

This Month

February 2007

Johnson County Community College

**Design
Flowers
at JCCC**



Faculty

Cover: Diana Adams will create the floral designs for the dedication of the Regnier Center.

Brittney Myhre puts an oriental bent on her floral design.



Diana Adams has the same gamine smile as Audrey Hepburn's Eliza Doolittle selling flowers in *My Fair Lady*. But looks and a

love of flowers is where the comparison between Adams and Doolittle stops.

Adams has a bachelor's degree in horticulture and master's degree in education from the University of Missouri-Columbia and the title of adjunct professor in three JCCC program areas. She teaches *Concepts of Floral Design*, a horticulture science class; *Elements of Design* and *Advanced Floral Design*, one-hour interior design classes; and *Introduction to Catering* in hospitality management.

While Adams' floral designs have been featured at weddings, Missouri Gov. Mel Carnahan's 1997 Inauguration and the 2006 holiday edition of *Kansas City Homes and Gardens*, the public and JCCC community will view her creations firsthand on campus during the dedication of the Regnier Center in September.

"I will do a walk-through of the Regnier Center interior before I create the designs, but I know I want to do something unique and bold with fresh flowers, something more artistic than the full English garden stuffed into a vase."

Adams is no stranger to planning major galas. As catering manager at Hyatt Regency Crown Center for five years, Adams created menus, designed floor plans and participated in food preparation, culinary classes, wine tasting, and wine and food pairings. She was also the wedding specialist for the hotel for three years.

Previous to that, she was an event planner for Event Central, coordinating the caterer, decor, rental equipment, entertainment, flowers and linens for events, including major ones for Rosalynn Carter, Maya Angelou, Don Hall of Hallmark, Henry Bloch of H&R Block and other Kansas City community leaders. In addition, Adams has owned Floral Accents, a custom design floral accessory business, since 1986, working with silk and dried designs in residential and commercial properties and creating fresh flowers for weddings and special events.

Adams' experience has led to real-world opportunities for students. JCCC floral design students have done special projects for large parties, weddings and the Greater Kansas City Parade of Homes. Albert Pujols, first baseman



Lisa Shipman arranges fresh materials in the *Concepts of Floral Design* class.



Sande Buller creates a floral design.

for the St. Louis Cardinals, liked one of the furnished models on the parade so much that he bought it all for his Kansas City home – furniture, draperies and JCCC students’ flower arrangements.

Adams says students want real applications for their floral designs. Some students have taken the floral design class two or three times, one student for five years, for extra experience.

“Like any trade, flower arranging takes practice. You practice enough that you become comfortable and then add your own personal style,” she said.

Her horticulture studies enable Adams to teach students about floral and tropical plant materials and their care requirements and availability. Students also learn principles of design and arrange a variety of marketable designs each semester.

“My students learn everything in class but lack the practical application,” she said.

Adams, who taught flower store management at MU-Columbia, would like to do the same at JCCC. Her vision for students in *Concepts of Floral Design* is a campus flower shop utilizing a

florist cooler located at a central retail site.

“Flowers are both a special occasion and an impulse purchase,” she said, explaining why the flower shop needs to be readily accessible.

Adams would also like her students to have the opportunity to create wedding floral arrangements at a reduced rate.

“I really enjoy teaching,” Adams said. “There is a creative energy in the classroom. Students come into the 6 p.m. class exhausted; they leave feeling energized. There is something therapeutic about working with flowers.”

With a full schedule of teaching and owning her own business, Adams has a couple of more plates to juggle – full-time jobs marketing information technology services to businesses for Midwest Consulting Group and mother of four daughters.

As far as the Regnier Center arrangements, Adams anticipates students volunteering to help.

“Students want the experience,” she said. 🌸

McLaughlin Writes for a Song

When Olathe kicks off its sesquicentennial celebration with a Governor's Ball on Feb. 17, Paula McLaughlin, administrative



Paula McLaughlin

assistant, Olathe Center, will be center stage.

