



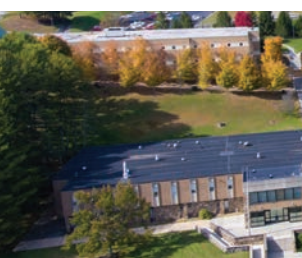
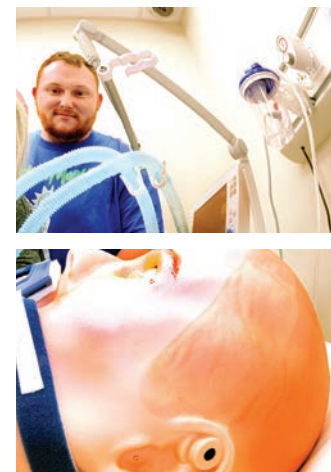
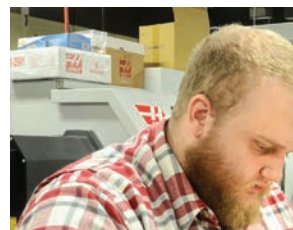
ROOTED LOCALLY



GROWING GLOBALLY



Mountain Empire
Community College Foundation



2018-2019
REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

FROM THE PRESIDENT



“

It is supporters like you who provide opportunities that benefit hundreds of MECC students.

Even in the middle of an unprecedented pandemic, Mountain Empire Community College continues to serve the citizens of Southwest Virginia in unique and customized ways, providing opportunities and opening doors to bright careers for thousands of our region's citizens. Our alumni consistently share their positive experiences, outcomes, and benefits of attending MECC. I am thankful for the opportunity to lead such an amazing team and am proud of the strong academic and workforce programming delivered by MECC.

Inside this annual report, you'll read about the numerous scholarships, student support services, and resources MECC has in place to ensure students are able to meet their educational goals. MECC students often have to overcome formidable barriers. It is supporters like you, donating your generous time and resources, who help provide opportunities that benefit hundreds of MECC students.

Over the past year, the MECC Foundation has engaged in numerous strategies to raise money for scholarships, student needs, and other needs of the college. The Foundation has received support from corporate and private partners who helped strengthen the area's workforce. The transformational changes underway at MECC support and increase the workforce readiness and participation in our region. The innovative strategies in action at MECC ensure more students who attend the College receive the degree or credential they seek.

Our College, our students, our communities, and our culture are strengthened through the contributions that you have made to the MECC Foundation. We know that an investment in MECC is an investment in our students, our workforce, and the economic vitality of our community. In the midst of this pandemic, our students need support now more than ever. Many have lost employment and/or are struggling to adjust to the challenges that come with virtual learning. Some battle with food insecurities and inadequate learning technology resources. These students' goals are achievable when they have appropriate resources. As a supporter, you understand this, and we are thankful you are part of the amazing MECC legacy. Thank you for providing opportunities to make a positive, long-term impact in the lives of our students and in our communities through your continued support.

Dr. Kristen Westover

President, Mountain Empire Community College



MECC Hosts SACS-COC Ten-Year Reaffirmation Site Visit

MECC hosted the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) On-Site Committee in October 2019 as part of the College's Ten-Year Reaffirmation and was found to be compliant in the majority of SACSCOC standards.

A large portion of the On-Site Committee's review was aligned with the College's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). The Committee reviewed the five components of MECC's QEP, provided strong feedback and suggestions about the plan, and found only one recommendation as part of this review process.

The full SACSCOC Board will act on MECC's reaffirmation in the summer of 2020. As part of the site visit process, the SACSCOC Committee Chair shared that she appreciated MECC's hospitality and focus on student success.

"We are extremely pleased with the results of the SACSCOC reaffirmation visit," said MECC President Kristen Westover. "Every MECC faculty, staff, and administration member played a role in the accreditation process and visit. To be found in compliance with the majority of standards is a tremendous accomplishment and I cannot thank our amazing team enough for their work."

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Aspen Institute Names Mountain Empire Community College as a Top 150 U.S. Community College Eligible for 2021 Aspen Prize

The Aspen Institute College Excellence Program named Mountain Empire Community College as one of 150 community colleges eligible to compete for the \$1 million Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence, the nation's signature recognition of high achievement and performance among America's community colleges. Based on strong and improving student outcomes—including achievements in learning, completion rates, employment rates and earnings, and equity—15 percent of community colleges nationwide have been invited to apply for the Aspen Prize.

