Stargazers take note: MCC will offer a free program, The Secrets of Orion, on Tuesday, Jan. 26, at 6 p.m. in the McCain Theater.

Edwin Faughn of Rainwater Observatory will be presenting the lecture, which is underwritten by MCC and the Mississippi NASA Space Grant Consortium. Admission is open to the college and community.

The Secrets of Orion explores one of the most beautiful and recognizable constellations in the winter night sky. Filled with mystery, legend and a wealth of scientific discovery it has been recorded by many ancient cultures and is even mentioned in the Bible. This informative presentation will take audience members on a journey through this majestic constellation and reveal some of the most breathtaking imagery and astounding discoveries ever recorded in human history.

Faughn is also an artist and lecturer specializing in space sciences and has presented hundreds of presentations to universities, museums, science centers, schools, churches and civic organizations.

His original artwork has been featured in and on the covers of numerous international space science magazines, exhibitions and planetarium productions. A few of his credits include Scientific American, Federal Express World Headquarters and the world premiere of Titanic: The Exhibition. He also served nearly 20 years as the art director for the Sharpe Planetarium of the Pink Palace Family of Museums in Memphis. His work is now featured on the main Kepler website of NASA’s Ames Research Center.
MCC Faculty member and student tapped for HEADWAE

Gowdy, Shaw to meet with legislators, lt. governor

A Meridian Community College instructor and sophomore will be traveling to Jackson next month to be feted by the Mississippi Legislature.

Otis Gowdy Sr., Commercial Truck Driving Program coordinator and instructor, and Alysia Shaw, a student in the Medical Laboratory Technology Program, are MCC representatives for the state accolade, The Higher Education Appreciation Day, Working for Academic Excellence (HEADWAE). HEADWAE was established by Mississippi Legislature to annually honor the academically talented students and faculty members of Mississippi’s higher education institutions who have made outstanding contributions in promoting academic excellence.

The Appreciation Day, hosted by the Legislature each February in Jackson, is the Legislature’s way of saying “thank you” to these students and faculty for their commitment to the future of Mississippi. The 2015-2016 Higher Education Appreciation Day will take place on Feb. 2 at the Jackson Marriott Hotel.

On Appreciation Day, honorees are invited to the capitol where they are welcomed by the lieutenant governor and recognized in each chamber of the legislature. A luncheon follows wherein each student and faculty honoree is recognized by name in front of their guests, institution leaders, corporate sponsors and legislators.

The goal of the Appreciation Day is to encourage excellence among those involved in higher education as a way to further leadership, increase knowledge across the broad spectrum of education, promote good citizens capable of thriving in today’s society, who are prepared to meet future challenges. To this end, one student and faculty honoree are annually selected from each of the 34 public and private member institutions of the Mississippi Association of Colleges to participate in the Appreciation Day activities.

An instructor and coordinator for 11 years at the College, Gowdy helped to get the MCC’s Commercial Truck Driving Program rolling when it started in 2005. His educational background links seamlessly for his vocation. He holds a bachelor’s degree in auto mechanics from Mississippi Valley State University and teacher’s certification from Mississippi State University. In addition, Gowdy received his master of science degree in counseling psychology from the University of West Alabama. Gowdy is also a third party tester for commercial drivers licenses for the State of Mississippi and he garnered the Truck Driver Two Million Mile Award.

On campus, he been saluted as MCCer of the Month and was tapped as a Lamplighter recipient.

“It’s an honor to be chosen,” Gowdy said. “I’m grateful and thankful to be selected,” he said of being named HEADWAE representative.

Proud of his college, “I can’t think of any better place than MCC,” Gowdy said, adding, “we put people back into the workforce... it makes me feel good.”

Inside the Commercial Truck Driving Program classroom are photos of former students to whom Gowdy points with pride. “That’s my reward,” he said, “helping somebody.” Former students often return to Gowdy’s office sharing with him their successes. “It makes you feel good when they come back,” he said. “This is a good career. There are a number of things you can do with a commercial drivers license,” he said.

