



MONDAY MEMO • STLCC-FOREST PARK • 10.1.12

# Commitment rally mixes promise with fun

**“ARE YOU COMMITTED?”** shouted rapper Ryan Bell, a former Wildwood student.

**“YES I’M COMMITTED,”** students shouted back, arms swaying overhead, some clapping, some dancing in the aisles in the amphitheater at Kiener Plaza in downtown St. Louis.

**“ARE YOU COMMITTED?”** he rapped again and again, performing what is probably the nation’s first and only rap song about Phi Theta Kappa’s “Commit to Complete” initiative.

Energy and enthusiasm were high in sunny Kiener Plaza Friday afternoon as several hundred STLCC students gathered to publicly demonstrate their commitment to finishing their college educations. PTK Executive Director Rod Risley was the keynoter and was joined by Heather Wathington, a data coach for the Achieving the Dream Initiative, and Chancellor Myrtle Dorsey and Vice Chancellor Donna Dare.

The “Commit to Complete” rally was a dream come true for organizer Jeannine Shaffer, Wildwood’s PTK president, who at one time was a homeless mother of three, living in her car and fleeing an abusive relationship. She found a new future at STLCC.

*(Top left) Vowing to raise \$3,000 for the Commit to Complete Student Scholarship fund, STLCC students outdid themselves, turning over a check for \$3,280 to (left) Chancellor Dorsey and the Foundation’s JoAnn Digman. Forest Park’s students raised the highest amount: \$1,233.75! Student leaders in the red t-shirts were (right to left) LaTasha Brown, Forest Park PTK president; Jeannine Shaffer, Wildwood PTK president; Rjeem Pearson, Florissant Valley SGA president; and Philip Oehlerking, Meramec PTK officer.*



*A community college graduate, Rod Risley has been executive director of PTK since 1985, growing the organization from 550 **national** chapters, to 1,250 **international** chapters.*

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“We’re here to celebrate and inspire not just our own students, but every student in the city, the state and the nation to commit to complete their education,” said Shaffer, who also serves as the PTK district regional vice president. “Community colleges are the great equalizing factor. They allow us to achieve our dreams and to better ourselves.”

The rally was capped off with free tickets to the Cardinals baseball game where the Cards whopped the Washington Nationals, 12-2.

Campus rallies preceded the Kiener Plaza finale. At Forest Park last Wednesday, more than 200 students lit candles and repeated a pledge to “commit to complete” their educations, signing the large blue and silver banner which later hung at Kiener Plaza.

Four alums returned to Forest Park to share their personal success stories:

- Derek Adams, who earned a degree in business administration from the University of Missouri-St. Louis, and now works at A.G. Edwards.
- Shahrouz Yousefi, an engineer at Boeing.
- Clark Porter, an ex-offender who is now a Jobs and Family Specialist with the U.S. Probation Office in St. Louis, after earning a master’s degree in Social Work from UMSL.
- Courtney Boddie, a Student Resource Specialist at Cornerstone: the Center for Advanced Learning at Washington University, who just finished his master’s degree in counseling at UMSL and hopes to apply for the doctoral program next fall.
- Jeanina Triggs, who is a candidate for a doctorate in English at Saint Louis University and has taught at SLU and UMSL.

On Friday, PTK district student leaders lunched with Risley at Forest Park, and other students attended a pizza party before boarding the buses for the hoopla at Kiener Plaza.



Photos by David Kennedy



# What's next, Casey?



## Shiller is St. Louis Chef of the Year

Congratulations to our Baking and Pastry Coordinator Casey Shiller who was named **St. Louis Chef of the Year** Sunday by the local chapter of the American Culinary Federation.

The 2012 Fall Culinary Salon and Chef of the Year Culinary Challenge was staged at the Culinary Institute of St. Louis at Hickey College.

Shiller wowed a panel of out-of-town judges by creating a dessert called Chocolate Decadence.

Student Amanda Mertens (middle left) created this green chocolate showpiece.

(Below right) Baking & Pastry Instructor Deb Hennen also won a bronze medal for this gorgeous wedding cake. Hennen teaches the Cake Production and Decoration class.

(Bottom left) Joe Lemoine won Student Best in Show with a silver medal; (right end) Jena Shaw served as Shiller's apprentice for two months, in preparation for the Chef of the Year competition.



Photos by David Kennedy



***Do you have any idea what these goofballs are spelling? Think about the song, YMCA...***



Yep, it was Missouri Community College Awareness Day across the state last Friday and at Forest Park we celebrated with the MCCA song, snacks and prizes in a reception in Café East, for members only. And, as Lallie McDonald and Cheryl Fowler will attest, everyone who came was a winner for joining MCCA. Human letters: (left) Randy Malta, Kellie Harris, Christy Hart and Audrey Hunter.

