

Focus on Faculty

This issue of *Focus on Faculty* contains a special section highlighting faculty experiences with Service Learning at MC.

Teaching About Audience and Voice in the Writing Classroom

by Caleb Kriesberg, Adjunct Professor of English, Rockville

“When you are as specific as you can be about who you are, you are the most universal,” reflects Dr. Yasye Barnwell, singer and director of the African-American women’s a cappella group Sweet Honey in the Rock. In my Techniques of Reading and Writing class (EN 101), students often begin the semester showing enthusiastically and transparently who they are in writing, but by the middle of the semester are concealing themselves behind cautious attention to grammar, punctuation, essay structure, thesis. And it may take them a while to care about, or turn their attention to, who their readers are. I attempted late in the semester, with two writing prompts, to re-introduce students to voice and make them aware of their audience, concepts that are interrelated.

Audience awareness is important in various composition courses. I admit to students that the teacher is their principle audience for their compositions, but students are also aware that they could be addressing fellow students or other readers with an interest in the topic. Voice (literary, not grammatical) is the personality of the writer revealed in the text and can help make a composition appealing to the reader regardless of the topic. Famous fictional voices are in Twain’s Huck Finn and Salinger’s Holden Caulfield, but a narrator’s voice can also be nonfictional. I sometimes describe the writer’s voice as “a self in front of someone else.”

A friend who recently received a Ph.D. in journalism suggested the following writing prompt, which might work in business writing courses such as EN109, or as an icebreaker, generally, to spark awareness of voice. This is a two-part exercise with in-class writing of five to ten minutes for both parts; students can share results.

- I. Imagine your inner critic is telling you that you cannot have the job you want in life, and why. Write what that critic would say.
- II. Now, answer that critic! Write a letter to the critic, telling why you can indeed have the job you want in life. This writing can contain your voice.

This prompt did not work so well with my EN 101 class, in part because the course may have been the students’ first emphasizing critical reasoning, because many of the students had not yet declared majors, or because the students may have been ready to write from a viewpoint other than their own.

(See Audience and Voice, page 2)

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So, I ventured my second in-class writing prompt for audience and voice. I don't recollect the source of this one—I believe it was a professor's published testimony about student writing, incorporated in an article on young people and dating. It is not a particularly novel prompt—one of my students said a sociology professor used it for classroom discussion. I told students that they might share the product with classmates. It is the only creative writing assignment I used in the semester:

Imagine you had no choice but to be, for one day, the opposite sex (while remembering your life experience as your actual sex). That is, if you are a man, then for one day, you had to be physically, mentally, emotionally a woman. If you are a woman, then for one day you had to be physically, mentally, emotionally a man. What do you think the experience would be like? What would you want to experience? What would you want to do, and what do you think would happen?

Many of my students—especially those just out of high school—were delighted by this prompt. Most students chose this prompt over some other possible topics I offered concerning men and women. And I received some of the semester's best in-class writing, with regard to grammar and organization, as a result.

Students pictured an audience because they sensed that their readers might know less, or more, about the topic than the writer did, but reader and writer

Being aware of self and reader is important whether one is writing an essay, a lab report, or a resume.

would likely share some near-universal assumptions and misconceptions. The students created their voices sometimes by narrating a specific, first-person account of that day. (It would be interesting to compare my results with a woman teacher's. In my class, generally the men responded with drama while the women planned the day's activities and hoped to overhear men's personal dialogues.) Being aware of self and reader is important whether one is writing an essay, a lab report, or a resume. Ursula K. LeGuin, fiction writer and essayist, advocating a particular diction for communication, remarked, "The mother tongue, spoken or written, expects an answer. It is conversation." But diction—well, that is another, related topic. ❖

A Preview of Upcoming CTL Workshops

Summer 2005

- *Academic Literacy Circles*
- *Building and Using Faculty Web Pages*
- *Cultural Simulation Game and Reflection Session*
- *Evaluating Papers and Projects*
- *First-Year Experience Training*
- *Learning Communities Institute*
- *Linking Course Objectives and Evaluations*
- *MyMC Course Tools*
- *On Course Workshop with Skip Downing*
- *Teaching Statistics*
- *Five CTL Technology Fridays*

Fall Professional Week 2005

- *First-Year Experience Training*
- *MyMC Course Tools*
- *Service Learning*
- *Universal Design*

Visit the CTL on the Web for dates, times, and additional information at www.montgomerycollege.edu/ctl/

Guidelines for Contributions to

Focus on Faculty

The deadline for submitting articles for the next issue of *Focus on Faculty* is September 19, 2005. Please submit your article(s) of no more than 800 words in Microsoft Word to:

Bryant Davis, 134 Humanities (Germantown campus)
or
bryant.davis@montgomerycollege.edu

This publication was produced by Kim Emery and Bryant Davis for the Center for Teaching and Learning.

