

Friday, October 31, 2008

Mesa's Great Escapes

Imagine having a "near death experience" one moment and a sublime immersion in stress reduction next. This was the case for me this week. On Wednesday, Mesa College students took part in a "Mock Death Experience" as part of our Drunk Driving Awareness Campaign. The experience included simulated drunk driving through the use of glasses that impaired vision in increments in direct relationship to the alcohol level in the bloodstream. What an eye opener!

-no pun intended. Students also experienced being arrested and booked for Driving Under the Influence. More than 200 students walked by and witnessed first responders using the Jaws of Life to extract a victim from a demolished vehicle. The horrific experience concluded with a funeral complete with a casket and mourners. The entire event was punctuated when the story was brought home to all by Mark Crispino a former Mesa student whose brother died in a drunk driving incident.

On Thursday, I was in need of rest and relaxation and Mesa provided me with the perfect opportunity. I attended a magnificent event under the heading of " **Lecture and Performance: Rediscover the Long forgotten Traditional Chinese Music & Musical Instruments .**" Three professional Chinese musicians performed using traditional Chinese music instruments, such as **er hu, pi pa and gu zheng**. All three instruments are part of the mainstay of Chinese music and have been enjoyed for more than 1,000 years. I can tell you that, as a member of the audience, I felt suddenly transported, not just to a different time, but to a different place, where beauty, and meditative melodies truly soothed the soul. It was my "Great Escape."

Today, Friday, I met with Mesa's InterClub Council (ICC). These students represent various members of the 23 clubs that are active on campus. I was on the agenda to introduce Hermes Castro; a wonderful, inspiring, charismatic Mesa student who is also a paraplegic and a victim of a drunk driver. If you would like to know more about Hermes log on to his inspiring website: www.hermescastro.com Hermes' story is truly inspiring, and his spirit is so indomitable that he is on the verge of becoming a world explorer. In fact, Hermes will be joining Sir Robert Swan, who is known as "one of the great explorers and adventurers in history, and the first man to walk to both the North and South Poles." Hermes will board "Yacht 2041" as part of Robert Swan's next expedition focusing on a Voyage for Cleaner Energy. This entire adventure began when Robert Swan presented a lecture at Mesa College and Hermes was in the audience as part of a class requirement. After the presentation, the two talked, and the rest is history. The ICC is extremely inspired and will be raising funds to send Hermes to the Antarctic.

The Beat Goes On

Great events that helped to lift our spirits.

10/29 - Music Recital featuring Janos Negyesy on violin.

10/29 - Drug and Alcohol Awareness Event. Simulator goggles, sobriety tests, a crashed car, a mock funeral, an arrest and a DUI conviction are all a part of this experiential drunk driving awareness event intended to change the behavior of college-aged students who drink and drive.

10/29 - Orientation Session, Hospitality Program. Potential students interested in this career programs in Hotel Management, Events Management, Culinary Arts/Culinary Management are invited to attend.

President's Cabinet Update

At its meeting Tuesday, October 28, the President's Cabinet:

- Approved the following Major Events:

By consent:

- a) Sal Castro Visit to Mesa College, November 5, 2008
- b) Tri-Regional Meeting of Co-op Work Experience Educators, February 17, 2009

By unanimous vote:

- a) Big Gay Awareness Fair, November 3-4, 2008
- b) Rocky Horror Picture Show-Halloween Party, ***as amended***, October 30, 2008
- Heard Dean Yvonne Bergland and Professor Jill Baker's campus and district accreditation update, where they requested additional faculty and students for Mesa College's task force.
- Dean Bergland presented the 2008 Mesa Program Review Handbook which was revised to reflect the integration of Administrative Services.
- Discussed e-mail guidelines and the current controversy regarding use of the "DL." Numerous suggestions emerged that ranged from finding a "technical remedy" to exercising peer pressure, referring to the college's Civility Statement and the possible creation of a separate "chat room" that could be used for discussion purposes.