

The Martin Messenger

Martin Community College Highlights

Graduation 2017



MCC's Class of 2017 Inspires!

Martin Community College (MCC) conducted its forty-ninth graduation ceremony on Wednesday, May 10 in the Martin County auditorium.

Ninety-two students walked across the stage to receive degrees, diplomas, or certificates at this year's ceremony. Individual program awards and the Distinguished Graduate award were also acknowledged at this event.

Reverend Gary Saffell, the Pastor of Colerain Baptist Church, gave the invocation and benediction. Dr. Kenneth A. Boham, MCC's Interim President, welcomed everyone and introduced the speaker, Jennifer Haygood.

Haygood began her remarks with heart felt congratulations to the students for making it to this important milestone in their life. She then went on to share three life lessons that have shaped her career and leadership style: Lesson 1: Be a Problem Solver; Lesson 2: Your Struggles Can Become Your Greatest Source of Strength; and Lesson 3: Don't Let Yourself Be Your Biggest Barrier.

In regard to being a problem solver, Haygood shared a childhood story of her father's refusal to help her assemble a vacuum cleaner and told her to figure it out herself. She noted that it was a lesson that never left her because it "taught me not to expect others to give me all the answers and to take the initiative to solve problems myself... Over time I've learned that you can't let your doubts paralyze you... Persistent inaction usually does more damage than even imperfect action. So if you want to distinguish yourself, don't just wait for someone to tell you what to do and how to do it. Help figure out what needs to be done and how best to accomplish it."

As to making "Your Struggles Your Greatest Source of Strength," Haygood related her Teach for America experience in New Orleans during the late 90's. While there, she taught large classes of third graders in a school with no air conditioning, in a



Pictured above is Quante Tatiana Bazemore of Windsor, receiving MCC's Distinguished Graduate award which was presented during the Class of 2017 graduation ceremony on May 10. Bazemore, who lost everything in her home, twice, due to flooding from a tropical storm and again during Hurricane Matthew, was moved to tears during the presentation. She is planning to attend ECU or ODU (Old Dominion University) and begin working toward a doctoral degree in psychology.

classroom that had more students than textbooks, and equipment so old that she had to reproduce classroom handouts on an old ditto machine filled with toxic-smelling blue fluid and cranked by hand. She stated, "Even though I was the teacher, I'm pretty sure that I learned even more than my students...I learned I could survive really tough situations, and failure wasn't the end of the world if I learned from it..."

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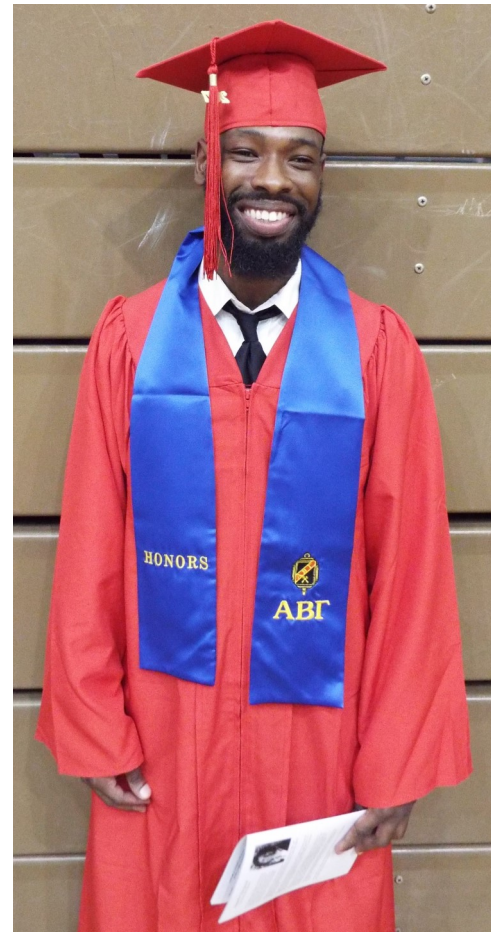
Remember: we can't always avoid hardship, but we can use the experience to strengthen our resilience to it."

And lastly, Haygood told the students not to be their own biggest barrier. She cited a psychological survey by Angela Lee Duckworth in which children and adults are placed in super challenging settings. She has studied performance in all types of settings, including West Point cadets, Spelling Bee contestants, rookie teachers, and salespeople. In all those very different contexts, one characteristic emerged as a significant predictor of success. It wasn't social intelligence, good looks, physical health, or IQ. It was grit. Duckworth describes, "grit is passion and perseverance for very long-term goals. Grit is having stamina. Grit is sticking with your future, day in, day out, not just for the week, not just for the month, but for years, and working really hard to make that future a reality. Grit is living life like it's a marathon, not a sprint."

Haygood is the Chief of Staff for the NC Community College System office in Raleigh. In this role, she is responsible for overseeing the internal operations of the System Office and creating a fully integrated, highly performing System Office team that supports the System's mission. Prior to becoming Chief of Staff, Haygood served for eight years as the System's Chief Financial Officer, leading the division that is responsible for managing approximately \$1.5 billion in State, federal, and tuition funds that support the state's 58 community

colleges and the System Office. Haygood earned a Masters of Public Policy degree from Duke University and received her undergraduate degree from Rice University. Prior to returning to graduate school, she was a Teach for America corps member and taught elementary school in inner-city New Orleans.