Shaw, 26, of Livingston, Ala., is also a student on the go. Arising in the wee hours of the morning, Shaw travels 45 minutes from her home Monday through Thursday to attend her Medical Laboratory Technology Program classes at MCC. She also goes to her clinical sites and part-time job. “It’s a bit of a hassle but it’s worth it,” she said of her hectic schedule.

“I try not to procrastinate too much,” she said in order to get all of her assigned duties completed,

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A message from the President

Dear colleagues:

MCC was notified of a mid-year budget cut, as ordered by Gov. Bryant. As you are aware, state tax revenue has lagged behind budget projections this fiscal year, thus, making it mandatory in accordance with state law for the governor to make cuts to state-supported agencies - among them MCC.

MCC’s cut came in at $215,069.06 from the general fund and another $34,954 from Educational Enhancement funds. Yet another $16,402.93 was cut from Capital Expense fund.

Because of our loss of enrollment last year, our state appropriation was adjusted downward by $212,019 back in June. To reiterate, that was a formula cut resulting from our percentage loss in FTE being worse than the state average in FY16.

The bottom line? Since June, factoring adjustments based on the state enrollment funding formula and yesterday’s mid-year cut enacted by the governor, MCC has lost $539,447.99 in state funds off of our beginning FY16 budget. That’s a significant sum for a college of our size.

I am sure that you heard in the media that the Governor exempted K-12 from the mid-year cuts, which was no surprise. You may recall that I predicted this would occur during both Workshop Weeks this year. Also, I think you can look for K-12 to be exempted henceforth from any cuts, given the near passage of Initiative 42 in November. K-12 may not achieve the dramatic budget increases for which they are lobbying, but I don’t see K-12 ever losing any money going forward. That would be politically untenable for most in the Legislature.

Moreover, the Governor can’t cut Medicaid - which is arguably an even bigger elephant in the middle of the room than K-12’s MAEP - simply because the state is required to deliver its match of federal funds on Medicaid. With K-12 and Medicaid exempt for one reason or the other, higher education has become an even more inviting target for current and future cuts, should revenue projections not be met.

The aforementioned cuts to MCC’s budget compel us to:

(1) Continue to rebuild enrollment
(2) Work harder than ever to retain our students AND
(3) Continue to be conservative on our expenditures for the remainder of the fiscal year.
(4) Aggressively tell our story to the citizenry through any means possible, knowing that positive word-of-mouth in the community is the most powerful marketing tool we can muster.

The good news?

(1) On a percentage basis, MCC’s mid-year cut was tied with 6 of our sister institutions for lowest in the state.
(2) Our spring term enrollment, according to the latest report issues by Dean Welden, is slightly up on both headcount and FTE over last spring. So, we are moving in the right direction, albeit, not dramatically.
(3) The losses we have suffered in state appropriations this year have been offset, to some degree, by a rebate from Mississippi Power on our past utility payments and our new collections program, which has already reclaimed over $250,000 from students with outstanding balances. Ms. Brand has done a superlative job in conducting that program. Early results have far exceeded expectations.
(4) Occupancy in our residence halls has increased this year.
(5) We have the largest Associate Degree Nursing enrollment in the college’s history.

I hope this information helps to update you on where we stand budgetarily up to this point in the fiscal year. In actuality, we have suffered mid-year budget cuts multiple times during my tenure as your president. We have been blessed to survive each one of those with nary an employee being laid off, none having taken a pay cut, and none being furloughed. On the contrary, modest raises have been granted by our Board of Trustees. I thank all of you for your considerable efforts over the years to make that happen. We will endure this cut, too, especially as each MCCer does his/her part to address the three bold-faced aforementioned goals.

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and it’s a proven, beneficial method for her. She has a 4.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale in her Medical Lab studies.

Shaw holds a bachelor of science degree in biology from the University of West Alabama and discovered after graduating that she was either too qualified for some jobs or she needed certification. After completing a career exploration session and a chance conversation with a former medical lab instructor, Shaw found MCC’s Medical Laboratory Technology Program was just the ticket for her.

