Reflecting on HCC’s internal course on the Community College in America, I can look back upon time well spent learning specifically about this community college in Hillsborough County. The scope of the HCC course curriculum mirrored what is offered at the University with one important difference: the focus was on our community college. The syllabus was clear and reflected the desire of our able professors, Dr. Mary Bendickson and Dr. Karen Griffin, to share with the students the uniqueness and yet many shared similarities of HCC to the other 27 Florida community colleges.

The course met weekly on Friday afternoons approximately two and one-half hours for nine weeks. Each session dealt with different aspects of the work being done at HCC to educate students. We were made aware of the services available to our students. We visited other campuses and learned how they provide similar services in their own unique manner. Our overview of the community, vocational education, and developmental education put into perspective the types of degrees and certificates that we offer here at HCC.

The students in our class were from each of the campuses. This was meaningful as there were ample opportunities to discuss issues and ideas. Learning who worked at the other campuses was helpful, especially at All College Day when one could reconnect with fellow classmates from the course. When each student presented a research project, it was enlightening and gratifying to know these remarkable people comprise the faculty at HCC.

Other topics covered in the course were: the History of HCC, Technologies and Faculty Instruction, Governance, Finance, & Administration, and Transfer Education. The structure of the course required reading the text and the websites listed in our curriculum, writing posts to the various modules within the course, responding to the posts of other students, and participating in class discussions. Additionally, two different writing assignments were required; the first was a reflective work regarding the student services aspects of the college, and the second was a more detailed research project on an aspect of community college education.

For me, it was a worthwhile experience I would recommend to my fellow faculty members. Learning about the institution where we toil is of estimable value.
UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN  by Ebony Wilson

Yes, you can make CHANGE in your community!

Each year HCC partners with the United Way of Tampa Bay to support a wide array of services and programs including education, income, and long-term solutions for people of various income levels. The United Way of Tampa Bay has been assisting individuals and families for over 80 years right here in the Tampa Bay area. The work of the United Way is made possible through donations from partnership like the ones they have here at HCC. The Dale Mabry Campus has historically stood out with our contributions to the campaign, and this year we are reviving some old favorites and planning new events to show our continued support to the campaign.

The College-wide Chair for this year’s United Way campaign is Julie Redcay, Institutional Effectiveness Analyst, Strategic Planning and Analysis.

The Dale Mabry Campus United Way Campaign Committee for 2009 consists of:

- Ebony Wilson – Chair (Faculty, Counselor)
- Ed Coursey (Faculty, English)
- Randy Janz (Laboratory Assistant)
- Gina Ricard (Faculty, Respiratory Care Program)
- Alex Tavares (Faculty, English)
- Linda Trujillo (Facilities Supervisor)
- Anne White (Assistant to Dean, AS Degree Programs)

The committee held a kick-off event on Tuesday October 6th where Mary McAlister-Scaglione spoke to the impact the United Way has on our community. The weekly events and prizes were unveiled at this time as well.

The United Way team had a presence at both Fall Fest and the Hispanic Heritage Festival where students had the opportunity to guess how many candies were in a jar for a donation to the United Way. The candy was won by one of our students, Antoinette Daniels.

In addition, there was a car wash held on Wednesday October 28th from 10am-2pm in the southeast parking lot of the Science Building. There will be a Frito Chili Pie Sale on Monday November 9th outside of the SGA lounge.

Along with these events we also have a beautiful basket filled with Mary Kay products donated for a raffle by Senior Staff Assistant Carolyn Curtis. There was also an anonymous donation of an Ascot and Taylor for one of the campaign’s prizes. Lastly, this year we have created a DM Campus cookbook containing recipes offered by faculty, staff, and students that will be available for sale. The cookbook will make a great holiday gift.

Participation in this year’s campaign has been fantastic. I would like to thank the DM campus community and encourage you to join in on our other events planned. If you have any questions or would like to donate to the campaign please contact me at ewilson21@hccfl.edu.
On October 29th the Dale Mabry SGA hosted its first Etiquette Town Hall Meeting. Students and faculty joined in this gathering. The Founder and Executive Director of YES! of America United, Becki Forsell, led the discussion. She brought her friend, Doug Lamb and some other YES! members for this panel. YES! of America United is a local non-profit that strives to positively change what it means to have a disability. Together the presenters who live daily with disabilities shared a message of inclusion. They stressed the importance of focusing on our similarities, not our differences. Both Becki and Doug shared their stories of becoming persons who now live with a disability. During the town hall meeting students were encouraged to ask the panel questions. At first students seemed a little shy to ask the “disabled people” questions about their disabilities and what they needed to know about “disabled people” in our communities. As the discussion grew and the students felt more comfortable they started to see why the politically correct people-first language is persons living with a disability. Students and faculty left the hour-plus long meeting with some new insights and a basic understanding of what living with disability means today. Hopefully this experience and information will break down emotional barriers and help them identify and eliminate physical barriers as the students encounter people with disabilities in their daily lives.

