Schlesinger Center, Community Celebrate 15 Years

More than 100 friends, family members, students and community members gathered at the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center on September 27 to celebrate the art center’s 15th anniversary and to view the artwork created by Ann Schlesinger, daughter of Rachel M. and Jim Schlesinger.

The Schlesinger Center hosted an artist’s reception for Ann’s exhibit, titled “PAINTING THE LINE, drawing the paint.” Ann said she was honored to be exhibiting her work at the Schlesinger Center – a space that her parents advocated for early on and also provided funding.

“What excites me most in painting is the process of searching. I play around with the composition – pushing things up and down, left and right, blowing them up and shrinking them back, changing the angle of my view, altering color and texture until everything feels as if it’s exactly right,” Ann said. “There is a constant push and pull. It’s intuitive and analytical at the same time.”

Schlesinger Center, Community Celebrate 15 Years

Ann Schlesinger, along with her children and other family members, attend the artist’s reception for Ann’s show “PAINTING THE LINE, drawing the paint,” at the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center.

Rachel M. Schlesinger was a violinist with the Arlington Symphony. Before her untimely death in 1995, she was instrumental in the search and initial fundraising for a community concert hall. After her death, her husband Jim – a former Secretary of Defense and Secretary of Energy – stepped in and finished the job, donating $1 million to name the center in his wife’s memory.

During her speech, Ann talked about her parents, their impact on those who knew and loved them and their passion for the arts and their community.

“Whenever I talk with anyone who knew my mother, invariably the words ‘lovely’ and ‘wonderful’ come up and she truly was,” Ann said. “My father gave of himself to this country until he could give no more. What a rarity. The number of people he mentored – in and out of government, Republican and Democrat alike – has created a lasting legacy.”
The artist’s reception was free and open to the public, and light refreshments were served. Ann was delighted to have many of her family members there to celebrate and honor her parents. Friends of Rachel M. and Jim Schlesinger were also in attendance, including former U.S. Senator Charles “Chuck” Robb.

Gallery hours at the Schlesinger Center are 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and on weekends during events. Ann’s artwork will be on display through Sunday, November 9.

**IBM and CASY Launch Veterans Employment Initiative at NOVA**

NOVA has partnered with IBM and Corporate America Supports You (CASY) to offer important training for veterans to help them transition their military experience into highly skilled tech jobs. The new veterans program provides returning service members with hands-on training, certification and job placement assistance in the fast-growing tech sector. More than 100 veterans around the nation will participate in the program this year.

The i2 Analyst Certification is a desirable skill in the high-tech workforce. It helps technicians to identify and deal with online evidence of credit card fraud, making those who hold the certificate highly sought after in an age of online banking and e-commerce. The certificate typically takes several months to complete. However, because most veteran service members are used to fast-paced, high-tech training, the certification is usually completed in five business days.

Graduation was recently held on September 25 in the Workforce Development classrooms at the Pitney Bowes building in Annandale, Virginia.

Among those in attendance at the final day of training were Susan D. Baker, NOVA’s special assistant to the vice president for Workforce Development; Capt. Mike Riley, U.S. Army Soldier and Family Support Division, Army National Guard; and Anne Altman, general manager, U.S. Federal and Government Industries, IBM.

**STEM Panel for Scholars Celebrates Diversity at Manassas**

STEM Panel for Scholars Celebrates Diversity at Manassas On September 15, the STEM Panel for Scholars inaugurated the celebration of the Hispanic Heritage Month at the Manassas Campus. Professor Sara Mendoza invited four distinguished scientists from different subject areas including math, informatics, biology, physics and engineering, who represented a wide array of Hispanic countries.

Ana Valentin from the Bureau of Census, Javier Ortiz from John Hopkins Applied Physics Lab, Elena Hernandez-Ramon from National Institutes of Health, and Adan Rodrigues-Arroyo from
NASA, all shared their stories, anecdotes, challenges and accomplishments that finally got them to achieve their career goals.