McLaughlin, a professional singer and Olathe native, wrote the lyrics to the Olathe anthem commissioned for Olathe's 150th anniversary and will sing the song, *Olathe City Beautiful*, at the Feb. 17 event.

"Olathe's 150th Celebration committee wanted someone to capture the spirit of Olathe from its beginning to now," McLaughlin said. "It wasn't easy to take 150 years of history and put it into three refrains and four verses."

Howard Abernathy, Overland Park, a professional composer, wrote the music.

"I think Howard has done a great job with

the music and arrangements," McLaughlin said.

The events and festivals subcommittee co-chairs, Connie and Jerry Snider, approached McLaughlin about writing the lyrics in August 2006. She spent August and September researching Olathe's history including the early settlers, the U.S. Navy base, Hyer Boot Company, railroads and expansion with the building of I-35.

When her mother died in October 2006, McLaughlin dedicated the song to her parents, Bill and Jennie Stambaugh, who had owned Bill's Meat Market on Hwy K-7 from 1955-1976. Her six siblings and friends had helped her

brainstorm ideas at the hospital during McLaughlin's mother's final days, and the lyrics followed that same month.

"Writing the words made me appreciate Olathe more," said McLaughlin, who signed her maiden name to the song. "I realized how the little town that had a population of 30,000 when I was growing up is now a town of more than 100,000."

McLaughlin was adamant that the song would not scream "O-l-a-t-h-e" like a television car ad. She wanted the song to relate to the traditional interpretation of the Shawnee word "Olathe" as "beautiful" and to be general enough that everybody who hears the words can relate to its meaning.

"I was really honored to do this because I know how many talented musicians there are in Olathe," McLaughlin said.

McLaughlin has sung professionally 20 years, performing with the City Limit Band, the Plaza Summer Series, the Phoenix Bar & Grill, Plaza III Steakhouse, 2001 Plaza lighting ceremony and the 2006 Legends at Village West Christmas tree lighting. She sings at weddings and funerals, and estimates she performs about three week-ends a month in addition to her full-time JCCC position. *Olathe City Beautiful* will be her first published work.

Jerry Snider said they asked McLaughlin to write the lyrics because they wanted a local musician.

"We have a national song and a state song, so we thought 'why not a city song?'" he said.

The Governor's Ball is at 6 p.m. Feb. 17 at the Holiday Inn of Olathe. Tickets are \$75, available by calling the city, 913-971-8700. 🌸

Hunka Hunka Locust Turns Elvis

Staff

When Dr. Lorelee Stevens,
Community Outreach

credit coordinator, moved back to her hometown of Tonganoxie last summer, she just wanted to blend into the neighborhood. Trouble is: There's a 10-foot Elvis in her backyard. Now the locust tree-turned-Elvis has become a piece of public art.

"It's really fun to have people knock on the door and ask permission to take a photograph in my backyard," Stevens said.

Initially Stevens planned to have the old locust tree removed before it fell on her 1903 house. But her father, 79-year-old Dr. Phil Stevens, who has practiced medicine in Tonganoxie since 1955, suggested a tree sculpture. Stevens' father and sister had tree sculptures completed after a 2000 microburst damaged trees at their respective homes, also in Tonganoxie. Lorelee Stevens' father commissioned Daniel Boone; her sister Chief Tonganoxie.

"Yard art isn't really my style, but I couldn't say 'no' to my father. So I thought if I am going to go kitsch, I am going to go kitsch all the way. That's when I decided on Elvis," Stevens said.

Artist Russ Ehart spent about 25 hours carving with a chain saw, designing freestyle from photographs. Standing on a scaffold, Ehart began with the Elvis's head and distinctive pompadour and worked down to the blue suede shoes. The hardest part? Cutting the 1950s-microphone in one long piece.

"It's a God-given talent," Ehart said. "I don't have to do anything but run the chain saw."