Faculty Experiences with Service Learning

Update: Service Learning at MC

by *Betsey Zwing, Assistant Professor of English, Rockville*

This is an exciting time for anyone interested in exploring how to incorporate service into his/her classes. By definition, Service Learning combines community service and classroom instruction, with a focus on critical, reflective thinking as well as personal and civic responsibility. To date, 17 faculty members have completed the CTL Faculty Fellowship in Service Learning and are now actively engaged in this learning-centered pedagogy—computer applications students are building databases for Threshold Services, a provider of mental health services in Montgomery County; women’s studies students are planning Take Back the Night activities for our campus community; math students are tutoring; and microbiology students are testing the water in Sligo Creek and sharing their results with the community. For more, check out CTL’s website where summaries of all the projects will be posted. Even better, give one of these Service Learning ambassadors a call.

When well planned, Service Learning can benefit faculty, students, and the community as well as fulfill MC’s mission. My composition and literature students have been engaged and inspired by their experiences at the Rockville Nursing Home, Shepherd’s Table, Twinbrook Library, American Lung Association, National Audubon Society, and many other community organizations. In class, they have researched community issues and organizations; discussed and written about themselves, their experiences, and their connection to their community; and shared their insights through presentations both in and out of class. In turn, these organizations have been infused with people power to meet the needs of our community. Service Learning has energized and challenged me, been the springboard for my first conference presentations, deepened my connection to my students, and shown me that teaching English can make a difference in the community in real ways.

Transforming my classes to a Service Learning model and co-facilitating the Service Learning Fellowships with Patti Bartlett have been incredibly rewarding both personally and professionally. Feel free to contact me so we can explore any Service Learning-related inklings you may have. ❖

Service Learning in a Women’s Studies Class

by *Esther Schwartz-McKinzie, Assistant Professor of English, Takoma Park*

As former Women’s Studies Coordinator and advisor to the Women’s Studies Club on the Takoma Park campus, I have some experience working with students on service projects. I was very excited to apply for the CTL Service Learning Fellowship because I knew it would give me the opportunity to integrate the principles of service into my teaching. Though I was a bit worried about how to justify a service project as part of my EN 208 Women and Literature class, the activism inherent in prose by Gloria Anzaldua, Alice Walker and others turned out to be an excellent catalyst for our project.

So far, my class’s discussions of service have, among other things, fostered an increased awareness of community, a sense of how institutional structures work (and of how to access them) and a pragmatic sense about when to formulate “plan B.” After snow days scuttled three attempts to work “hands-on” with a local service organization, one student took a decisive leadership role. Drawing on Anzaldua’s challenge to us to acknowledge “third world” women, she persuaded the class to switch gears and ally with the feminist, non-governmental organization Women for Women International (WWI). Working with WWI, the class has formulated a dual goal: they will educate the Takoma Park campus (which draws a significant population of African students) about the plight of women in the Congo and raise money for Congolese women who need food and skills training to support their families. Students have been responsible for all aspects of planning the event: they have written a script, invited outside organizations (including dancers and musicians) to be involved and planned promotion. Perhaps most impressively, each student will put her- or himself on the stage in some way as part of this evolving project. The event/fund raiser will take place on the Takoma Park campus on April 26. Time and location TBA.



Map of the Congo

Our project is a striking example of how Service Learning initiatives can grow and conform to the evolving subject matter of a class—in this case, women, sisterhood and activism—while inspiring the creativity and passion of students. ❖

(Service Learning continued, page 8)

An Interview with Barbara Thorn

by Suzanne Shaffer, CTL Instructional Designer, Takoma Park

Meet Barbara Thorn, MC professor of computer applications. Barbara began her time at MC in the early 1970's as an instructor in Continuing Education. In 1990, after finishing her master's degree, she began teaching credit courses at the college.