The event served as a space for open discussion and gave the opportunity for students to ask questions as well as express their concerns. Panelists spent time afterward and shared ideas with students and information about internships in different subject areas. The event was an inspirational opportunity for students.

The Manassas Hispanic Heritage Month Committee members worked together to support this and other events that will take place at the Campus throughout Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15 to October 15). The Global Learning Center, Student Life Office, the Provost Office, HOLA (Hispanic Organization for Leadership and Action), and faculty and staff members, Judith James, Marcie Schreibman, Ramunda Young, Professor Chaiya Mohanty Ortiz, Dr. Ia Gomez and Mendoza were on this committee.

Alexandria Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month

In celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, the Alexandria World Languages Department hosted a Spanish and Latin American Film Festival from September 15 to 23. The festival was made possible by a grant awarded to Professor Martha Davis by Pragda, SPAIN Arts & Culture and the Secretary of State for Culture of Spain.

NOVA was one of 46 colleges and universities throughout North and South America and Australia, and one of only three community colleges in the U.S. to receive the grant. The Alexandria Office of Student Life and Spanish American Latino Student Association (S.A.L.S.A.) also provided funding and support.

Alexandria Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month

Photo by Sandra Swab

The festival featured five films from Chile, Argentina, El Salvador, Spain and Paraguay. Many highlighted the countries’ linguistic diversity by including speakers of Chinese, Russian, Arabic, Guaraní and Korean in addition to Spanish. All of the films showcased communities that have been largely unrepresented in cinema, such as Asian immigrants to South America and illiterate adults.

For example, “Wilaya,” the selection from Spain, is the first narrative movie filmed on location in an Algerian refugee camp for Saharawis escaping the decades-long conflict in Western Sahara. The 2014 film, “Malacranza/The Crow’s Nest,” was the first fiction film from El Salvador to be produced since 1969 and the first ever to enjoy worldwide release.

The films were followed by lively discussions moderated by professors Davis, Carlos Schroder, James Baer, Lama Hamdan and Eddy Arana. Thank you to the moderators, all who attended and
those who encouraged their students to attend, especially Alexandria professors Dali Tan, Amanda Trostle, Peter Ruffner and Carolyn Lorente and Woodbridge Professor Lindsay Félix.

Constitution and Citizenship Day at Alexandria

During the week of September 14, faculty from Alexandria’s Liberal Arts Division and Social and Professional Sciences Division, in collaboration with staff from the NOVA Institute for Public Service, Student Services and Learning and Technology Resources sponsored events in honor of Constitution and Citizenship Day.

Each year on September 17, the nation commemorates the signing of the Constitution in 1787 and recognizes those who have or are taking steps to become U.S. citizens. As part of the observance, many campus community members worked together to give students opportunities to think about the Constitution and citizenship and provide them with a meaningful platform to discuss and share thoughts throughout the week.

Constitution and Citizenship Day at Alexandria The week kicked off with a program designed to encourage students to think about how they are citizens of the world and challenged them to consider ways in which they could “think globally,” but “act locally.” The second event of the week brought Dr. Robert Koulish, MLaw Programs director at the University of Maryland, to campus for a guest lecture on the 14th Amendment and its citizenship clause. Koulish spoke about the history that led to the development of the amendment and specific clause and what both currently mean today for citizens and non-citizens, alike.

Constitution and Citizenship Day at Alexandria The next event featured members of the NOVA Forensic Team, led by Dr. Nathan Carter, who debated whether or not the U.S. should ban the sale of assault weapons in front of an audience of students, faculty and staff, bringing into focus the Second Amendment and its promise of the right to bear arms.

The week culminated with a final event on September 17 that focused on the First Amendment’s freedom of speech rights, particularly political speech rights. Dr. Jack Lechelt, professors Kelly Hebron and Nick Gaffney came together for a panel discussion, moderated by Dr. Jim McClellan, on the issue of banning state-issued license plates that convey political messages or other offensive symbols, such as the Confederate flag. Just after the panel discussion, the Alexandria Library hosted a Rock the Vote campaign allowing students to register to vote.