"MECC spends a great deal of time and effort creating and offering programs designed to provide students with the greatest opportunity for completion and success. It is certainly rewarding to be recognized as an Aspen Institute Top 150 College for our accomplishments related to these endeavors," said Kristen Westover, MECC President.



The 150 community colleges named as eligible to compete for the 2021 Aspen Prize were selected from a pool of nearly 1,000 public two-year colleges nationwide using publicly available data on student outcomes. Located in 39 states in urban, rural, and suburban areas, serving as few as 500 students and as many as 75,000 students, these colleges represent the diversity and depth of the community college sector.

Title III Grant Awarded



For more information on MECC or the Title III grant, visit the college's website at www.mecc.edu or contact the college's Office of Public Relations at **276.523.7480**.

Mountain Empire Community College is pleased to announce the College has been awarded a \$2.2M Department of Education Title III Strengthening Institutions Grant. MECC's Pathways to Student Success Grant will support expansion of academic programs, renovation of classroom spaces, and additional student advising support.

The goal of MECC's Title III grant is to improve student's access to education through expansion of academic programming in the science and health science areas, offer additional classes and flexible class scheduling, and require students to participate in comprehensive, one-on-one advising. As a result, student retention and completion rates will be increased. In addition, MECC students will benefit from improved quantitative literacy skills through additional faculty training and improved technology.

The five-year grant will enable MECC to hire four new full-time faculty members in science and health science program areas. Additionally, two laboratories will be renovated at the Big Stone Gap campus to be used in biology, anatomy, phlebotomy, and pharmacy tech courses.

Another aspect of this award allows the College to participate in an endowment challenge to increase the College's endowment funds. As part of the challenge, the MECC Foundation has set a goal to raise \$225,000 over a five-year period, with all funds raised to be matched by the Title III grant. The funds will be used to support the goals outlined in the grant program.

"The MECC Foundation is excited to announce our goal to raise \$225,000 to support students and college infrastructure improvements. The pledge match from the Strengthening Institutions Grant will result in a significant, long-term impact to our campus and our region," said Amy Greear, Vice President of Institutional Advancement and Executive Director of the MECC Foundation.

“

The five-year grant will enable MECC to hire four new full-time faculty members in science and health science program areas.

New Scholarships and Other Special Gifts:

Carol Greene Memorial Scholarship

James Hawley "Jimabe" Fleenor Memorial Scholarship

Alison and Laurel Fleenor, Dr. Lawrence & Betty Fleenor, John & Mary K. Wilson, donors

Morris F. & Velda M. Fannon Memorial Scholarship

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Linda Pickle

Town of Pennington Gap Scholarship

Ikey Joe and Eleanor Chadwell Memorial Scholarship

Joe Chadwell

Ballad Health for scholarships and NCLEX Testing Fees

Dual Enrollment students from Ridgeview High School and Governor's School for Dickenson County students

Columbus Phipps Foundation

Mountain Music School instruments and supplies

C. Bascom Slemph Foundation

Training & assistance for workers impacted by Blackjewel Mining closure

C. Bascom Slemph Foundation

Debra Rene Greene Memorial Scholarship (Endowed)

Anthem Foundation for Food Pantry

Newly Created Lee County Endowed Scholarship Awards First Student

Austin Shane Bocock, 2019 Lee High School graduate, was awarded the first ever Lee County Endowed Scholarship. Bocock completed dual enrollment college classes and participated in MECC's Governor's School program. He plans to study geology at MECC and then transfer to ETSU.

MECC & Slemph Foundation Partner to Help Blackjewel Families

The Mountain Empire Community College Foundation and the Slemph Foundation partnered to assist families in Lee and Wise County impacted by the Blackjewel mine closures with tuition, books and other college-related expenses as part of this special emergency grant program.

Dr. Kristen Westover Fund Established at MECC

The President Kristen Westover Fund has been established by members of Dr. Westover's family to assist with faculty, staff, and student professional development, recognition, and learning tools. Dr. Westover, President of MECC since July 1, 2017, established a Leadership Academy at MECC for staff and is developing a leadership training for students as well.