The Dale Mabry Campus Beautification Committee continues on their seemingly never-ending pursuit of planting and sowing the seeds of a more pleasant environment. Whether it’s picking up trash, cigarette butts or littered gum from our lovely planters, or actually planting the array of flowering plants in the planters and garden beds, this committee strives to improve the general atmosphere here on campus.

The Committee has met three times this semester, with volunteers representing faculty, staff and students. At our first two beautification events this Fall on September 26th and October 10th, we amassed approximately 100 volunteers for each day and planted around 50 new plants. At each of our events, the committee members and student volunteers remove plants that unfortunately did not make it and trimmed back the ones that are flourishing. Volunteers planted drought and flood tolerant plants in various planters and picked up litter around the campus grounds and near the storm-water ditches that parallel the campus grounds from Tampa Bay Boulevard to Lois Avenue. Participants also weeded and cleaned the planting beds around the campus core and at the DM Child Care Center.

The committee would especially like to thank Joan Perillo and Steve Miciak for their plant donations, as well as the SGA for the food and beverages. We would also like to acknowledge Keep Hillsborough County Beautiful Inc., Waste Management Inc., and the City of Tampa Mayor’s Beautification Program for their support and supplies.
...Personal Growth Students Do Just That!

I teach Psychology at the Dale Mabry campus, where two CLP1000 courses (totaling 43 students) participated in a service learning project in Spring 2009. For their project, the students held a fundraiser to benefit the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) – Hillsborough County. The fundraiser was a great success for many reasons, as well as raising $500 for NAMI-Hillsborough. The students collected donations from the community which were then sold or raffled at the fundraiser. At the fundraiser delicious baked goods courtesy of the students were also sold. It was amazing to see how the Service Learning CLP1000 students came together to ensure this would be a great success.

The students learned a wealth of information about mental illnesses and shared their knowledge on stage at the microphone, announcing how important it is to understand mental illness and to stop the stigma that surrounds it. Students provided materials on mental illness alongside Active Minds On-Campus Student Club (also a NAMI affiliate).

There was a multitude of talent provided by the students which enticed crowds to gather. Along with some of the Psychology for Personal Growth (CLP1000) students, there were many other HCC student volunteers who provided a variety of talents such as music, signing, guitar playing, and fantastic performances by Xstatic Student Dance Club.

All of the HCC students who participated in this endeavor helped make it possible for NAMI-Hillsborough County to continue providing support and awareness to the community. NAMI Hillsborough is a non-profit organization affiliated with NAMI Florida and The National Alliance on Mental Illness. NAMI Hillsborough’s mission is to provide the tools to enhance the lives of those affected by mental illness. They accomplish this by providing awareness to the public about mental illness through free services such as educational programs, support groups for families and consumers, and through advocacy for better services for those with mental illnesses (brain disorders).

Foremost, I would like to personally thank all of my wonderful students for their outstanding dedication and the numerous individuals and businesses in Hillsborough County that provided donations! I would also like to thank Ken Turley and SGA for their continued support, Xstatic Student Dance Club, Active Minds On-Campus Student Club, facilities, HCC Bookstore, Dean Mary Bendickson, and last, but certainly not least, the dedicated Service Learning Faculty Committee.
All of the students expressed great satisfaction and accomplishment in the service learning project, as you will read from some excerpts taken from their reflection papers:

“So many people are misinformed about mental illnesses. We all worked very hard and put on a wonderful fundraiser and I learned a lot about myself.” -Rachel D.

“I learned that people with mental illness are exactly like you and I.” -Krystal C.

“Although the financial support that we provided will help NAMI further their efforts, our most significant achievement was gaining our own awareness and growth concerning the complexity and seriousness of mental illnesses.” -Caitlin L.

“I personally gained a lot of knowledge and understanding of mental illness.” -Gabriela R.

“I believe in NAMI’s mission: Mental illnesses should not be an obstacle to a full and meaningful life of persons who live with them.” -Hoang H.

“I am thankful to have had this opportunity to participate in this service learning course.” -Adelmarie P.

“This experience has benefited everyone involved; NAMI, our classes, and those who attended the event who learned about NAMI and mental illnesses. I will always remember what I have learned and the people I met because of this service learning project.” -Yelynda M.

“I have to say, this is one of the best classes that I have taken since I’ve been at HCC.” -Evelio H.

“This learning experience has taught me some valuable things. I came into class thinking that I’ll never learn anything, but I left with learning more that I can take with me in life than I have ever received while taking all my other classes.” -Marlo B.

“This service learning project ‘is’ personal growth; I learned a lot about myself and that college is not so bad, it’s a growing experience.” -Nicole S.

Have a story...

Please submit articles in a Word attachment (Times New Roman, font size 12) and photos to Joanne Ernst at jernst@hccfl.edu or Alex Tavares at atavares@hccfl.edu by the end of the month.