Ehart, who divides his time between McLouth, Kan., and Cold Brook, N.Y., also credits his MS200 Stihl chain saw. The chain-saw artist drew an audience while completing Elvis in time for Stevens' housewarming party Sept. 30.

"My 6-year-old son Simon liked coming home from school and watching Elvis come to life," Stevens said.

Elvis's face, hands, shoes and microphone are painted; the remaining sculpture is natural wood color. The whole tree stump is coated in a polyurethane, which should give Elvis a life span of about 10 years.

Stevens says the neighbors like Elvis. The pastor



in the parsonage across the street commented that Elvis sold more gospel records than any of his rock-and-roll hits.

To see Stevens' Elvis sculpture, take I-435 W to exit US-24W/US-40 W (by the Legends); go 12 miles west to Tonganoxie; at the second stoplight, turn left onto 4th Street; turn right on Shawnee St. Elvis croons on the corner of 5th and Shawnee St. (424 Shawnee St.). 🌸

Dr. Lorelee Stevens, Community Outreach credit coordinator, stands next to the 10-foot Elvis in her backyard.

Albano Fills a Tall Order



Staff

Inside her Campus Services Building office, Robyn Albano is surrounded by samples of fabric, carpet and furniture finishes and catalogs showing chairs, tables and desks.

Robyn Albano, interior services coordinator, has been poring over architectural floor plans and meeting with user groups for the

Regnier Center and the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art since she began work at JCCC in January 2006.

Albano has the responsibility of planning, ordering and managing the installation of furniture for three floors in the Regnier Center and two floors in the Nerman, a total of 167 rooms and 192,000 square feet.

“It’s a challenge, but rewarding to see this project come together from the ground up,” Albano said. “My job is to provide a continuity of the whole experience and get users what they want within the allowed budget.”

Albano, who has a bachelor’s degree in architectural studies from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, brings with her a background in corporate facilities design. Decisions about space planning were made before Albano came on board, and hard surfaces such as granite, limestone and flooring were specified by Gould Evans Associates, the architects. Albano is working in tandem with one of the architect’s designers.

“In the Regnier Center, we are trying to evoke a ‘techie’ feeling, something upscale with higher-end finishes and woodland tones of gold and olive to soften hard surfaces,” Albano said. “Everyone who is fortunate enough to be moving into the Regnier Center will be moving to a warm, inviting space. The architect has brought in a lot of light.”

Albano’s office in Campus Services Building is filled with samples of fabric, carpet and furniture finishes and catalogs showing chairs, tables and desks. She points to each office space, conference room, seminar space, classroom, computer lab, testing site, biotechnology lab and hallway in the Regnier Center and then details the corresponding furnishings and floor and wall finishes – from lab stools and student worktables to the upholstered lounge chairs in open foyers.

Albano has made the same decisions for the Nerman, only here the design is “minimalist.”

“We want the furniture to carry the same aesthetic – no patterns or adornments that would



Robyn Albano, interior services coordinator, dons a hardhat to inspect plans inside the Regnier Center.

Albano’s responsibilities for the Nerman Museum and Regnier Center

- Number of rooms for both buildings: **167**
- Number of cubicles (Regnier): **111+**
- Private offices (both buildings): **66**
- Computer labs (Regnier): **27**
- Classrooms (lecture only) (both buildings): **5**
- Conference rooms (both): **10**, plus the large 1st-floor conference center in the Regnier Center
- Auditorium (Nerman): **1**
- Seminar Rooms: **9**
- Number of chairs to order for both: **1600+** (includes task chairs, lab stools, classroom chairs)
- Number of tables to order for both: **750+** (includes lab tables, classroom tables, conference room tables)
- Number of staff moving to new buildings: **200+**

distract from the art,” she said. “The Nerman is not furniture intensive.”