MECC Foundation Raises \$100,000 to Support Scott County Students

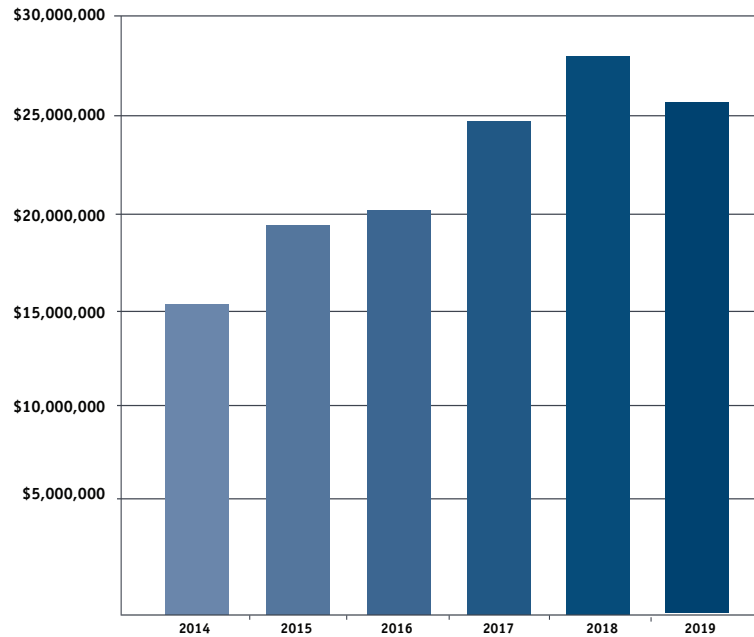
Thanks to the generosity of the Scott County community, the Mountain Empire Community College Foundation has raised more than \$100,000 over the past two years to support the Scott County Endowed Scholarship Fund. For the second year, all funds were matched by a generous gift from the estate of Joyce Tallman.

Debra Rene Greene Memorial Endowed Scholarship

The Debra Rene Greene Memorial Endowed Scholarship benefits MECC students interested in careers in social work and counseling. The scholarship was created by Debra's father following her death in June 2019. Debra was a 29-year kidney transplant survivor. Despite this obstacle she received her Associate Degree from Mountain Empire Community College in 1993 and served eleven years as Guidance Counselor at the Flatwoods Job Corps in Coeburn, Virginia.

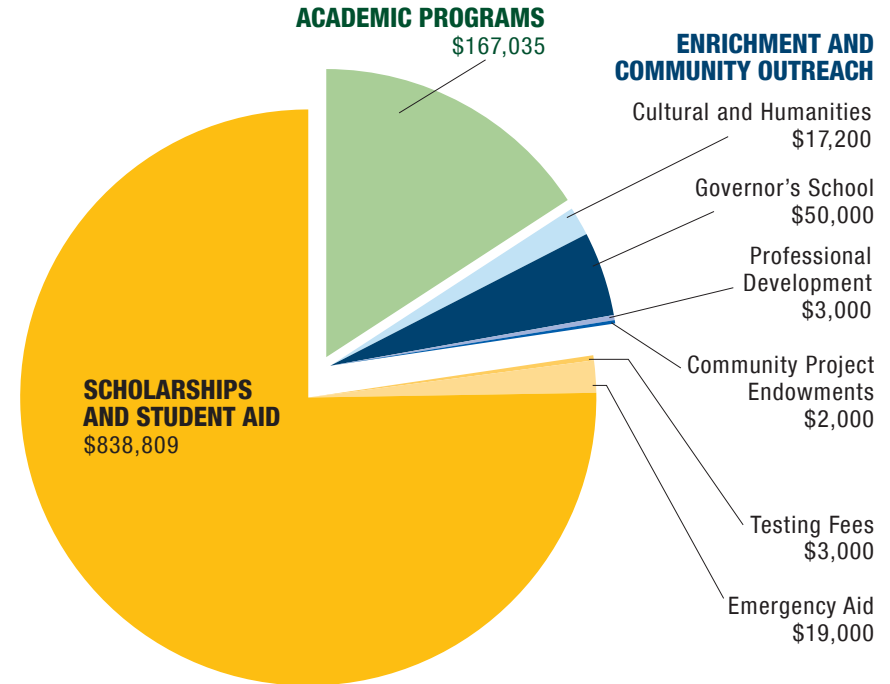
Endowment Growth

Balance as of December 31, 2019 \$26,665,138



Program Budget

Total 2018–2019 \$1,078,044



FAST FACTS



**385 Students
RECEIVED
Scholarships**

Increased the
amount of scholarships
BY 10.8%
from \$616,250
to \$683,406

Received approximately
\$2.4 MILLION
in new grant funds
\$107,000
raised in special events

Endowment grew to
\$26.6 MILLION
Raised more than
\$900,000

**ESTABLISHED
THREE
NEW
ENDOWED
SCHOLARSHIPS**



“

Thanks to MECC Scholarships, I have been able to go and experience different cultures and meet different types of people. What we experience and believe in most places in America isn't the same as how others live or believe in other countries. Thanks to the trips I have attended, I also have a strong appreciation for the culture-rich place that I live in.