With plans on completing her associate degree this summer, Shaw is also working on her master’s degree. Though uncertain as to the specific lab arena, she has the career hopes of medical lab director.

“I’m really excited and happy about being named for this academic honor,” Shaw said.
Legislative assignments
MCC has been assigned two weeks – Feb. 2-5 and April 5-8 - during which MCCers will visit solons in Jackson to express concerns for the upcoming Mississippi Legislature session.

Early next week, Al Mitchell, chair of the Student Success division, will ask for volunteers to travel to the Capitol and speak with lawmakers during that first week of February.

Wish to volunteer or want more details? Contact Mitchell at extension 802.

Driven
The new mileage reimbursement rate for private owned and school vehicles is 54 cents per mile, said Stephanie Holifield, accounting manager. “Please make this change on your travel vouchers, travel request and in-district mileage forms. If you have any questions, please feel free to give me a call at extension 391,” she said.

Granted
Now’s the time to apply for a faculty course grant sponsored by the MCC Foundation. The deadline is Jan. 29. For details, contact Sally Morgan, administrative assistant, at extension 704.

Naming names
It’s not too early to think about outstanding students and the accolades they receive on Awards Night. Patrick Lovette, campus life coordinator, noted the deadline to nominate a student will be Friday, Feb. 12. For more information about changes in the Awards Night format, contact Lovette at extension 340.

More than fair
MCC Resource Fair will be Tuesday, Feb. 2, from 8:30 a.m. to noon in Ivy Hall and will feature the agencies including Lauderdale County Department of Human Services, Multi-County Community Services, Weems Mental Health Center, Care Lodge, Boys and Girls Club and others.

Campus Policing
Faculty and staff are reminded to follow proper parking protocol while on campus – including having a parking decal on the vehicle you drive on campus.

Also, there are two new smoking areas on campus – one between Smith and Ivy Halls and the other near Riley Health Center.

Diversity Committee plans
The College’s Diversity Committee invites MCCers to attend the program, Echoes in Our Soul: MCC Honors Its First African-American Employees, Friday, Feb. 5, at 9:30 a.m. in McCain Theater. A reception will follow.

Members of the committee include Dr. Angie Carraway, Sandy Clark, Adrian Cross, Terry Cullum, Daniel Ethridge and Vinnie Gutierrez.

In addition, the Diversity Committee will again host its book club discussion this semester. Meetings are set for one Friday at 11 a.m. in February, March and April. For more information, contact Carraway at extension 660.

Racing for a cure
MCC’s Relay for Life team will host a garage sale fundraiser on Saturday, Feb. 6, from 5 a.m. to noon in the Dulaney Center.

Donations will be taken from Wednesday, Jan. 20, through Friday, Feb. 5.

To learn more about this event or other college-related Relay for Life activities, contact Adrian Cross at extension 553.

Employee photo directory
Copies of the Employee Directory have been placed in the campus mailboxes. If you didn’t get a directory in your mailbox, stop by the Production Center and pick up a copy.

It’s tax time
MCC employees’ 2015 W2s will be available for pick up from the Business Office now through Wednesday, Jan. 27, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

“You must be prepared to show your current MCC ID or driver’s license. You will not be able to pick up a W2 for anyone else,” said Amy Brand, associate vice president for finance. Forms not picked up by 4 p.m. on Wednesday will be mailed.

Questions? Contact Brand at extension 455 or email abrand@meridiancc.edu

Giving back
Campus Life will join with United Blood Services for a blood drive on Tuesday and Wednesday, Jan. 26 and 27, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. To find out more, contact Patrick Lovette, campus life coordinator, at extension 340 or email jlovette@meridiancc.edu
**MCC Weekly Schedule • 25-JAN-16 to 31-JAN-16**

**Monday**
- BSU - Arise 0630 AM - 0830 AM, Chapel SANCTUARY
- Tribal Scholarship Program 0930 AM - 0330 PM, Ivy Hall 121
- Outback Recruiting 1000 AM - 0100 PM, Ivy Hall MALL
- Lifetime Quest Bingo 0200 PM - 0400 PM, Webb Hall DULANEY
- MCC vs. Pearl River (Women & Men) 0530 PM - 0930 PM, Ivy Hall GYM