Albano is in the process of selecting gallery benches. The auditorium’s chairs are very simple, not over-stuffed. Albano describes the chair for the Nerman’s Café Tempo as an “iconic” chair designed by an architect in the 1950s, matched by clean-lined tables. Office furniture has a natural beech finish and no exposed hardware – an austere European look.

“We want a Zen-like experience, light-filled without a lot of distractions. The design of the building should stand on its own, and the art should speak for itself,” Albano said.

Besides the broad philosophical and design considerations, Albano also writes meticulous specifications on every piece of furniture that goes out to bid so the vendors deliver exactly what she wants, right down to the gauge of the metal used on a chair. Once every specification is written and out to bid, Albano will meet with Campus Services to begin scheduling and coordinating moves. More than 200 staff and faculty will move to the two new buildings.

“The Regnier Center and Nerman Museum are both really nice spaces,” she said. “People may not pick up on all the details, but the details contribute to a unique atmosphere.”



Mulcahy Teaches, Researches

The week after this interview, Dr. Ellyn Mulcahy, assistant professor of science, was on her way to a meeting of the American Public



Dr. Ellyn Mulcahy, assistant professor of science, is researching the impact of health education on Somali Bantu refugees.

Health Association, Boston, to present her research on the “Identification of the Health Needs of Somali Bantu Refugees through Educational Intervention.”

How an Irish native came to study Somali Bantu women in Kansas City is one of those uniquely American melting-pot stories, propelled by its protagonist, Mulcahy, who is smart, energetic and motivated to improve the health of low-income women and their children.

Mulcahy received her bachelor of science degree in microbiology with honors from the University College Cork, Ireland, and her doctorate in microbiology from Creighton University, Omaha. Her dissertation research determined how a specific infectious protein (PrP^{Sc}) causes normal protein to change in Prion diseases, progressive neurodegenerative disorders like mad cow

disease and its human version Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease.

What brought Mulcahy to Kansas was a post-doctoral fellowship at the University of Kansas Medical Center, where she also completed a master of public health degree with honors. Her research on Somali Bantu refugees was the capstone to her master’s degree, and an article with results is pending publication in a scientific journal.

When choosing her master’s topic, Mulcahy was interested in women facing healthcare disparities. That’s when she connected with Jewish Vocational Services, Kansas City, Mo., which was starting Practical Orientation for Women Refugees (POWR) to serve Somali Bantus relocated by the United Nations to Kansas City from refugee camps in Kenya.

While POWR addressed many orientation needs, Mulcahy was in charge of health education on topics of nutrition, prenatal care, child development, sexually transmitted disease and hygiene. The pilot program lasted from April 2005-2006, and Mulcahy followed up with two months of individual interviews with participants and data analysis. Her research looked at the impact of health education on the women.

Keep in mind that Mulcahy was doing all this while teaching at JCCC, where she started full time in 2005, part time in 2004. Mulcahy has now submitted a grant proposal to look at the effect of maternal health education on Somali Bantu children in Kansas City, Mo., through JVS, and in Wyandotte County through Catholic Charities.

Meanwhile at JCCC, Mulcahy has taught in the biotechnology program and developed online courses in microbiology and cell and molecular biology. She will assist Dr. Luanne Wolfgram in workshops for secondary educators as part of a Carl D. Perkins Postsecondary State Leadership grant to expand biotechnology career awareness in Kansas.

At 31, Mulcahy has surprised herself with her career track.

“I had really planned a strictly academic career in basic research,” Mulcahy said. “I didn’t realize teaching would be so attractive. Clinical and basic research are important, but with public health and teaching you see the impact more directly, more immediately.” 🌸

Certificates Meet Industry Demand

Rick Posa, a student in Mike Weible's *Residential Wiring* class, is working on electrical switches in the bathroom of a new house,

an opportunity Posa terms "real world experience."

Posa plans to spend two semesters earning an electrical technology certificate and then look for a job, hopefully in maintenance.