Columbus Phipps Foundation Supports International Travel Opportunities For MECC Students

Students at Mountain Empire Community College have the opportunity to broaden their educational and cultural experiences by participating in international travel thanks to scholarships provided by the MECC Foundation, Columbus Phipps Foundation, and local student activity funding.

Mike Strouth, a former MECC History Instructor, launched the international travel program more than 20 years ago to provide students with an affordable global education experience. Hundreds of MECC students from Southwest Virginia have been able to participate, with scholarships averaging at least \$1,000 per student.

Destinations have included England, Ireland, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Greece, Portugal, Spain, Japan, Australia, and Costa Rica. Alumni and members of the community are also invited to travel. The experience provides students with service learning opportunities and cultural immersion experiences. In Costa Rica, students planted trees to support rainforest regeneration. In Japan, students engaged in games and learning activities with Japanese college students and visited the Honda international headquarters.

MECC's mission is to provide an educated, globally competitive workforce. The majority of students who participate in the international travel program have never traveled abroad, with some students never having journeyed outside of the region. While traveling, students learn to navigate an airport, use public transportation including a subway system, exchange currency, and acquire basic foreign language skills.

Center for Workforce and Innovation of Appalachia Open House

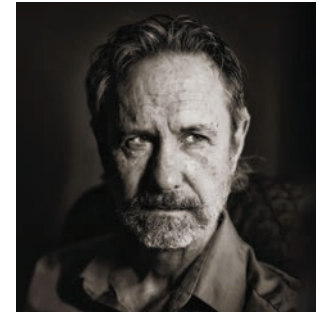
MECC held an open house for the Center for Workforce and Innovation of Appalachia in August 2019 as part of the annual Appalachia Railroad Days Festival. Visitors toured the facility, which now houses MECC's Power Lineman, Commercial Driver's License Training and Testing, Dental Assistant, and Smart Farming Programs. The open house also featured a special "Meet Your Teacher" event with former teachers at Appalachia Elementary School available to meet with their students. Since its opening, the Center for Workforce and Innovation has served hundreds of students as well as community members. The MECC Foundation and MECC have secured more than \$2M in federal and state grant funds to support renovations and programming at the site.

Legislative Visit

The MECC Foundation hosted students Cameo Smith, Cameron Cope and Christian Hale for the 2019 Legislative Visit hosted by the Virginia Community College System. Students were able to visit with Virginia legislators Terry Kilgore, Ben Chafin, and Bill Carico one-on-one to discuss the importance of community college funding and were recognized on the floor of the Virginia Senate by Sen. Bill Carico. The students also attended the 2019 Legislative Reception hosted by the Virginia Foundation for Community College Education along with MECC President Kristen Westover, MECC Foundation Executive Director Amy Greear and MECC TRIO Programs Director Jessica Ketron.

MECC Foundation Hosts Author Ron Rash for 43rd Annual John Fox Jr. Literary Festival

The MECC Foundation, in partnership with the Lonesome Pine Regional Library and the National Endowment for the Arts Big Read Project, hosted New York Times best-selling author Ron Rash for the 43rd annual John Fox Jr. Literary Festival.



Ron Rash is a New York Times best-selling author, PEN/Faulkner finalist, two-time winner of the O. Henry Prize, and winner of the James Still Award from the Fellowship of Southern Writers. His reading for the Festival included stories of growing up in rural North Carolina, his experiences writing and formulating characters, and his love for the Appalachian region and its people.

Dual enrollment classes

Students at Ridgeview High School who participated in dual enrollment classes through Mountain Empire Community College received tuition support this year from the Columbus Phipps Foundation in partnership with the Mountain Empire Community College Foundation. All MECC dual enrollment students enrolled at no cost to the student or high school this year, thanks to the Columbus Phipps Foundation support. Several Ridgeview students completed their college credentials in 2019 as part of this program, which is set to continue in 2020-2021.