At all of the events, technology was used to engage the audience. Participants used Turning Point response cards (clickers) for polls and surveys that were embedded in PowerPoint presentations each day. Each event audience was asked a series of questions at the beginning, during or at the end where participants could select their answers once polling was open. Data from these multiple-choice questions were immediately displayed on screen once polling closed
and served as a springboard for in-depth discussion and debate. Students were also able to register to vote using campus iPads during the Rock the Vote campaign.

Over 300 students, faculty and staff participated in the week’s events. It was exciting to see the hard work and collaboration on the Alexandria Campus result in captivating discussion and active participation. Thanks to all those involved who made this week a success.

**Gebre-Egziabher Selected for Fulbright Specialist Program**

Lucy Gebre-Egziabher, Alexandria Communication Studies and Theatre assistant professor, has been selected for a Fulbright Specialist Program in Addis Abeba, Ethiopia, her country of origin. As a Fulbright Scholar, Gebre-Egziabher will teach film studies and conduct a “From Script to Screen” practicum at Rift Valley University in the Communications and Journalism Department. In addition, she will assist the institution in the development of a film curriculum.

Gebre-Egziabher is an award-winning filmmaker who has been teaching film studies on the Alexandria Campus since 2010. For more information on Gebre-Egziabher, go online.

**Pachter to Release Multiple Publications This Fall**

Josh Pachter, Loudoun Communication Studies and Theater assistant dean, has been teaching at the college level since 1978; but he has been a professional crime writer for 10 years longer than that. Pachter’s first short story, written when he was a teenager, appeared in Ellery Queen’s Mystery Magazine (EQMM) in 1968.

Through most of the ’80s and early ’90s, Pachter taught overseas on American military bases for the University of Maryland European College, including a 10-month stint in the Middle Eastern emirate of Bahrain in 1982-1983. While there, he created fictional policeman Mahboob Chaudri, who was featured in a total of 10 stories published in EQMM, Alfred Hitchcock’s Mystery Magazine, and other periodicals.

Pachter to Release Multiple Publications This Fall The complete Chaudri series has now been collected into a single volume titled “The Tree of Life,” which has just been published by Wildside Press. It is available in paperback from Amazon and other online and bricks-and-mortar vendors, and also as an e-book titled “The Mahboob Chaudri Mystery Megapack.”

Meanwhile, Pachter continues to produce new fiction: “Coffee Date,” which he co-wrote with his wife Laurie. It will be in the online edition of The Saturday Evening Post during the week of October 8. “Styx,” a zombie cop novel on which he collaborated with Belgian author Bavo Dhooge, will also be published by Simon & Schuster on November 3 and is available for pre-order on Amazon. “Selfie,” a solo story, will be in the February 2016 issue of EQMM.
In addition to teaching, “assistant-deaning” and writing, Pachter translates both fiction and nonfiction from Dutch and Flemish to English.

**Troy Kurz Pens Short Story**

“Drinking with Mr. Bone Crow,” a short story by Manassas electrician Troy Dean Kurz, was recently published in “Trick or Treat! A Collection of Spooky Stories.”

In his tale, Kurz writes about a mysterious stranger who arrives at the local pub where a grieving man is trying to drown his sorrow.

“My story relates to the fact that sometimes in life, when things get you down, you just want to give up and disappear in a drunken haze,” Kurz said. “The problem is, sometimes you do get what you want.”

His writing roots date back to a childhood spent reading comics and novels such as “The Gunslinger” by Stephen King.

“I’ve been writing off and on since my early twenties and now have found the time to work on my craft. This is my first published short story and hopefully there will be many more,” he said.

Kurz has been an electrician for 25 years. He lives in Spotsylvania County, Virginia, with his girlfriend, daughter, two dogs and a couple of cats. He also has three grown sons.

“I’ve always had a pretty wild imagination,” Kurz said. “Turning that imagery into art through words isn’t as easy as you would think but I love the challenge and when someone enjoys my work it’s even better.”

Kurz is currently working on his first novel and also plans to complete a series of short story collections featuring the strange things he sees in his mind so others can enjoy them, too.

