

PRESIDENTS' COMMUNITY PARTNER AWARD



Birch Hill Terrace **Retirement Community** *Manchester Community College*

Since 2008, Birch Hill Terrace (formerly Hillcrest) has actively partnered with Manchester Community College in a variety of collaborative initiatives. Birch Hill hosts student service-learners and interns, while MCC has hosted Birch Hill seniors for tea. What started out as a total unknown to us all has grown into a wonderful program and relationship.. The impact on both students and seniors is more than meaningful. It is life-changing!

Exercise Science students who provided annual 8-week fitness classes returned for internships to help residents safely work-out at Birch Hill fitness facilities. Not only does this experience build their skills and confidence but they are able to experience the emotions that come along with teaching this population which is something that cannot be learned from a textbook. MCC students also helped Birch Hill seniors with spring cleaning and craft events. One semester, MCC Spanish professor, Maria Mann, took Birch Hill explorers on a virtual cultural and language trip.

This spring, based on the relationships established with Birch Hill, MCC students have invited Sister Melinda Hill to serve as the keynote speaker for the MCC Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society induction ceremony.

We know Sr. Melinda will speak to the longevity, mutual collaboration, and affection that characterize this truly genuine partnership between Birch Hill and the College. Professor Dorene Bourque, Director of the MCC Exercise Science program, expresses it best: "I wish all MCC faculties could provide a service-learning experience with the extraordinary impact we value at Birch Hill!"