THANK YOU

to our many generous donors

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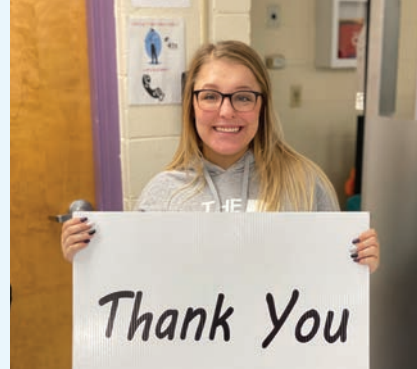
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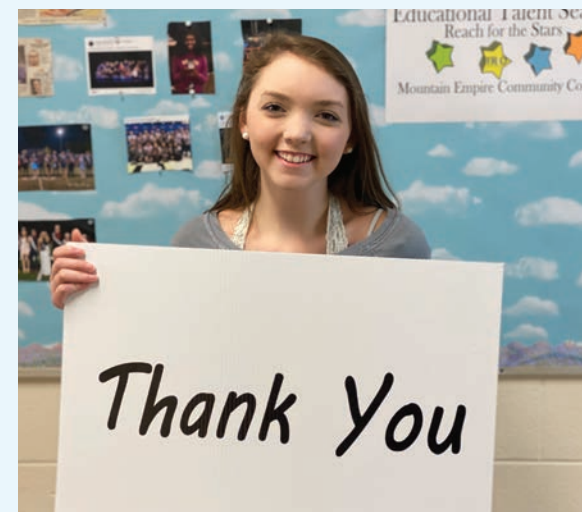
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Community College Philanthropists Honored with 2019 Chancellor's Award for Leadership in Philanthropy

Left to right, Jeri Bledsoe, Annual Fund Coordinator; Amy Greear, Executive Director; VCCS Chancellor Glenn Dubois, Shirley and Ralph Fisher, Dr. Kristen Westover, MECC President

The Virginia Community College System and Chancellor Glenn DuBois has presented Ralph and Shirley Fisher of Big Stone Gap with the 14th Annual Chancellor's Award for Leadership in Philanthropy. The Fishers were nominated for the award by the MECC Foundation.

Ralph Fisher was born and raised in the Wildcat section of Big Stone Gap, attended East Stone Gap and Powell Valley High School and served in the US Army for two years, with one year in Vietnam. He was employed by C & P Telephone (now Verizon) until his retirement. Shirley Fisher was born and raised in Appalachia and graduated from Appalachia High School. She attended Clinch Valley College (now UVA-Wise) and Mountain Empire Community College. Mrs. Fisher was employed at First National Exchange Bank (now Wells Fargo) as a teller and vault teller for 15½ years. The Fishers have created the Ralph T. and Shirley M. Fisher Endowed Scholarship benefitting students enrolled in technical programs at Mountain Empire Community College.

The Fishers were recognized along with two dozen other individuals, families, and businesses from around Virginia for their exceptional support of Virginia's Community Colleges. The awards were presented at

a luncheon sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for Community College Education in Richmond on Tuesday, April 16th, 2019. As part of the award, each college received funds for the Commonwealth Legacy Scholarship, named in honor of the college's 2019 Chancellor's Award recipient.

Now in its 14th year, the Chancellor's Award for Leadership in Philanthropy recognizes outstanding leaders who have helped support Virginia's Community Colleges and their respective foundations. This year, among those to be honored are four members of VCCS faculty. This year's class of distinguished philanthropy leaders has contributed a combined total of more than \$18 million dollars to Virginia's Community Colleges.

"We are thankful for the generous support of Ralph and Shirley Fisher and their dedication to providing students the opportunity to pursue a technical education at Mountain Empire Community College. The Fishers have made a lasting gift that will impact students for years to come," said MECC Foundation Executive Director Amy Greear.

Belcher Named 2019 MECC Alumna of the Year



Dr. Alicia Belcher, a resident of St. Paul and math teacher at Ridgeview High School, was named MECC's Alumna of the Year for 2019.