## Malta is October Employee of Month

When he's not playing the letter "M," Randy Malta is a leader worth emulating. Malta is our October Employee of the Month for his leadership with the Forest Park Institutional Affairs Council and as Campus Blackboard Coordinator in the Center for Teaching and Learning.

Malta, who has worked for STLCC for 15 years, is a senior instructional designer, and reviews Blackboard II advanced courses for faculty who want to be certified to teach online. He was previously the manager of Media Services from 1998-2004. He was the district manager for TeleLearning Services from 2004-07, and then went to Meramec for two years as the manager of the Digital Arts and Technology Alliance.



This is Malta's second time chairing the Forest Park Institutional Affairs Council. He chaired once before in 2002-03 and served as chair for the District Institutional Affairs Council in 2003-04. Malta is currently pursuing his Ed.D. in distance learning. He and his wife, Sylvia, have been married 30 years, and their daughter is currently a college freshman.

## Student workshops: Word, PPT, Email

A Student Success Seminar on Microsoft Word, Power Point and Email Overview premieres Wednesday, Oct. 3, from 6 to 8 p.m. , and continues Friday, Oct. 5, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Library Computer Room, L-102B.

Space is limited, so RSVP Monday, Oct. 1, to Liz Levenhagen at ext. 9062 or email: [elevenhagen@stlcc.edu](mailto:elevenhagen@stlcc.edu). The seminar is sponsored by the Academic Support Center.

## Let your star shine at Forest Park Follies

Are you a creative soul in need of an outlet for your under-appreciated talents? Director Mary Hurley is seeking faculty, staff and highly disciplined students who



sing, play an instrument, perform spoken word or comic monologues, do magic, or any other kind of entertaining acts for the **Forest Park Follies** in November.

Auditions will be from 6 to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 9, in the theatre. This celebration of the diverse gifts and talents from the Forest Park community will be presented Nov. 8-10 at 8 p.m. and Nov. 11 at 3 p.m. in the Bastian Theatre. For more information, contact Hurley at ext. 9232 or [mhurley@stlcc.edu](mailto:mhurley@stlcc.edu).





**Counselor Sandra Knight** has spent 20 years as the adviser of Phi Theta Kappa's Xi Epsilon Chapter at Forest Park. She has been honored with numerous regional and international awards, including Distinguished Adviser, and under her leadership, students and the organization have thrived. She lives in O'Fallon, Ill., with her husband, and she has three grown children.

**1. Where did you grow up?**

I was born in Panama City, Panama, but grew up in Puerto Armuelles, a city near the Pacific Ocean.

**2. What drew you to your career path?**

In my family there was always an emphasis on education, and they wanted me to become a teacher. However, my desire to become a counselor was first inspired by a friend who was majoring in psychology and with whom I shared some affinity. After reviewing the psychology curriculum at the University of Panama, I decided that psychology was just right for me. The combination of science and psychology appealed to me, as well as the possibility to help others. After marriage, I came to the U.S. and attended Purdue University, where I received my undergraduate degree. I later obtained a master's degree in counseling from the University of Montana, while my husband was stationed in that area.

**3. What do you like best about your work?**

I am passionate about having the opportunity to influence both the personal and career lives of many of our students. It is so nice to hear them, years later, mention the ways in which I have impacted their lives.

**4. Who has had the greatest influence in your life?**

My parents! But my uncle also served as a strong role model, during my early development. He had high expectations of me and often verbalized them. I believe that he was ahead of his time by always stating that, in order for me to be a woman, I must be intellectually, emotionally and socially competent. It was a role to be achieved. I tried hard to measure up to his expectations.

**5. What would people be surprised to know about you?**

That I can be on the dance floor with high heels longer than lots of young people, as per Bella Hafezi and Brenda French.

**6. What are some of your favorite things to do?**

I am passionate about listening and dancing to Latin music, especially salsa. I like to travel. I enjoy meeting people from all over the world. I appreciate the arts and the outdoors. I like parties!

**7. What motivates you to do your best?**

I believe that the intrinsic rewards that I receive from what I do in my relationship with others, motivates me to continue to do my best.

**8. If you could trade places with any other person for a week, famous or not famous, living or dead, real or fictional, who would it be?**

I would like to take Sonia Sotomayor's seat as a Supreme Court Justice. I truly admire this woman. She did not allow adversity to determine what she would do in life. She is a role model for every woman and man.

**9. What is a future goal for you?**

I dream of having a boutique, after retirement, so that I can stay connected with people, especially women.

**10. How would you like to be remembered?**

I would like to be remembered as someone who helped inspire, transform and improve the life conditions of many.