"Instead of going to school for two years for an associate's degree, I'll go two semesters for a certificate, then look for a job and go to school on top of that," Posa said.

Students like Posa are the reason industrial technology programs are repackaging coursework to offer incremental 8 to 23 credit-hour vocational certificates as well as a 64 credit-hour associate's degree.

"In today's market, industrial technology students want to come to JCCC, get trained and go make money," said Bill Brown, interim dean, business and technology division. "The employers, in turn, get employees with the skill sets their companies are looking for."

In the spring 2007 semester, Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning Technology is rolling out four new vocational certificates: General Basic HVAC; General Basic HVAC Installation and Duct Fabrication; General Basic HVAC Maintenance; and General Basic HVAC Sales, Design and Estimating.

As of fall semester 2005, metal fabrication/welding offers five vocational certificates, and as of spring 2006, electrical technology offers four vocational certificates. Automotive Technology will be the next program to seek Kansas Board of Regents approval for new certificates.

"Most skilled trades students are aware that a vocational certificate is as good as a bachelor's degree in another arena," Brown said. "We have students who believe that never in their lifetime will they have enough money or time to get an associate's degree. But they find they can get one comprehensive certificate, then another, and then with a couple of online general education classes, an associate's degree is obtainable."

Brown says certificates do three things for students: They are rewarded with a KBOR-approved certificate, gain employability right away and are encouraged by the certificate to

continue their education.

"The typical industrial technology student starts at JCCC as a full-time student, working part time. But within three semesters, the student is working full time and going to school part time," Brown said. "Life gets in the way. The students are employed, and the associate's degree is an all-or-nothing proposition. The certificates are step-by-step."

Part of the reason for the change to short-term certificates is industry demand, and JCCC's ability to meet the demand in a timely manner. In metal fabrication/welding, for example, the program can't turn students out fast enough. Brown says people don't realize the demand for metal fabrication for everything from overhead door equipment to building bridges for the Kansas Department of Transportation.

Even though new construction may be down, there is a huge demand for retrofitting. In HVAC, workers are needed to do the duct work and installation for higher-efficiency furnaces, for which the federal government is giving tax credits.

"Students can earn \$16-\$18 an hour as soon as they complete a certificate in an industrial trade," said Brown, who also oversees automotive, civil engineering, drafting, electrical, electronics, HVAC, metal fabrication/welding, pre-engineering, railroad electronics, railroad industrial welding and railroad operations technology programs. 🌿



Mike Weible, professor, career program facilitator, electrical technology, instructs Ben Toplikar on the wiring of a ceiling box.

Project Finish Receives National Recognition, More Sites

Project Finish's success in involving volunteers to supplement the work of paid teachers in English-as-a-Second-Language classes



Magda Lugo-Blas, case manager/office coordinator, El Centro, and Susan McCabe, program director, ABE/GED/ESL, prepare for Project Finish ESL classes at El Centro, 75th and Metcalf.

has earned it a role in a national project funded by the UPS Foundation and ProLiteracy America, the U.S. program of ProLiteracy Worldwide. Project Finish is the Adult Basic Education program sponsored by Johnson County Community College and the Johnson County Library.

During the next 18 months, Project Finish and nine other

adult education and literacy programs will share their experiences to create a national best practices guide to help publicly funded adult education programs recruit, manage and support volunteers.

Last year, Project Finish served more than 2,100 students at its nine locations throughout Johnson

County. Project Finish has 140 active volunteers. Janet Daley, volunteer coordinator, attributes the success of Project Finish, in large part, to its dedicated volunteers. Adult students come to Project Finish to improve their reading, writing and math skills; to study for the GED exam in order to receive a Kansas High School Diploma from the Kansas Board of Regents; and to learn to speak English in one of the 35 English classes offered through the program.

Susan McCabe, program director, reports that the number of students enrolling in ESL classes has doubled in the last seven years. In the fall 2006 semester, 920 students enrolled in ESL classes. To meet the growing demand for services, three new ESL locations have recently been added to the Project Finish program.