Barbara, thanks for agreeing to this interview. There aren't many who don't know you around the college. Tell us a little about yourself and your history with MC.

You asked me to tell you a little about myself. I had always wanted to be a teacher but was not able to go to college after high school because the family needed the money, so I went to work and to night school to learn shorthand and typing. Then I got married and raised three wonderful children, all of whom went to college, and then it was my turn. I'm very grateful to MC for letting me fulfill a dream.

You are an icon for your professionalism and enthusiasm about teaching. Tell us your secret. How do you stay motivated and fresh?

I love teaching and realize the need for constant improvement, which is one reason I take so many of the CTL programs. They are so very helpful. I wake up every day and look forward to the challenge of a classroom full of students. Right now, I have the distinct privilege, pleasure, and challenge of also teaching on-line. I look forward to receiving e-mail from my students with their questions and answering them. Students are here to learn and we are here to teach. We must meet them where they are so that we can have rapport with them and help them fulfill their dreams.

Talk a little about your classroom interactions....How have the students changed over the years? And how have you changed as a result?

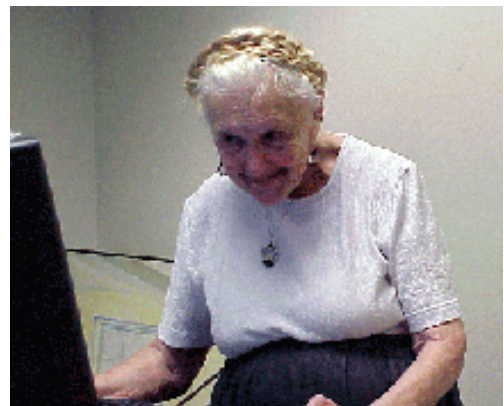
Students use technology more and express themselves more fully and freely now. Teachers should not consider this as personal disrespect but must adjust and meet student where *they are*. Students are here to learn and we are here to teach. We must always strive to have our presentations reach the students so we can help them open their eyes to their unlimited and wonderful futures.

You recently told me that you were shifting from computer applications into developmental reading. That seems like quite a shift in content area. Many people find change to be difficult. How are you managing, and what could you tell us about how to manage change as gracefully as you do?

I'm not completely shifting; I hope to continue teaching computer applications. I love doing that, but enrollments have fallen and one must be practical and versatile. My original dream was to teach history and English, and now I hope to be able to do some of the English. I had the pleasure and privilege of taking RD 238 and 239 with Professors Jean Van Meter and Paul Parent. These courses were wonderful, and I learned a great deal from them and from the dedicated teachers. I am currently teaching writing in Pathways classes and hope to teach reading in one class next fall. I'm really, *really* looking forward to that.

If you could give three pieces of advice to a new teacher, what would they be?

Respect your students. Always be prepared for your class. Be flexible. If you see the way you are teaching doesn't seem to be reaching your students, switch to another tactic so that you can meet them where they are, and when the students leave class, they will have learned something from having been there and want to learn more.



Barbara Thorn teaching a computer applications course

(Interview continued, page 7)

Transitioning Second Language Students into College Classes: Text as a Source of Developing Academic Literacy

by Aida Martinovic-Zic, Assistant Professor of English, Rockville

On April 8, 2005, Montgomery College faculty had an opportunity to attend yet another cutting-edge presentation among the many professional development choices that the College consistently offers. Dr. Eli Hinkel of The University of Seattle spoke about her pedagogical research and instructional methods addressing the language learning needs of bilingual college students who are developing academic literacy and grammatical accuracy in English as a Second Language. Dr. Hinkel is a renowned, extensively published scholar and a classroom teacher with expertise in second language acquisition and academic literacy. Her work ranges from applied linguistics and teacher training to classroom instruction for second language learners and the development of academic literacy in second language students. Her books include *Culture in Second Language Teaching and Learning* (CUP, 1999); *New Perspectives on Grammar Teaching*, co-edited (Erlbaum 2001); *Second Language Writer's Text* (Erlbaum 2002); *Teaching Academic ESL Writing* (Erlbaum 2004); and *Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning* (2004). She has also published numerous articles in scholarly journals, and she is the editor of Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, ESL Applied Linguistics Professional Series of books and textbooks for teachers and graduate students.