Belcher, a 2014 Summa Cum Laude graduate of MECC, earned an Associate's Degree in Pre-Teacher Education. She began at MECC as a non-traditional college student, enrolling as a single mother in her thirties with only a high school education. After graduating from MECC, Belcher graduated Summa Cum Laude in 2015 from UVA-Wise, earning a Bachelor's Degree in Liberal Arts and Sciences with a Concentration in Mathematics and Teaching Endorsements in PK-12, Special Education, Middle School Mathematics, and High School Mathematics.

In 2017, she graduated Summa Cum Laude from Aurora University, earning a Master's Degree in Mathematics Education. She is currently in the dissertation sequence at Northcentral University where she earned her PhD in Education with a specialization in Curriculum and Teaching in late 2019. She maintained a 4.0 GPA in her graduate work.

Belcher teaches mathematics at Ridgeview High School in Dickenson County where she assists more than 40 at-risk youth as they earn high school diplomas. She is also an employee of UVA-Wise Upward Bound Program where she teaches at-risk youth in several mathematics classes and heads up several STEM projects.

Belcher formerly worked for nearly 12 years with local nonprofit agencies serving at-risk youth, victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, and the local homeless population. Additionally, she is a GLOBE certified instructor in the areas of atmosphere, biosphere, hydrosphere, and pedosphere.

Mountain Empire Community College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award the associate degree. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097, or call 404.679.4500 for questions about the accreditation of Mountain Empire Community College. Normal inquiries about the institution, such as admission requirements, financial aid, educational programs, etc., should be addressed directly to the institution and not to the Commission's office. Degree programs are approved by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia and are also approved for listing in the U.S. Office of Education directories for participation in various federally-sponsored programs of student aid and educational assistance. The College is authorized by the Veterans Administration to certify students to receive veterans' benefits and is approved by the Department of Health and Human Services for students who receive Social Security and Vocational Rehabilitation benefits. The Respiratory Therapy program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care. The Nursing program is approved by the Virginia State Board of Nursing and accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (3343 Peachtree Road NE, Suite 850, Atlanta GA 30326). The Practical Nursing and Nursing Assistant programs are approved by the Virginia State Board of Nursing. The Emergency Medical Services Technology program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Educational Programs. The Phlebotomy program is approved by the National Phlebotomy Association. The Computer-Aided Drafting & Design Technology, Technical Studies/Welding, Computer Manufacturing Technology/Electromechanical Technology, and Computer Manufacturing Technology/Industrial Electronics are accredited by the Association of Technology, Management, and Applied Engineering (ATMAE).

Mountain Empire Community College (MECC) is an open entry institution. Its mission is to provide quality higher education and workforce training programs and services that are financially and geographically accessible and meet individual, business, and community needs. The following pathways exist: Allied Health, Arts & Music, Business, College Transfer, Construction, Education, Engineering, Environmental, Health Sciences, Manufacturing, Public Safety, and Technology.

MECC is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in employment and education opportunity. No person shall be discriminated against in the terms and conditions of employment, personnel practices, or access to and participation in, programs, services and activities with regard to race, sex, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or membership or activity in a local commission as defined by law.

Harassment of an individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or membership or activity in a local commission has no place in a learning or work environment and is prohibited. Sexual violence has no place in a learning or work environment. Further MECC shall work to eliminate violence in all its forms. Physical contact by designated system, college, and university staff members may be appropriate if necessary to avoid physical harm to persons or property.

Lack of English skills will not be a barrier to admission or participation. In order to eliminate barriers, we take appropriate measures to assess each student's ability to participate and benefit through placement testing and counseling. Based on the assessment and counseling, students are then provided with campus services or a referral to community services to be better prepared for successful participation.

Nondiscrimination Coordinators: Title IX Coordinator – Ron Vicars, Room 136, Godwin Hall, 276.523.7480; Title IX Coordinator (Students) – Lelia Bradshaw, Room 133, Holton Hall, 276.523.2400 ext. 288; Title IX Coordinator (Employees) – Pam Giles, Room 137, Godwin Hall, 276.523.2400 ext. 212; Disabilities Coordinator – Dale Lee, Room 131, Holton Hall, 276.523.2400 ext. 343.

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Mountain Empire *Community College Foundation*

3441 Mountain Empire Road
Big Stone Gap, Virginia 24219

Phone 276.523.7466, Fax 276.523.7485
meccfoundation.org



Mountain Empire **Community College**

3441 Mountain Empire Road
Big Stone Gap, Virginia 24219

Phone 276.523.2400, Fax 276.523.8297
mecc.edu