In October 2006, the Emmanuel Family Outreach Center, 71st and Quivira, agreed to accommodate evening classes for 150 people on an ESL waiting list. In January, Project Finish and El Centro, at its new location at Metcalf Bank, 75th and Metcalf, partnered in daytime ESL classes. Also in January, a new venture between Project Finish and the Shawnee Mission School District began with 10-week evening ESL classes offered to parents of Briarwood Elementary School students. SMSD provides childcare and Project Finish ESL classes.

"By opening these two new sites in January, we should be able to serve at least 200 more people," McCabe said.

Project Finish provides four levels of ESL classes. Kansas requires students to pass a state test to progress to the next level. When students complete four levels of ESL classes, they can enroll in a transition class that equips them to study for the GED.

In addition to volunteers, Project Finish has 55 part-time staff and four full-time staff including McCabe. For more information about Project Finish, contact McCabe at 913-829-8742. 🌸



El Centro is one of three new sites for Project Finish ESL classes.

Family Ties

There's a 60-year age difference between Ashley Schlotzhauer, 17, and Lyle Murphy, 77, but a similarity in their love of learning and

mutual admiration. This grandfather and granddaughter are both enrolled at JCCC during the spring semester.

Schlotzhauer, a junior at Blue Valley North High School, is attending night classes Jan. 8-March 14 to earn a certified nursing aide certificate.

"I want to go into the medical field, and this will help me get my foot in the door," Schlotzhauer said.

Murphy, who earned a bachelor's degree in Greek and Hebrew from Calvary Bible College, Kansas City, Mo., in 1963, and a master's degree in linguistics and history from Indiana University, Bloomington, in 1967, took *Elementary Spanish II* in the fall 2006 semester and is enrolled in *Intermediate Spanish III* this spring.

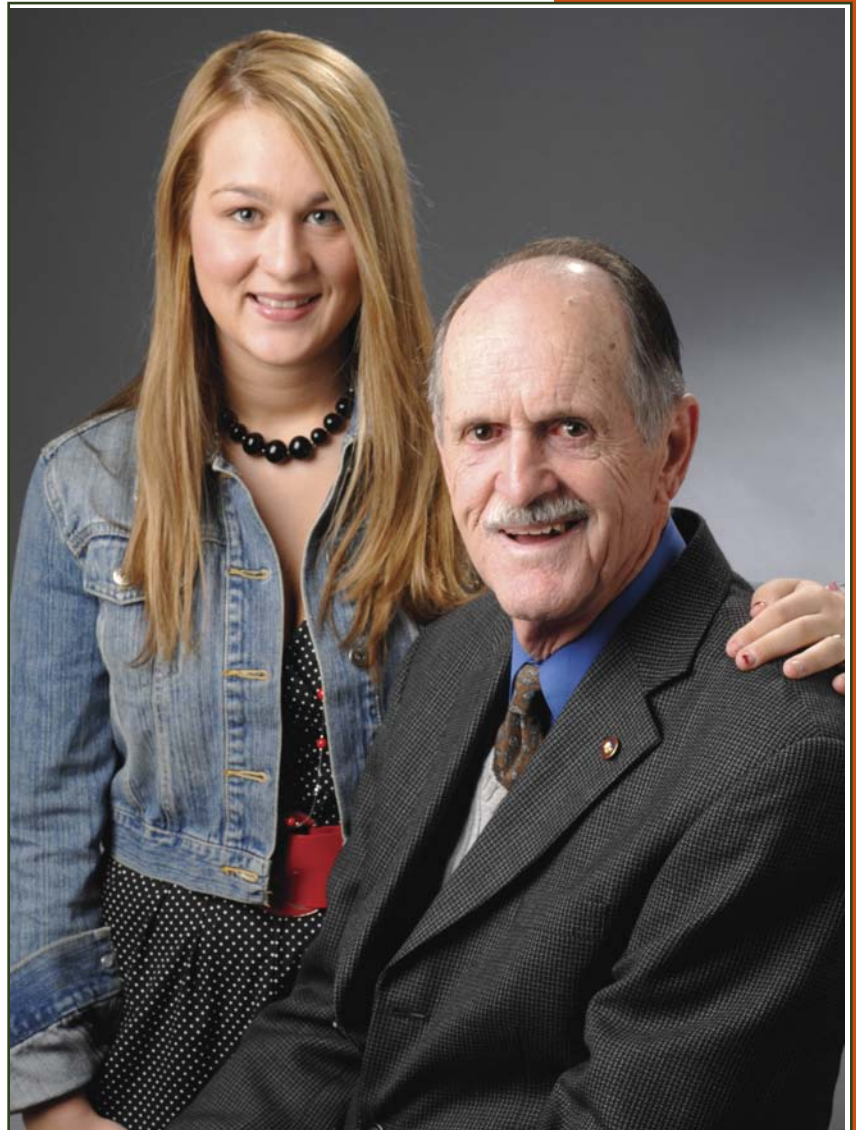
"I'm building on my high school Spanish from 1943-44," Murphy said with smile. "I am doing pretty well considering it's been six decades since my last Spanish class."