Dr. Hinkel's presentation focused on the important pedagogical link between the acquisition of academic vocabulary and acceptable, native-like grammar in the writing of college students for whom English is not their first or stronger language. In her talk, Dr. Hinkel identified the most frequent academic verbs and their grammatical

forms, arguably among the most essential tools in acceptable college-level writing. She demonstrated how the use of academic reading provides pedagogically relevant examples of such grammatical forms and facilitates the acquisition of these forms by second language students. The workshop that followed the talk provided teaching activities and practical suggestions for productive teaching techniques. Importantly, the presentation was professionally informative not only for instructors in the disciplines such as AELP, English, and foreign languages, but also for faculty across the curriculum. Furthermore, Dr. Hinkel's presentation was equally valuable for Montgomery County teachers, whose pedagogical effort prepares second language students in the county for academic course-work and future professional careers.

Dr. Hinkel's presentation was an all-encompassing professional development opportunity for faculty across disciplines and educational levels. Such an important educational partnership is expected to promote professional discussions of the highly relevant and current topic of the development of academic literacy in second

language college students among faculty both at the College and at MCPS, with the goal of generating pedagogically meaningful outcomes. ❖

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CTL-Sponsored Access to *The Teaching Professor*

by Suzanne Shaffer, CTL Instructional Designer, Takoma Park

In the fall of 2004, the CTL purchased access to the on-line newsletter *The Teaching Professor*, published by Magna Press for all MC full- and part-time faculty. Published monthly, the newsletter has articles on such topics as classroom environment and best practices in teaching. Faculty may gain access to this useful resource by contacting the site license administrator at MC, Suzanne Shaffer at suzanne.shaffer@montgomerycollege.edu. Magna Press has reported that MC has the largest user rate with over 200+ registrations from MC faculty. That says a lot about the MC faculty's commitment to improving teaching and learning. ❖

Using Library Resources

by Jim Gray, Professor of Speech, and Kathleen Stacey, Instructional Librarian, Germantown

James Gray, professor, speech communication, and Kathleen Stacey, instructional librarian at Germantown, conducted a CTL training titled *Supporting the Liberal Arts Education: Applying Information Literacy Principles in the Classroom* on March 2, 2005. The main objective of the training was to illustrate the practical application of library research in student assignments.

Kathleen opened by focusing on the databases and other research sources available to students at MC. The Germantown Campus Library has over 40 databases. Just one of these databases, *Academic Search Premier*, has over 10 million articles from journals, magazines, and newspapers. Other databases are just as rich. None of the information in any of the 40 databases is available free on the Internet using Google or the like.

The idea is to have students go beyond just using Google. Students these days are used to doing “research” on Google—by printing out the first five of five million hits. The databases contain published, vetted information NOT available on Google, and 100% more reliable, accurate, and timely. As instructional librarian, Kathleen encourages all professors to “just say no” to Google and to require that students use library books and databases in their research. Many professors have done this very successfully.



As an example, Jim followed up by illustrating how to incorporate the research into speech assignments to reinforce points made in speeches and to build speaker credibility.

A first advantage of the library databases is that students and professors can access the research from on-campus or from their home computers. Using the Internet as a conduit, students and professors can access the library homepage, www.montgomerycollege.edu/library, to get to the catalog and databases as well as a wealth of other useful information. The College’s catalog, WebVoyage, can be searched from anywhere—no ID or password needed. All the databases are available from off campus; anyone who is in the Banner system can access them by typing in their last name and social security number when choosing a database.

Another advantage is that the sources can be brought directly into any classroom with an Internet connection. There, students can be instructed how to access and use library resources. A hands-on class in the Library is preferable, though.

For more information, faculty members can find many handouts on the Library homepage under “Library Instruction.” Click on “Handouts for Students” or “Handouts and Forms for Faculty.” Kathleen encourages faculty to work with the instructional librarians on their campus to arrange information sessions for their students. ❖

Visit the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) on the Web!

www.montgomerycollege.edu/ctl/

(Interview, from page 4)

We hear a lot about multiculturalism and the value of diversity. Ageism is one form of prejudice that happens frequently in this country. Do you come across this at all? If so, how do you combat it? What message do you have for our students and faculty about how they can combat the prejudices that they might also face?