Published by Possibilities Publishing Company, “Trick or Treat! A Collection of Spooky Stories” is available from Amazon.com in both paperback and e-book formats. To learn more, email tkurz@nvcc.edu.

**Manassas Welcomes Chinese Delegation**

On September 30, the Manassas Campus welcomed the Xinjiang University of Finance & Economics (XJUFE). Founded in 1950, it is the sole financial institution of higher learning in the northwest of China. XJUFE has 16 master’s degree programs, 32 bachelor’s degree programs, 17 schools and two teaching departments. Currently, there are 18 degree programs in six subjects: management, economics, law, liberal arts, sciences and engineering. XJUFE consists of 18,000 students with 160 being international students and 1,455 faculty members.
The group included deans, vice deans, deputy directors, directors and their vice president. The delegation visited to learn about the role of the community college and the admissions and transfer process.

NOVA presenters included President Scott Ralls, Manassas Provost Roger Ramsammy, Communications Technologies and Social Sciences Associate Dean Heidi Adamson, Barbara Hopkins (Accounting), Yinjin Cui (Information Technology), Kurk Lew (Information Technology), Dr. Laura Bhadra (Economics) and Campus and Community Relations Specialist Ramunda Young.

**NOVA Credentials to Careers Initiative Welcomes New Interns**

NOVA Credentials to Careers Initiative Welcomes New Interns

The Manassas team is happy to announce three student interns: Amanda Hawkins, Mitchelle Ly and Brandon Register. They will be working at Insystech, Inc. in Chantilly, Virginia.

These students were selected through formal interviews and a test and will go through the web and mobile curriculum. They will have a chance to learn the tricks of the trade through hands-on development of a web application and a mobile app.

Many thanks to our NOVA colleagues for your support in identifying the candidates.

NOVA Credentials to Careers Initiative Welcomes New Interns

NOVA Credentials to Careers initiative is a partnership between NOVA, nonprofit workforce development organizations, and local information technology (IT) employers to provide high performing education and training programs leading to credentials and a career in IT for TAA (Trade Adjustment Assistance) impacted workers and other adult workers (unemployed or underemployed, low-wage, dislocated, military or veteran).

Led by a large regional cluster of IT contractors, Northern Virginia’s employers have a massive demand for skilled IT professionals that exceeds the current IT talent workforce. To meet the demand for educated and prepared employees, the Department of Labor – NOVA Credentials to Careers Consortium has come together to build the gateway of IT and STEM careers.

For more information on the Credentials to Careers program, please contact them at 703.425.5737 or c2c@nvcc.edu.

**Retrospective Art Show at the Alexandria Library**

On September 23, the Alexandria Library celebrated NOVA’s 50th Anniversary with a retrospective exhibition of alumni art. The Library welcomed special guests President Scott Ralls, alumni artists, community partners from Alexandria Public Library and Resurrection...
Church, neighbors, faculty, staff and students to a gala opening. Student musicians Owen Squire and Margaret Bisulca provided live entertainment on the keyboard. The work of over 30 alumni artists is showcased on both levels of the Library, including paintings, ceramics, photography, sculptures, lithography, conceptual work, graphic design, mixed media and collages.

The exhibit runs until November 27 in Bisdorf 232. Read more from the Alexandria Library Blog or follow them on Instagram.

Jazz Faculty Recital

Mark your calendars for the annual Jazz Faculty Recital that will be held Tuesday, October 6 from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in Room 130 of the Tyler Building on the Alexandria Campus. The event will feature the music of Charlie Parker, a.k.a. “Bird.” This event is free and open to the public. Please join in for what will likely be the last Jazz Faculty Recital in the old Tyler Building. There will also be an opportunity for musicians to jam with the faculty at the end of the show, so bring your instruments.

For more information, see the Flyers section of this edition of the Intercom.