Dr. Brian Busch, MCC's Dean of Student Services and Interim Dean of Academics, then presented the program awards and recognized and the Distinguished Graduate. To be eligible to receive a Program Award, a student must be a candidate for graduation, have a minimum overall GPA of 3.00, possess outstanding qualities in cooperation and initiative, and must be nominated by a full-time faculty member (advisor). The "Program Award" denotes a student's excellence in a particular MCC program. The graduates receiving Program Awards were as follows: Associate in Arts – Quante Tatiana Bazemore, College Transfer – Shakira Shante Bond, Associate in General Education – Christy Jane Small, Accounting – Joseph Haywood Biggs, II, Cosmetology – Sherricka R. Brown, Early Childhood Education – Heather Farmer, Electrical Systems Technology – Reco Pugh-Bey, Equine Training Technology – Ashley Bundy, General Occupational Technology – Reco Pugh-Bey, Industrial Systems Technology – David Ted Birdo, Information Technology Network Maintenance – Aisnick James Corey, Medical Office Administration – Tammy Lynn Gedrimas, Office Administration – Ashley E. Muse, and Physical Therapist Assistant – Jackie Lea



Mr. Chazz Cobbs, pictured above, graduated with honors from MCC on May 10. Cobbs earned an AS degree, diploma and certificate in Electrical Systems Technology and is a member of the Alpha Beta Gamma Honors Society, which signifies excellence in business related studies. He was also active in the Man Up Success Leadership program.

Beasley.

MCC's Distinguished Graduate award, which is based on scholarship, civic engagement, and demeanor, was presented to Quante Tatiana Bazemore of Windsor. Bazemore, who lost everything in her home – twice – due to flooding from a tropical storm in September of 2016 and again during Hurricane Matthew in October of 2016, was

moved to tears during the presentation. Bazemore was also active in MCC's Literary and Cultural Arts Club, serving as president for two terms. She is planning to attend ECU or ODU (Old Dominion University), and work toward earning a doctoral degree in psychology.

Sandra Hardy, the Assistant Superintendent of Bertie County Schools, then joined Dr. Busch on the stage to congratulate the Bertie High School students who also earned college credentials. MCC partners with both BECHS and NERSBA (Northeast Regional School of Biotechnology and Agriscience) to provide an Early College High School program. Other High Schools in the area also work with MCC to offer the Career and College Promise program. Each of these programs makes it possible for their students to attend college without paying for books or tuition, while still in High School. Many of these students will transfer their MCC credits to universities and enter their course of study as sophomores or juniors.

In her closing remarks to the graduates, MCC Trustee and Board of Trustees President, Helen Davis thanked the graduates for choosing Martin Community College to be a part of their academic journey. "We the Trustees, the Staff and especially the faculty, are proud of you and are so very happy that we could be a part of your lives. No matter where you go after tonight, you will be carrying a piece of MCC with you, and I look forward to seeing how each of you invests that piece of MCC in your community, your family

and yourself." Davis then directed the students to turn the tassels on their hats from left to right and declared them to be official graduates of Martin Community College.



Pictured above is Reco Pugh-Bey of Bertie County. He graduated with honors from both MCC's Electrical Systems Technology and General Occupational Technology programs on May 10. Pugh-Bey was also an active member in the Man Up Success Leadership program at MCC and was inducted into the MCC Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, an academic honors society. Pugh-Bey plans to eventually open his own busi-



MCC's Interim President, Dr. Kenneth A. Boham poses with commencement speaker Jennifer Haygood, as they wait to enter the Martin County Auditorium for the 49th annual MCC graduation ceremony on May 10. Haygood is the Chief of Staff for the NC Community College System office in Raleigh.



Dr. Brian Busch, MCC's Dean Of Student Services and Interim Dean of Academics, conferring the degrees on May 10.



Pictured left is Helen Davis, President of the MCC Board of Trustees, during the MCC Graduation ceremony on May 10. In her closing remarks to the graduates, Davis thanked the graduates for choosing Martin Community College to be a part of their academic journey. "We the Trustees, the Staff and especially the faculty, are proud of you and are so very happy that we could be a part of your lives. No matter where you go after tonight, you will be carrying a piece of MCC with you, and I look forward to seeing how each of you invests that piece of MCC in your community, your family and yourself." Davis then directed the students to turn the tassels on their hats from left to right and declared them to be official graduates of Martin Community College.

***Congratulations
MCC's Class of 2017!***



Pictured above are Jamesville's NERSBA (Northeast Regional School of Biotechnology and Agriscience) students who not only earned their High School diploma this year, but simultaneously completed their two year college degree from MCC. Many of these students will transfer their MCC credits to universities and enter their course of study as sophomores or juniors. MCC's partnership with NERSBA, as well as all of the regional High Schools, makes it possible for their students to attend college without paying for books or tuition, while still in High School.