

## All About Student Success

Building Relationships on Campus for Student Success

Winter, 2021 issue

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### Note from the Dean, Megan Dugan

Happy New Year and Welcome to 2021!

As winter term begins, I hope that each of you has taken time to rest and recharge during the break, believing that better days are on the horizon. The challenges of online learning and remote academic services during a global pandemic have certainly taken a toll on many of us this past year.

Here are some suggestions for self-care and healthy coping during the next few months:

- Try to eat healthy, get a little exercise, and keep a routine sleep schedule
- Get outside for a few minutes when possible (maybe a socially distanced walk with a friend)

- Take a break from the news and social media whenever you can
- If physical isolation or quarantine is necessary, stave off loneliness by a video call with a friend or family member.

And steer your students toward the support they need. AVID|LSC is serving students in new ways online, including: a Zoom welcome room, more weekend hours, online Bridge programming, and other innovations. We're reaching significant numbers of students and helping them succeed.

Some of these new processes are certainly improvements and are pointing to new ways for delivering service even after we return to campus. As just one example, our writing center will continue some level of online writing help alongside face-to-face writing tutoring in the future, making tutoring available to greater numbers.

Take a look inside this newsletter for more insights into how AVID|LSC, during a pandemic, can help your students overcome challenges and stay on track for success.

Best wishes for a successful and productive year,

*Megan*

## **AVID|Learning Success Center Support for Students (in a Nutshell)**

For the gateway to, and details on, all our services, see our webpage at: <https://www.mhcc.edu/AVID/>

Some highlights:

### **Math/Science help:**

Enter the Zoom room (link on webpage) and be greeted warmly before talking to your tutor. Many hours available, including evening and weekends. It's a virtual hangout space also in which to study and talk to

other students. Or send your question via email to [MathScience.Tutor@mhcc.edu](mailto:MathScience.Tutor@mhcc.edu) **Recent success:** High volume of student usage, little wait time, and very pleased students.

### **Computer help:**

Your students challenged by any aspect of technology?

Uploading/downloading, sharing electronic documents, navigating Blackboard? Join us at the same Zoom link for math/science or send an email to [computer.tutor@mhcc.edu](mailto:computer.tutor@mhcc.edu). Technology Skills Specialist Lance Lannigan also offers his personal support to students or interested faculty via his email: [Lance.Lannigan@mhcc.edu](mailto:Lance.Lannigan@mhcc.edu) **Recent success:** Opening the AC1451 lab space to student users, following strict safety protocols. See hours online at <https://www.mhcc.edu/Lab1451/>.

### **Academic Coaching and Success Strategies:**

AVID Center Learning Specialists support student success in myriad ways, including coaching for success and trouble-shooting challenges in a remote-learning world. Have a student struggling for whatever reason?

Connect them to a Learning Specialist via email at [AVID@mhcc.edu](mailto:AVID@mhcc.edu).

**Recent success:** One-minute success videos on a variety of topics posted on our webpage. And social media pages made engaging and useful for students too. See our pages on Instagram and Facebook (@mhccavidlsc). And on YouTube ([AVID/Learning Success Center at MHCC](#)).

### **Writing and English Language Learning Help:**

Email to [writing.tutor@mhcc.edu](mailto:writing.tutor@mhcc.edu) to connect with a writing tutor, then make a plan—Zoom appointments or written comments on homework and essays six days a week. Appointments and English Conversation Hour on Saturdays too. **Recent success:** high student usage, and also the addition (since Summer term) of embedded tutoring—tutors inside several writing classes, becoming content experts, reaching larger numbers of students, and building bridges to faculty. ■

## **Bridge Programming Succeeds Online**

The year 2020—despite COVID, wildfires, and political and social unrest—marked seven years of successful Bridge events at MHCC. Questions staff wrestled with: How to help students adjust to MHCC when some have never stepped foot on campus? How to teach them to succeed online when some don't even have a computer? How to help students persist even if they lose their job or home?