First Spanish Spelling Bee at the Woodbridge Campus

The Woodbridge Campus will be hosting the first Spanish Spelling Bee on October 15 to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month. This activity goes beyond honoring the Spanish language; it is a valuable educational experience especially for Spanish students. Participants will gain competency over vocabulary, which will allow them to increase their skills in reading and writing in the target language. The Spelling Bee will also enhance learner memory and will motivate students to trace the origin of words. Additionally, students will increase their confidence and have fun through healthy competition.

Participants will compete in two levels, beginner and intermediate. There will be prizes for first and second place. The competition will be promoted among NOVA students, especially those in Spanish classes.

The competition judges will be Spanish instructors from NOVA’s Alexandria, Annandale, Manassas and Woodbridge campuses. Woodbridge is planning to continue the Spanish Spelling Bee each year and invites other campuses to join them.

For questions, please contact Dr. Carmen R. Figueroa at cfigueroa@nvcc.edu.

Professional Development Series for Students
Today’s students seek more out of higher education than just classroom knowledge. Current research on the importance of professional readiness and a growing nontraditional student population reinforces the notion that students are placing an increased emphasis on the employment-related benefits of post-secondary education.

There are few resources for students which address the social and soft-skills gaps needed in professional environments. The Office of Student Life, Career Services and the Oral Communication Center have collaborated to create a Professional Development Series for students. The overall goal for implementing this type of student programming is to fully equip NOVA’s diverse, student population with the soft skills that are necessary to become marketable graduates ready to enter the global workforce.

According to Oral Communication Center Supervisor Shaunda Durham, “Teaching students how to be strong job candidates in a student services environment encompasses the development of skills vital for career readiness and advancement.” It also supports NOVA’s retention efforts and mission to “deliver world-class, in-person post-secondary learning and workforce development to ensure our region and the Commonwealth of Virginia have an educated population and globally competitive workforce.”

Student Life Events Specialist Noor Naveed knows from experience the benefits of professional readiness training. Naveed, a NOVA graduate and a current George Mason University senior feels, “It’s important to expose students to professional practices and environments.” These workshops will prepare students for the real world and will provide students with a “competitive edge.”

Topics covered in the series include resume and cover letter development, how to brand yourself on social media, interviewing strategies, building a professional wardrobe on a budget, presentation/listening skills bootcamp, networking 101, dining etiquette, etc. Students who attend a minimum of three out of the eight workshops will attend a networking dinner and receive a certificate of completion in December.

For questions or more information, please contact Durham at ssdurham@nvcc.edu.

Leave Sharing Request

Shahin Mafaher (CS) has requested to participate in the leave-sharing program. If you would like to donate leave hours, please access a Leave Sharing Program Donor Form online. Please print, complete and submit the form to Human Resources by fax to 703.323.3155. Leave must be donated in eight-hour increments and only annual leave may be donated.

If you need other assistance or have questions about NOVA’s Leave Sharing Program, please contact Chantell Jones at 703.425.5270.
Announcements

1. NOVA Jazz Faculty Recital
   October 6, 2 p.m.
   AL Campus, Tyler Building, Room 130

2. HR OL&D Workshop Schedule
   Contact AskHR@nvcc.edu for more info

3. Clothesline Project
   View or create shirts, supplies provided.
   Oct. 5 & 6, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
   MEC – Coker’s Patio

4. Take Back The Night
   Oct. 6
   Rally & March
   Resource Fair at 6:30 p.m.
   Rally at 7 p.m.
   MEC Campus

5. NOVA Sexual Assault Services is looking for volunteers for October Events
   For information and times contact Angela Acosta at aacosta@nvcc.edu

6. MEC Open House
   Oct 17, 9 a.m. – noon
   Register by Oct 2 at MECOpenhouse2015.eventbrite.com

7. Technology Training (T2)
   Fall Workshops – Faculty & Staff
   https://www.nvcc.edu/faculty-and-staff/technology/tac/tactraining/register/
   For more info AskTechTraining@nvcc.edu

8. Endless Forms Most Beautiful? The Making of the Animal Kingdom
   Dr. Sean B. Carroll
   October 23, noon
   AN Campus, Ernst Center Theatre
   Free and open to the public