**Tuesday**
- Campus Life 0830 AM - 1200 PM, Ivy Hall MALL
- MCC’s Blood Drive 0900 AM - 0300 PM, Ivy Hall Parking Lot
- Entrance Counseling Session 1200 PM - 0200 PM, Todd Library CASTEEL
- Weems LifeCare Training 0100 PM - 0500 PM, Magnolia Hall
- NASA Astronomy Lecture 0600 PM - 0830 PM, Ivy Hall THE

**Wednesday**
- BSU Noon Day 1030 AM - 0130 PM, Chapel AR
- Campus Life 0100 PM - 0300 PM, Todd Library CASTEEL
- MASEP 0600 PM - 0930 PM, Health Center 221
- MASEP 0600 PM - 0930 PM, Health Center 240

**Thursday**
- EMDC Board Meeting 0800 AM - 0200 PM, Webb Hall DULANEY
- Weems Training 0800 AM - 0500 PM, Magnolia Hall
- HOSA Central District Conference 0800 AM - 0200 PM, Webb Hall ROSENB
- HOSA Central District Conference 0800 AM - 0200 PM, Web Hall 129
- HOSA Central District Conference 0800 AM - 0200 PM, Webb Hall GSR
- HOSA Central District Conference 0800 AM - 0200 PM, Webb Hall THE
- Tennis Parents’ Day 1100 AM - 0200 PM, Chapel AR

**CE Classes**

**Monday**
- Fitness - Water Aerobics 0900 AM - 1000 AM Fitness Center
- Fitness - Pilates 1230 PM - 0130 PM Fitness Center
- Fitness - Swimming 0100 PM - 0200 PM Fitness Center
- Fitness - YOGA 0130 PM - 0230 PM Fitness Center
- Fitness - Cond-Cardi-Zumba 0330 PM - 0430 PM Fitness Center
- LCSD Adult Detention Off Trng 0400 PM - 0900 PM Webb Hall 129
- IBEST Sys Maint A+ 900 Series 0500 PM - 0900 PM Annex D 401
- Fitness - Kickboxing 0530 PM - 0630 PM Fitness Center
- Fitness - Strength Toning 0730 PM - 0830 PM Fitness Center

**Tuesday**
- Fitness - Water Aerobics 0900 AM - 1000 AM Fitness Center
- Fitness - Body Sculpting 1230 PM - 0130 PM Fitness Center
- Weems Lifecare Trng 0100 PM - 0500 PM Magnolia Hall
- Fitness - Power Hour 0230 PM - 0330 PM Fitness Center
- Fitness - Power Yoga 0330 PM - 0430 PM Fitness Center
- Ballet 0400 PM - 0700 PM Fitness Center
- IBEST Network Security 0500 PM - 0900 PM Annex D 401
- Ballet - POINTE 0600 PM - 0700 PM Fitness Center
- Basic Electricity I 0600 PM - 0900 PM Workforce Development Center 108
- CE Boy Scout Woodworking 0600 PM - 0900 PM Reed Hall
- MPD MPSA Part Time Acad 0600 PM - 1000 PM Webb Hall GSR
- Manufacturing Skills 0600 PM - 0900 PM Annex E 101
- Prin. Air Cond I Part 1 0600 PM - 0900 PM Reed Hall 100
- Welding 0900 PM - 1000 PM Off Campus
- Fitness - Strength Toning 0330 PM - 0730 PM Fitness Center

**Friday**
- Basic Welding 0700 AM - 1200 PM Structural Steel Welding Bldg
- Fitness - Lifeguard Training 0900 AM - 1000 AM Fitness Center
- Fitness - Scuba 0900 AM - 1100 AM Fitness Center
- ACT Prep - JAN 0900 AM - 0400 PM Webb Hall 129
- ACT - Half Day Jan or April 0100 PM - 0400 PM Webb Hall