For Summer Bridge planning, AVID staff worked with Online Learning to create an interactive Blackboard experience. They spent hours assembling supplies and SWAG packages, operating a socially-distanced pick-up event, and even mailing to students hunkering down in Saipan in the Northern Mariana Islands.

With the support of staff in AATC, Financial Aid, AES and the International Program, AVID|LSC hosted 25 Zoom sessions to meet and support 120 new students. While the wildfires raged, and displaced some students and staff, we kept working, and only had to cancel three sessions. Students worked at their own pace to complete the Blackboard program, some in as few as ten hours. Feedback from students made for a still stronger offering for Winter Bridge. Bridge Programming this year helped students navigate chaos and make connections that will continue to support their success in difficult times. ■

## **Lucy Cook Sends a Message**

Lucy Cook always dreamed big. As a girl in Peru, she wasn't frightened by the odds of getting into a university: most don't make it through high school. Far fewer could imagine college. She estimated the odds at 1 in 10,000. But she asked her father for his support in her desire for a college degree. He told her, "Your two brothers will go. But why should you, as a female, go?"

Her dreams went on the back burner. But she met an American who'd come to Peru to see Machu Pichu. They dated for four years before marrying and moving to Portland. For the first two years here, she mostly stayed home, afraid for her lack of English skills. But in the fall of 2012, she enrolled in ESL classes at MHCC. "My motivation was to fit into society," she remembers. "I decided to leave Spanish behind and to learn to think and to speak in English."

She quickly found allies. ESL Instructor (and AVID|LSC writing tutor) Sharon Marks offered to spend hours after class helping any who needed extra help. Lucy took her up on the offer. She remembers of Sharon and Susan Hall and other faculty, "They were very patient and spoke slowly and clearly. They always encouraged us to come to office hours to learn something else, grammar or pronunciation."



(Photo above of Lucy Cook at her 2015 MHCC graduation)

Students from the higher-level "Intensive English for College and Career" program visited her ESL classrooms to encourage students to continue.

Lucy already knew that she would. “I always wanted a B.A. I was self-driven about that.”

Her faculty also pointed students toward other resources—scholarships, counseling, advising, and also the AVID|Learning Success Center. “The tutors made me feel like a family,” she says. “They knew everyone by name. They had a microwave in the AVID Center, so I spent hours and hours there and just hung out.” The kind and caring support of a tutor, Cynthia Glidden, was another draw.

As she finished ESL and IECC courses and started in on college-level work, she found more AVID|LSC tutors to help her, including Tim Bradley and Zach Entenmann for math. “They were so patient,” she says, “and they wouldn’t solve the problem for me, but would help me understand. They would teach me with anything they had, including apples or plastic dinosaurs, whatever they needed.”

Writing tutors helped her succeed in every writing course through Wr122 and beyond to poetry and literature classes, and gave important help in her scholarship applications, which financed most of her education.

Other MHCC programs played essential roles, including Transiciones and Trio. Even a fellow student made the difference for her when, close to completing her AA, Lucy faced a difficult time in her personal life and considered giving up. Her friend told her, “You are so close to finishing your degree now. You can’t stop. I’ll help you if you need.” Then Trio counselors gave her a vision and connections to her life past MHCC: a BA program in health care administration at Concordia.

When Lucy was completing her studies at MHCC in 2015, Tim Bradley asked her to stay in touch, let him know when she’d achieved her childhood dream of a B.A. Her reply came late though. In the spring of 2020, Lucy brought him up to date.

She had achieved her dream, with a BA from Concordia, but had decided to keep going. She wanted a full-time position in management, so she

didn't stop. She'd completed an MBA program also—at PSU. She'd been thinking of the tutors, she told him, because “AVID|LSC was absolutely the foundation for me to learn and to move on.”

And she was remembering the words of a leadership teacher at Concordia: “We rarely remember to thank those who impact and shape our lives. One sentence can change someone's life.” “That's why I thought of the AVID|LSC and all the people who helped me at MHCC,” she says. “I am writing to say ‘Thank you.’” ■

## Contact Us

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See all the AVID|LSC services on our website at: <https://www.mhcc.edu/AVID/>

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