.

“My parents always taught us to give back, to donate to the community,” said Brian, now the father of two.

“It just makes sense that we'd give to HCC. This college has given me so much. I am an employee here. I was educated here. What could be more natural?”

– Kathleen E. Moore

# Alumni Letters



**Miriam "Mim" Sajkovic**

**Editor's Note:** Two books by Miriam Sajkovic are available at the HCC library or via lending libraries in Western Mass.:

**FM Dostoevsky: His Image of Man,** Sajkovic, Miriam Taylor, 1963, University of Pennsylvania Press, and **Visionaries of Our Times: An Introduction to Their Creative Legacy,** Sajkovic, Miriam Taylor, with Thompson, Katherine Burr, and portraitist Dalski, Svetlana, 1994, Dorrance Publishing Co, Pittsburgh, PA.

## Betty Jane Longtin '85

I was deeply saddened in late 2004 to read of the passing of Miriam Taylor ("Mim") Sajkovic.

Professor Sajkovic was both dynamic and brilliant. As she lectured, I often sat there in awe of her vast knowledge. She seemed to be equally comfortable whether lecturing on physics, math, psychology, history, or ethics. Her words came with such ease in a constant free flow. My hand ached from note taking, but one dared not sit idly by.

Mim recognized that the courses were difficult, particularly for those of us with neither scientific nor mathematical minds (or so we thought). Abstract thought was totally new for many of us. At the beginning of the semester, she reassured us that although we might not understand everything at first, not to worry "because one day it will come to you - you will have your epiphany."

We did experience our sudden epiphanies.

Some of the heroic models introduced to us by Mim included great humanitarians and existentialist thinkers who dared to stand up to the Nazis in World War II, including Albert Camus, Jean Paul Sartre, and Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer. The first two men founded the French Resistance or Underground. My favorite hero, however, was the German pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who, as a member of the German Resistance, was involved in a plot against Hitler's life.

Then, we were introduced to the many brave Danes and Dutch, including Herman Dooyeweerd, who actively formed a resistance [movement] against the Nazis that involved hiding Jews from their persecutors. And last, but not least, were the exceedingly brave Russian dissidents, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and Andrei Sakharov, who dared to stand up to Stalin and the Communists in a totalitarian police state.

And, can anyone forget the great fun we experienced in playing and making colorful designs for Mim's patented game "Tetraworld-Dooyeweerd Synthesis" (become aware of the new consciousness of the universe)? The game graphically demonstrates the interdependence of the four kingdoms-human, animal, vegetable, and physical phenomena.

I am now 75 and although it has been 20 years since my last philosophy class, Mim is always with me in spirit. She has had a profound effect upon me and my value system and helped to prepare me to live in today's world. I remain aware of my responsibility to the needs of the common man, both at home and globally; to the preservation of Planet Earth, and to the great need to remain politically active.

I feel extremely privileged to have experienced the mind and teachings of Professor Miriam Taylor Sajkovic at HCC.

-Betty Jane Longtin '85

## Greg Schneider '90

I took every class Miriam Sajkovic taught during the years I was at HCC - a range of different philosophy courses, ethics, and history courses. She inspired me more than anyone else I have ever met - both before and after HCC. Although graduate school and my professional career so far have included molecular

biology, biochemistry, event planning, and payroll processing, what I learned with Mrs. Sajkovic has dramatically affected each of those endeavors. She taught me to be an independent thinker, to question, to ignore limitations and to embrace the world we live in.

It may sound silly and even a little extreme, but her passing has prompted

me to make some significant changes in my life from how I approach my businesses and how I interact with my family and the world. Without HCC, I never would have met her. She truly did leave the world a better place, and I am grateful to be assisting in setting up a fund in her memory.

-Greg Schneider '90

## “I believe in giving back”

For Serena K. Fuller, success grew out of three qualities: business savvy, gumption, and a whole lot of hard work.

The owner of College Highway Insurance Agency, Inc., says those traits began to blossom in her 28 years ago, when she was a retail management student at HCC.

“The program was entrepreneurial all the way, and very competitive,” says Fuller. “I loved (professors) Anne Potter and Elaine Ironfield. They really worked us hard, but they also encouraged us. We were like a family. They made us start a consignment shop on campus as part of our curriculum, and it had to make money...It was not your normal one-hour class.”

Years after she graduated from HCC, it was that same mixture of skills and passion that prompted Fuller to make a radical change in her career.

“I was about 30, and the place where I was working was like a little post office - safe, predictable, and not challenging. No one ever left,” she said. “I gave myself six months to make it work, and then I quit.”

Leaving was the easy part. Fuller had stashed away some money so she didn't have to work right away. Deciding what she was going to do next was a little more complicated. She studied her options.

“I knew I wanted to work for myself, and I knew that I wanted to sell something that everyone needed or wanted to buy. Everyone needs insurance,” she said. “But I didn't know anything about insurance and there was no one around to tell me how to get started. People inherit insurance businesses or they work in their family's business. No one is going to show you how.”