Murphy, an ordained Baptist minister, served in evangelism at Centropolis Baptist Church, Kansas City, Mo., for 37 years and is now a church conference speaker in the Kaw Valley District.

"There are 8,000 people in my district, and hundreds who I can't speak to unless I learn Spanish. I want to take care of that, and I am grateful that JCCC offers so many Spanish classes," Murphy said.

Murphy refers to himself as a "permanent student" having taken summer classes for 18 summers in the department of theology at the University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Ind. He also self-published a novel in 2004, *The Time of Jacob's Trouble*, a story of an American soldier and Israeli girl caught up in the Middle East conflict.

Schlotzhauer is also a scholar. She was inducted into National Honor Society in the fall, takes a full load in high school with classes such as pre-calculus and chemistry in addition to CNA classes, and is the photographer for the high school yearbook. She lives about 12 miles from her grandparents and visits with them frequently. Murphy and Schlotzhauer agree that they learn from each other.




"He teaches me that I should always be learning something new," Schlotzhauer said. "I see how learning has enriched his life and how he is always teaching other people. He is a great role model."

Murphy is equally appreciative of his granddaughter.

"I was a fairly bright student through high school," he said. "But I see in this girl the vision to reach a goal. I wish I had pressed on with a clear goal at her age."

Murphy says it is great to have JCCC as a "front-line, front-rank" institution.

"I would be feeling guilty not taking a class," he said. 

Ashley Schlotzhauer, 17, and Lyle Murphy, 77, granddaughter and grandfather, are both JCCC students spring semester.

Green and Serene

In the midst of campus hustle and bustle, a place of serenity was created in the form of a traditional Japanese garden on the east side of the GYM in November. The garden is the project of a Japanese garden workshop taught by Dr. Takeo Uesugi, a landscape architect who has designed acclaimed Japanese garden installations and professor emeritus at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, and Tokushirou Tamane, master gardener for the Kinkakuji Temple, Golden Pavilion, Kyoto. About 35 landscape designers and landscape architects attended the two-day workshop.

"The symbol of the crane is represented in the garden," Uesugi said. "The crane is a symbol of peace and the bright future of JCCC. We hope that people will look at the garden and find peace in its harmony and balance."

The garden is composed of 18 rocks that create the head, wings and tail of the crane, a selection of pines, dwarf heavenly bamboo, Japanese maples, periwinkle, monkey grass and azaleas.

Dr. Takeo Uesugi (left) and Tokushirou Tamane direct the placement of the first rock in the traditional Japanese garden Nov. 8 in front of the GYM.

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