



January—February 2012

Help Us Name Our Newsletter!

JSRCC Middle College Happenings—Winter 2012



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\$5 HELP US
Name This Newsletter
...a Contest!

We need your help deciding on the right name for the Middle College newsletter. We came up with a few suggestions, but realized we couldn't do it alone. Please submit your name suggestions by email or Facebook (JSRCC Middle College) by **February 14th (Valentine's Day)** and show your love for Middle College! Students in our spring program will vote on your suggestions. Our March issue will reveal the winning entry! You may submit more than one name suggestion. Aside from the recognition of coming up with the stellar title, the winner will receive a **\$5 WAWA gift card** as a token of our appreciation. Send in your ideas today!

jepps@reynolds.edu or on Facebook: JSRCC Middle College



MC Graduate Ronnie Bailey Invited to NASA



Susan Kilrain with MC grad, Ronnie Bailey.

On November 8, 2011, Middle College graduate, Ronnie Bailey ('09) attended a Tweetup event at NASA's Langley Research Center in Hampton, VA. A Tweetup is an in-person meeting of individuals who use the social networking site, Twitter. The 50 people invited to this event were followers of NASA Langley and were randomly chosen from more than 24,000 followers across the country. The group enjoyed a tour of the facility, including an address by the director and the chance to meet astronaut, **Susan Kilrain**. They also observed a test drop of the Orion

capsule, indicative of the research on water landings being done at Langley. The group was encouraged to tweet during the event and Ronnie expressed his enthusiasm by sharing that it was more exciting than Christmas.

"Not even #Christmas can top today's #NASATweetUp @NASALangley!! I hope more people get to experience events @NASA"

We appreciate Ronnie sharing his photos and videos with us and are thrilled that he had this amazing opportunity. Our graduates do the most amazing things!



Proud fall graduate, **Theo Jones**, 18, holds his GED certificate.. Theo plans to pursue Business Administration at J. Sargeant Reynolds in the Spring of 2012.

Congratulations, Theo!

IMPORTANT DATES

- * Jan. 16, 2012: MLK Jr. Holiday **College Closed**
- * Jan. 17, 2012: **MC Classes Begin**
- * March 12—18 **SPRING BREAK**
- * **April 15, 2012: FAFSA Priority Deadline** for Fall 2012
- * May 13, 2012: **GRADUATION**



Transition & Retention Specialist, **Mary Chris Escobar**, with incoming students, **Justin and Nicole**, at our social, held in December.



A Word from our Director: Mary Jo Washko

Wow, it is hard to believe that we have served over 700 students in the Middle College program since we began in 2003. It is exciting to know that 511 (72%) students have earned a GED which has provided them with a starting point for college, employment, or a vocational training program. 477 (67%) students have also

earned a Career Readiness Certificate (CRC), a workforce credential. The majority of these students have also completed a Student Development course (SDV 106 or SDV 100) earning their first college credit. It is amazing what someone can accomplish in one semester when they have dedication and determination. I am so proud of all of you!

"It's never too late to become what you could have been."

~ George Eliot



See back page for article on the new 2014 computer-based tests!



Transition Corner 2012

So, it is that time of year again – the time to look ahead to the new year, set goals and make resolutions. There are three resolutions that I think every college student should make this year. **First, resolve not to wait until the last minute to complete your 2012-13 FAFSA form.** Every student interested in seeing what federal financial assistance (grants and loans) they may be eligible for needs to **complete this form no later than April 15, 2012** for priority consideration (at JSRCC). The form is available now at www.fafsa.ed.gov ...why wait?

Next, resolve to get involved. Find a club. Participate in an activity. Take a bus trip. If you are Middle College graduate, **attend our group for graduates** (stay tuned to Facebook and your VCCS e-mail for details). **Finally, resolve to ask for help.** College can be hard to navigate and it is important that you ask questions or let someone know if you are struggling. Talk to a friend, a professor, an advisor, a mentor. I welcome (and love!) any and all questions from Middle College grads. Best wishes for a happy, healthy and successful 2012!

- Ms. Escobar

Meet The Middle College Staff!



From Top, Left to Right: Mary Jo Washko, Director * Jackie Epps, Office Specialist * Toni Burruss, GED Instructor * Kristin Hott, GED Coordinator * Barbara Perryman, Instructional Assistant * Bert Edwards, Instructional Assistant * Mary Chris Escobar, Transition & Retention Specialist * Jamal Brooks, Work Study Student / MC Graduate*



2014 Computer-Based GED

“ We want our students to transition seamlessly to the new test format. It’s a priority.”

- Kristin Hott,
GED Coordinator,

JSRCC Middle
College

It’s official. The new format of the GED tests will be computer-based. The GED Testing Service (gedts.org) announced in 2011 that localities will begin offering computer generated tests as early as 2013, in preparation for the transition to a totally computer based format.

Most students come to Middle College with solid basic computer literacy skills, including test taking in an online or computer software format. However, there is wider variation in their keyboarding skills, something that will take on new importance with the 2014 GED test.

Students will type both an “extended constructed response”, formerly known as the essay, as well as short answer responses on two other tests in the battery. The GED will maintain its current timing standards, so this means that students will need to be familiar with the keyboard layout, and have a typing proficiency to help them find success on those tests. “It’s more than simple click and check,” says Kristin Hott, Middle College GED Coordinator. “Keyboarding skills are a must in college and the professional job market, and we want our students to transition seamlessly to the

new test format. It’s a priority.”

JSRCC’s Middle College has begun offering digital literacy training as a core component of the program, and is looking to integrate keyboarding training into the online portion of classes.

Visit www.gedts.org for more info.



Meet Mr. Brooks!

MC Graduate & JSRCC Student (on the Dean’s List!)



Jamal has joined the Middle College staff as a work study student while he works toward his degree in social sciences at JSRCC.

Maintaining a 4.0 GPA, Jamal serves as a mentor for current Middle College students and

other graduates on campus. He currently serves on the board of JSRCC’s Passion for Fashion student activities club, which holds events to raise money for local charities. At Middle College, you may find him answering the phone, filing papers or counseling applicants who are interested in our program. We couldn’t be

happier to have Jamal on staff. Keep up the good work,