No one, that is, except Fuller herself.

For the next two years, Fuller researched the field thoroughly, taking all of the necessary courses and licensing exams and establishing contacts with insurance companies. She couldn't scan the Internet to view her options. The Internet hadn't arrived on the business scene yet. Meanwhile, she purchased, rehabilitated, and furnished the building that now houses her office.

“When I opened my doors, I had a table, a chair and a phone, but I didn't have one customer,” she now recalls, laughing. “Insurance is a referral-oriented business and I had to build up referrals. I worked hard. I still do. It took probably a year and a half for things to even out.”

Fuller has never lost the perspective she gained from her early days in the business. She uses it to her advantage.

“Because I started out not knowing the first thing about insurance, I feel compelled to take the time to explain everything to my customers,” she said. “People like that.”

Remembering the value of mentorship, Fuller volunteers with young entrepreneurs through the Business Education Alliance in Southwick. She has also been a donor to HCC, where her business career first took shape. This year, she increased her usual donation to the college, committing herself to a pledge that will allow HCC to dedicate a room in the new Kittredge Center to Anthony and Helen Kazlauskas, Fuller's parents.

Fuller did not make this decision lightly. Neither, too, did she hesitate, when Director of Alumni Relations Joanna Brown approached her about the naming opportunity.



**Serena K. Fuller**

“When I was asked, it made a lot of sense to give to HCC,” she said. “I have a connection there. I have good memories of my experience there. I believe in giving back and HCC has given me a lot.”

– Kathleen E. Moore

# Alumni Notes

## 1970

After working in the industry for 36 years, Arnie Goldstein has started a business as an office equipment industry consultant. He offers sales management coaching to copier dealerships and he also provides independent document management assessment to large companies. The goal of his work is to help client companies reduce their copier/fax/printer costs by 10-30 percent. His web site is [www.arniegoldstein.com](http://www.arniegoldstein.com).

## 1972



**Joseph B. Collins**, a shareholder in the law firm of Hendel & Collins, P.C., is one of 22 lawyers inducted into the 2006

class of College Fellows by the American College of Bankruptcy. Inductees into this prestigious group are reviewed for their professionalism, ethics, character, integrity, professional expertise, and sustained evidence of scholarship, teaching, and lecturing on bankruptcy or insolvency. A graduate of Boston College and Suffolk University Law School, Collins has practiced bankruptcy law since 1978. In 1982 he co-founded the Springfield law firm of Hendel & Collins, P.C.

## 1974

**Tina M. Warren** graduated from UMass in 2004 and is now a social worker. Her daughter Lisa is 27 and works for a law firm in Hartford. Her son Scott is 25 and works in Hatfield. Warren, who lives alone with her cat Simba, writes, "I am very active in the community and I don't plan to retire until I am 70, so I have a long way to go."

## 1985

**Beth Dugan** has announced that her most recent book, *The Responsible Serving of Alcoholic Beverages: A Complete Staff Training Course for Bars, Restaurants, and Caterers* (with companion CD-ROM), has been published by Atlantic Publishing Company. This comprehensive manual

teaches management and liquor service staff how to responsibly serve alcohol in licensed premises. Among the topics covered in the book are: legal issues, blood-alcohol levels, responsible serving, ID checking, false IDs, minors, difficult customers, designated drivers, the physiological affects of alcohol, identifying and handling problem situations, and reducing liability premiums. The book also outlines an inexpensive in-house training program. For more information, please visit Dugan's website [www.foodwrite.us](http://www.foodwrite.us).

## 2003

**Ginette M. Smith** is employed at MassMutual as an actuarial analyst in the retirement services division.

### In Memoriam

Five members of the HCC community passed away since the publication of the last *Alumni Connection*. We mourn the loss of:

William J. Babkiewicz '79  
Lorraine F. Carter '81  
Sandra L. Paquette '88  
Corinne A. Rourke '93  
Dawn E. Nyquist '01

## Class Notes/Email List/Change of Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class year: \_\_\_\_\_

Former name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Class notes contribution to be published in the **Alumni Connection**.  Comments to the director of alumni relations (will not be published).

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## HCC Families

**Please list the other members of your family who have attended HCC.**

| Name  | Class year | Relation |
|-------|------------|----------|
| _____ | _____      | _____    |
| _____ | _____      | _____    |
| _____ | _____      | _____    |

Please return this form by July 15 to: Alumni Office, HCC, 303 Homestead Ave., Holyoke, MA 01040, fax to (413) 552-2479, or send to [jbrown@hcc.mass.edu](mailto:jbrown@hcc.mass.edu) with subject line of "HCC Notes."

## Winston Lavallee

Some years back, when HCC biology professor Winston Lavallee asked his students about “the CCC,” he was stunned by their response.

“One of them said ‘Isn’t that a package store?’” recalls Lavallee, who retired from teaching at HCC but now works part-time in the registrar’s office. “So I decided I should do something about it.”