I haven't encountered any discrimination at all at Montgomery College. Our mission statement encourages diversity. I think the best way to combat discrimination of any kind is to thoroughly know the subject you are teaching, keep up to date in your teaching message and methods, and reach today's students. In fact, in the Life-Long Learning classes that I teach through Continuing Education, it is an advantage to be not as young as I once was because I tell older adults, "I learned computers, and so can you!" And most of them find this an encouraging message.



Barbara Thorn assisting MC students

Some final questions....Is there anything else that you would like us to know about you? What books are you currently reading? What are some of your hobbies? A favorite quote?

I try to keep up to date and read news magazines and current books, but I do admit that I like mystery stories. My hobbies are basically knitting, crocheting, and gardening. My favorite quote that has stood me in good stead all my life is "With God, *all* things are possible."

Can you summarize your life as a teacher for us? What has it given you, and what do you still hope to accomplish?

I regard MC as a wonderful opportunity to grow intellectually, to expand my horizons, to meet some *great* people, to make many new and wonderful friends, and to interact with some of our many diverse students. It is a truly awesome experience to see a struggling student's face light up and to hear, "Oh, now I get it!" as well as to receive similar messages through e-mail. I hope to hear and read that many, *many*, more times. I'm very grateful for my good health, for the ability to continue to teach, and for the opportunities that MC continues to give me.

Thank you, Barbara, for sharing your insight and your experiences with us.❖

It is a truly awesome experience to see a struggling student's face light up and to hear, "Oh, now I get it!"

From the Director of the CTL



Our College and our colleagues remain busy, ever trying to improve our teaching and better reach our students. This issue of *Focus on Faculty* reflects the diversity of activities that we have been engaged in. Caleb Kriesberg discusses teaching to audience and voice in his writing class, Betsey Zwing and our Service Learning Fellows update us on Service Learning at the College and in their classrooms, Aida Martinovic-Zic tells us about the visit of Dr. Eli Hinkel, who spoke about her work on addressing the language learning needs of college students speak English as a second language, and Jim Gray and Kathleen Stacey share information on a workshop they gave on using library resources. In addition, we get to know one of our adjuncts, Barbara Thorn, a little better.

Throughout the year, we here at the CTL have enjoyed working with you and getting to know you better, and we hope you will attend some of our workshops over the summer and during the fall professional week. For additional information on topics that may appeal to you, please visit the CTL Web site at <http://www.montgomerycollege.edu/ctl> or the CTL channel on MyMC. Have a wonderful end of the semester and a great summer! —Helen Youth

(Service Learning, from page 3)

Personal Reflection to Peer Mentoring: Adopting a Service Learning Project in EN 002

by Rita Kranidis, Professor of English, Takoma Park

When I first considered designing a brand new Service Learning (SL) project, I had no specific class in mind. In the past, I had incorporated a SL project in my EN 109 (professional writing) class. There my students collaborated in creating informational brochures for nonprofits such as Head Start, Montgomery County Red Cross, and a local agency for the homeless, Silver Spring Community Vision. I have stepped away from teaching that course, however, and truly hoped that the CTL Fellowship would help me chart a new SL course. Indeed, it has.

The plan:

The project that I have created, with enormous help from other fellows and our leaders, is a publication that my students in EN 002 (developmental writing) will prepare for distribution to counselors on the TP campus. Here are the details:

Students do a lot of informal but directed writing on topics such as “what has contributed to your struggles and successes as a student?” They use writing as a way to explore and reflect on their own experiences as students, and then they share some of their insights with a small peer group. They also conduct interviews with friends, relatives, and other students to learn their strategies for academic success.

This exploratory work is put to use in a collaborative writing piece: students work with each other to identify information they want to share with high school students and with MC students in EN 001. They take on the role of mentor, sharing their thoughts on obstacles and keys to success. Thus, they make a positive contribution at the same time that they gain knowledge about themselves and the academic environment. Guided collaboration ensures that assumptions are examined and best writing strategies explored. Students are forced to consider, “what would make ours a very effective document?”

Realities:

The bulk of the real work for this project happens during the second half of the semester, although I would have wanted it to begin on the very first day....

Are you interested in participating in a Service Learning-related grant? MC is one of 5 community colleges in Maryland participating in a 3-year, 1.2 million dollar Learn and Serve grant to help institutionalize Service Learning at the community college level. If you would like to know more about participating in the grant, contact Jim Walters, Director of Student Life and of the Office of Student Volunteerism and Service Learning at Takoma Park, 301-650-1490.

The first half of the semester has been devoted to addressing the basics—understanding grammar, focusing on audience, developing content, and structuring and organizing papers, etc. As a first step in the SL project, students have done some journal writing on the general topic of “moments of success and frustration in my schooling.” After mid-semester, they will conduct interviews and do group work focused on discussing and understanding their experiences. We will take it from there, crating a final copy of the mentoring handout by the week before exams. ❖

Service Learning Fellowship

by Deb Taylor, Assistant Professor of English, Takoma Park

I learned a lot from my Service Learning Fellowship this past fall semester; in this brief essay, I want to explain some of my experiences in the hopes that you will be encouraged to introduce Service Learning activities into your classes. I hope you gather a few tidbits of information and a sense of some of the pitfalls and rewards awaiting you.

The hardest thing about Service Learning in my experience has been learning to let go, learning to let go of the need for things to go “smoothly” (as if they ever have)! But letting go really does open up the class for some terrific learning.

Last year, I was lucky enough to have my hands in the Service Learning grant that the state awarded to our college among many other schools in Maryland. From this grant, I knew a bit about the Ameri-Corp setup as well as the people in “the office,” which is always a helpful thing. The CTL Fellowship added to my experience as I was able to read and write, and to talk and listen, to people I didn’t

(See Service Learning, page 9)

(*Service Learning, from page 8*)

know from all the campuses and many departments. That was exciting. I learned about approaches to math, computer science, biology, and other subjects as well as about the traditions and history of Service Learning in academic institutions. We traveled to other campuses via the web, traversed readings such as excerpts from Paul Loeb's *Soul of a Citizen*, and wandered through ideas in cultural books such as *Bowling Alone*. The CTL fellowship provided a place to go to talk with other folks about what mattered most for student learning: engagement.

This semester I planned to overtly build a community from the ground up within our classroom. Interestingly, I started with the idea that understanding individual responsibility can lead to social responsibility. Students responded to an informal in-class writing exercise where they addressed an ethical situation and were asked how they would respond. Some of the questions came from a website directly related to Loeb's first book, *Soul of a Citizen*, which I highly recommend. These individual dilemmas were a great place to start. They made the students understand what it meant to take a stand and made them ask why they should or should not "do" something. Yes, this is a far cry from service, but I simply wanted them to instinctually respond to a situation. Of course I wanted them to see something, and that is that "everything is connected" (as the movie *I Heart Hucklebee* shows!). I wanted us to ask: How much is the individual person responsible for? When do I end and you begin?

After nudging the students gently on what personal responsibility is, I asked them to consider their responsibility to a community such as those found in a church, at school, in a classroom, and in other places. We read the short but deep story by Shirley Jackson called "The Lottery" (available as a free download on the web). The story challenges each reader individually because, on the surface, it doesn't make sense! A brief summary follows although I certainly can't do the story justice in a summary! The premise of the story is that winning the lottery is good, but not this lottery! This lottery means an individual death by a group stoning, a tradition that goes so far back that no one in this fictionalized town remembers how it began. Everyone participates, and eventually one person is chosen, and thus ends "the lottery." A few astute students caught onto one possible conclusion, and that is, if I don't do something for him or her, and this (a bizarre hurtful tradition) continues endlessly, then eventually there will be no one left—but me.

Shortly after "The Lottery," we read an excerpt from the book *Fast Food Nation* by Eric Schlosser. He argues that no industry is innocuous and that capitalism functions to bolster society not necessarily for "good" but rather to make money. Schlosser doesn't just condemn fast food but shows the domino effect of an industry that's goal hasn't been public health (to say the least!) but has been the CEO's pockets. Schlosser draws intriguing connections between the auto industry and the birth of fast food. He gives evidence that the meatpacking unions were bought out by the fast food market. He provides substantial support about how fast food culture is one huge force that has changed our society irrevocably. I asked the students why they go to McDonald's or Kentucky Fried, and they answered all of the things that this industry wants us to feel: happy with uniformity. A fry is always a fry at McDonald's! Then, I asked students to consider not going to a fast food place for a week and to report their findings.

Reluctantly, students caught onto the possible snowballing effect of looking out for oneself and how that related to looking out for others. The Service Learning class project is based on each individual going out and participating in an already-formed organization where they give their time as well as their skills. They write journals about the learning and the service and use their experiences as the research for forthcoming papers. First, they write about one agency, such as Shepard's Table; next, they write about how the agency—as a community—connects to other communities around it. Although their oral presentations are yet to come, I have no doubt that the students' learning and their experiences will affect one another.

How convenient is it to DO "service"? Extremely! How small a service is too small? Service can never be too small is the final lesson I want the students to learn. As Sonya Sanchez inferred at the Mid-Atlantic Women's Studies Conference on April 2, 2005, service to the self is the best service I can offer to others! Nothing I do is too small, and leading is a concept that comes from the most elementary level and begins not with the big names, but with each of us. ❖



Focus on Faculty Salutes Helen Youth

by Patti Bartlett, CTL Instructional Designer, Rockville

Recently, Helen Youth announced her decision to retire from Montgomery College this summer. It is fitting that we honor her in this issue of *Focus on Faculty*, the final one in her tenure at the college. As a faculty member in the Computer Applications Department, Helen piloted the Faculty Computer Awareness Program from 1991-1993, a project that caught the attention of a cadre of faculty already alerted to the need to become more adept in using technology in the classroom. So began the groundwork that led to the formation of the Center for Teaching and Learning.

In 1993, Helen became the founding director of the Center for Teaching and Learning at Montgomery College at the Rockville Campus and continues in that role. However, now, the Center is a College-wide program serving full- and part-time faculty on all three campuses with six full-time staff members and the assistance of 12 CTL Faculty Associates. Under her leadership, the Center for Teaching and Learning has enabled faculty with diverse backgrounds to discuss and implement best practices in teaching and learning and pedagogy at MC.

When the Center for Teaching and Learning was launched in the fall of 1993, it had neither location nor clear means to serve its new mission. Helen ably formed alliances of talent and expertise among faculty and staff that served as the nucleus of the Center's activities. Initially, the Center served all staff and faculty's technology training needs. Now, the CTL focuses completely on student learning, and the activities of the Center are a model of professional development and service outreach to teachers at Montgomery College and beyond.

Among important innovations initiated through the CTL, under Helen's leadership are

- year-long fellowship programs which gave selected full-time faculty released time to learn and reflect on best practices and to develop a project tailored to their classroom teaching needs.
- fellowships, Saturday conferences, and other professional development opportunities specifically for part-time faculty members.
- a comprehensive, three-year Professional Development Program for New Faculty.

Carol Decker, a faculty colleague, reflects on Helen's contribution:

Helen Youth's tireless role in bringing the Center for Teaching and Learning into being cannot be exaggerated or over praised. During the CTL's first year, Helen's faith, energy and vision *were* the Center. Today, twelve years later, collaborations with and among faculty have come to represent the spirit of the Center for Teaching and Learning and have made the Center an inviting and non-threatening place for faculty and staff to extend their pedagogical knowledge and enrich their own classroom and workplace environments.

In the early days of the CTL, Sue Liggett, Professor Emerita, assisted Helen in giving workshops to faculty about the use of technology in teaching. Sue notes that, in the mid-90's, Helen developed an online course in PageMaker. Sue's recollection includes:

The experience of developing the online course alerted Helen to the stages that faculty were likely to move through as they adapted to technology in the classroom. I believe that she organized workshops on the assumption that if faculty were exposed to what a piece of software could do, they would see the potential of the software to help them do things in and for the classroom they could not do before.

Helen's immediate supervisor, Ron Liss, sums up her able leadership:

The beauty of having Helen as the Center for Teaching and Learning leader is the commitment and vision she brings to the position. It only requires minutes with her on many topics to feel her passion for her work. The support and recognition of full- and part-time faculty, retirees, and others that touch our students are central to the activities she pushes front and center at every opportunity.

Montgomery College will miss Helen Youth, and to her we say, "Thank you, and a job well done."❖