The results of Lavallee’s efforts can be found in *Dancing in the Dark* (Xlibris Books, 2005, \$20), a fictionalized account of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) of the 1940s. Lavallee based the book on interviews he conducted with several former CCC members during the 1980s, while he was still teaching biology at HCC. Lavallee originally envisioned producing a more scholarly piece—an oral history project—but he was unable to devote enough time to make that happen. (In the midst of his work, Lavallee was tapped to serve as HCC’s interim president

from 1982 to 1983.) Over the next two decades, Lavallee pieced together the 357-page novel, which was released last December.

*Dancing in the Dark* chronicles the fictional life of Paul Boisvert, a CCC camp leader who works on the various conservation projects during the early 1940s “amid human failings of bullying, ethnic conflict, and racism, made raw by the effects of the Great Depression.” The book borrows from the stories Lavallee culled from former CCC members who settled in the Pioneer Valley. It also features local scenery that many readers will recognize. *Dancing in the Dark* is available at Odyssey Books in South Hadley or online at [Orders@Xlibris.com](mailto:Orders@Xlibris.com).

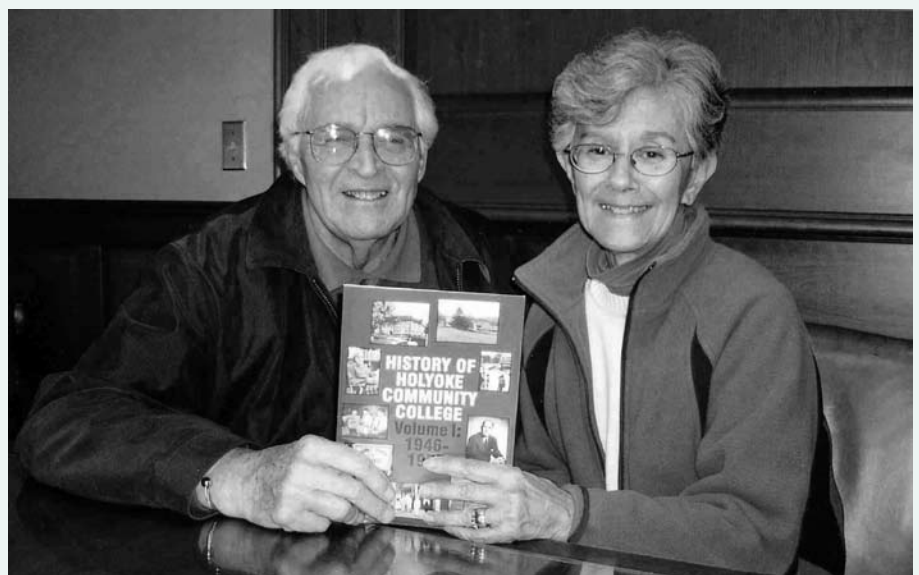


Winston Lavallee

## Don’t forget your HCC History!

You can purchase ***The History of Holyoke Community College, Volume 1: 1946-1975*** for \$22 by dropping by the HCC Foundation office, Donahue 101, or by calling (413) 552-2546.

It’s on the bookshelf of Lucille Gomez and John Gallagher, both members of the class of 1953. The married couple, pictured here, met while students at the former Holyoke Junior College in the early 1950s. A 1958 photo of Lucille’s sister, Josie—then a cheerleader—appears in the book along with many others you might recognize.



# ALUMNI CONNECTION

Holyoke Community College Alumni Office  
303 Homestead Avenue  
Holyoke, MA 01040



The Campaign for Holyoke Community College

[www.hcc.edu](http://www.hcc.edu)

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## 2006 Spring/Summer Events:

**Saturday, June 3, 10 a.m.**

**HCC's 59th commencement ceremonies** 

*O'Connell Memorial Soccer Field*

If it rains, the ceremony will be held in the Bartley Center and graduates and their families will be given preference on admission.

**Friday, June 16, 6 -7p.m.**

**The Alumni Riverboat Cruise**

This always fills to capacity quickly, so don't delay! Place your reservation by calling Joanna Brown at (413) 552-2253 today. Free.

**Monday, September 11, 2006**

**The HCC Foundation's 19th Annual Charity Invitational Golf Tournament**

Chaired by Bill Bagshaw and Jeff Sattler, this event will take place at the Springfield Country Club. For more information contact Joe April at (413) 552-2746, [japril@hcc.mass.edu](mailto:japril@hcc.mass.edu)

**Thursday, May 24, 2007**

**60th Anniversary Gala Dinner** 

To receive an invitation to this gala, please call (413) 552-2546.



**Wednesday, July 12, 5-8 p.m.**

**Alumni Summer Celebration.**

Come enjoy a free buffet supper and live entertainment by Mark Normantowicz '95 and Geraldo Cotton '06. There will be plenty for the kids to do, too. Registration is requested by July 3 by calling (413) 552-2546.

# HOLYOKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE