Kolap Samel: Hi, everyone. My name is Kolap Samel, and I'm one of the general librarians here. I've been here for a month, and it's quite an exciting time for me, and I have been very welcomed. The students are awesome here, and I look forward to serving everyone.

Monica Chavez: My name is Monica Chavez. I'm the career and technical education librarian. I worked here as an adjunct a few years ago, so I'm very happy to be back at Mt. SAC.

Christina Barsi: Hi, I'm Christina Barsi.

Sun Ezzell: And I'm Sun Ezzell, and you're listening to the Magic Mountie podcast.

Christina Barsi: Our mission is to find ways to keep your ear to the ground, so to speak, by bringing to you the activities and events you may not have time to attend, the resources on campus you might want to know more about, the interesting things your colleagues are creating, and the many ways we can continue to better help and guide our students.

Sun Ezzell: We bring to you the voices of Mt. SAC, from the classroom to completion ...

Speaker 5: I know I'm going to achieve my goals, and I know that people here are going to help me to do it.

Speaker 6: She is a sociology major, and she's transferring to Cal Poly Pomona.

Speaker 6: Psychology major ... English major ...

Sun Ezzell: From transforming part-time into full-time...

Speaker 7: I really liked the time that he spent with [Julie 00:01:08] about how to write a CV and a cover letter.

Christina Barsi: Or just finding time to soak in the campus.

Speaker 8: To think of the natural environment around us as a library.

Christina Barsi: We want to keep you informed and connected to all things Mt. SAC. But most importantly, we want to keep you connected with each other.

Christina Barsi: I'm Christina Barsi, Mt. SAC alumni and producer of this podcast.

Sun Ezzell: And I'm Sun Ezzell, learning assistance faculty, and Professional Learning Academy coordinator.

Christina Barsi: And this is the Magic Mountie podcast.

Emily Versace: This is Emily Versace with the Magic Mountie podcast. What is your favorite kind of book? Do you like mysteries, fantasy adventures, young adult fiction, biographies, historical fiction, nonfiction?

Emily Versace: Well, for me, one of my favorite book series was Harry Potter. I just loved, loved, loved Harry Potter. So much so in fact, that I got a quote from the Chamber of Secrets, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, and I put it up in my office. That quote says, it's by Ron Weasley, "When in doubt, go to the library." And why do I have that on my wall? Because not only is a library a source for all those amazing, wonderful, bountiful books, and types of books that I just mentioned, but I think that's good advice for our students, because the library at Mt. SAC just has so many great resources, and workshops, and all kinds of great things for our students to take advantage of so they can be successful.

Emily Versace: And today I'm very happy to be with several of our wonderful librarians, and they are going to update all of you on what is new and cool at the library.

Jared Burton: Hello, my name is Jared Burton.

Kolap Samel: And my name is Kolap Samel.

Jared Burton: And we are going to tell you about Mt. SAC Library Welcome Week, which is beginning on September 16th, so I believe that's week three, and it will continue for four days straight.

Kolap Samel: Till the 19th. On the 16th we'll be doing button making and coloring, and on the 17th we'll be doing music and zines, which Jared is going to coordinate, and on the 18th we'll do buttons and muraling, and on the 19th we'll be doing vision boarding.

Jared Burton: Yeah. And one thing I want to mention, too, is that this has been happening for a few years now, and was spearheaded by our outreach and equity librarian, Eva Rios-Alvarado. She's not here today to talk about it, but she's organizing this, so she's a good person to reach out to if you're interested.

Jared Burton: Each day we'll have those themes that Kolap mentioned, but we will also have materials to be available for students to know about the library, tours that are happening, the workshops, and all the things we do in the library. It's just a fun way for students to kind of see us outside in the front of the library, because that's where it will be, and we have the canopies up, and we have tables, and people are doing the crafting stuff, and we'll have music, and they can participate. It's really to kind of give students that impression that the library is for everybody. It's not just a quiet place where only really like the smart kids go. It's actually a place where everybody's welcome, and we can have a little fun.

Kolap Samel: Yeah. I did want to add that when we stress on the word welcome, like Jared said, that we want the library to be a welcoming space for the students, and we wanted to go against a typical stereotype of the library. We're having color, we're having music, we're doing muraling, and we're doing a vision board, because just because we were told the library is a quiet place, it's very stressful, or a place where stressed out students study and such, and we want to smash that stereotype in a sense. We want to add the color, the zest, the loudness, the sound of music.

Jared Burton: And food.

Kolap Samel: And food, and hopefully make the library more inviting to the students just because it is the students' library. We want them to understand that.

Emily Versace: So this sounds like a really great opportunity for faculty to partner with all of you here in the library, and promote this kind of event in their classes. Who should they contact? Just the library in general, or ...

Jared Burton: Well, in this case, a good person to reach out to would be Eva Rios-Alvarado. We have on the library's homepage, if you go there, you can find her contact information.

Emily Versace: So let your students know, food and fun at Mt. SAC's Library Welcome Week.

Emily Versace: There's so many great things happening at the library, and one that I would love to give a little time for us to discuss are our amazing library workshops.

Emily Versace: Go ahead and introduce yourself, and tell us all about the amazing workshops.

Pauline Swartz: Hello, I'm Pauline Swartz. The library offers a range of workshops that are scheduled throughout different times of the day, every day of the week. One thing you might want to know is that the research department studied our workshops, and they studied our data, a good set of data from 2013 to 2017, and they've found that in all demographic groups across the board, students who completed a library workshop had at least a 20% higher core success rate than students in the same classes who didn't complete a workshop, so that's a pretty significant amount.

Pauline Swartz: What was really interesting to see is that some demographic groups were impacted even more. So, for example, the report said that African-American males had a 27% higher core success rate than their counterparts in the same classes who didn't take the workshop. We want to to send your students to our workshops, so that they might have a better chance of passing their classes. They'll learn all about how to do research, how to find books and articles, how to evaluate sources, how to navigate the landscape of information to find great sources to support their arguments in their papers.

Emily Versace: So Pauline, while I'm talking to you, I'm wondering if there is anything you would like to share with the campus community about the GPS grant you got. Could you tell me what this grant is all about and what made you decide you wanted to apply?

Pauline Swartz: Sure. So part of the report that the research department did is they did some demographic studies, and they figured out who was coming to our workshops, and they found that female students were coming more than male students, and they found that minority male students were coming less than any other group, so we had to figure out a way to reach those students. And so what we did was we wrote this grant to help support ... trying to figure out ways to create a sustainable program to offer more opportunities to reach more students. So what we're doing is we're partnering with, in particular the English department, to have them book workshops for their classes to hold during their class times.

Pauline Swartz: So we're starting with English to figure out a good program, and eventually the idea is once we figure out a good and sustainable way to do this, we can branch out to other disciplines to create a specialized workshop, and we can scaffold the instruction that way. The other area that we would work with are the CTE areas to figure out specialized workshops for them, so we might end up creating workshops for the health sciences, research in the health sciences, or research in paralegal, or something like that. But that's down the road. So the first part is to work with English, to come up with good strategies to figure out a way to structure a program.

Pauline Swartz: The other thing we're doing, one of the specific projects that we're working on, is developing workshops on how to help students learn how to read scholarly material. So two projects I'm collaborating with the READ department on, one of them is about making videos. So we're making really short videos on how to read scholarly material, and we're inviting faculty from the different disciplines to record a video. The first part they'll be talking a little bit about the role scholarly reading has in their profession, and how they use it in their field, and then the second part is they're going to demonstrate a close reading of how to read that type of material. So these are going to be really short videos that'll be plugged into Canvas, and we can show them in our workshops.

Pauline Swartz: The other thing that we're working on is developing a face-to-face workshop on how to read a scholarly journal article, because that's pretty intimidating for a lot of people, not just students. So we're going to try and equip them with strategies on how to do that.

Emily Versace: Yeah, and I can really see how learning how to read a scholarly article could help students from nearly every discipline. Students in the sciences, students in the humanities, social sciences, CTE. So that sounds really, really amazing.

Emily Versace: I actually have been sitting in on some of the library workshops, and looking at some of the things you've been doing, and I want to say, it is really fun. You guys are incorporating some really fun titles, themes to help make this more interesting for students. Can you share some of the ways you guys have been incorporating fun into your workshops and programs here, and what you're experimenting with as far as teaching?

Jared Burton: Well, if you haven't already heard the library offers something called the zombie outbreak, and what that is is sort of, it's in between a library tour where the student has the experience of interacting with the librarian, but sort of passively where they can ask questions, but they learn about the space and feel more comfortable, and then a workshop where in a workshop you're in a classroom, you're doing fun stuff, but it's very much like a classroom experience for over an hour. So the zombie outbreak is right in the middle there. That's the idea is that it's a sort of segue between those two things, and it's fun, and it's role-playing, and it's just like an escape room, if you've ever been on one of those or if you've read about them.

Jared Burton: So the students walk in at the beginning, and they're approached by a librarian who's already play acting as somebody who's telling them that all the other students on campus are zombies, and they must find the antidote by solving various information literacy puzzles throughout the library in order to save everybody, or really save themselves. And so it's been really fun. Some of the librarians who've done it have expressed that the students really like it. We definitely want to get more students doing it. The larger the group, the better. But it will still work for one or two, and it's really fun. It's something the students, they get really engaged, and they don't even realize till the end how much work and intellectual work they've done. I think it makes them feel a lot more confident in the library and ready to just jump into workshops and all that kind of stuff.

Emily Versace: Yeah, that sounds like really fun and exciting. That's totally what I was talking about. I also have another librarian here, Monika. Is there anything you'd like to share about the fun, engaging ways you guys reach out to students?

Monica Chavez: So I only started here about a month ago full time, but already we've done something called library bingo. I use the curriculum that was created by my colleagues, but it was, essentially, it was a bingo game where we would draw cards, and then we would show ... or we would tell the students about what material was on the card. And I have to say it was one of the most engaging experiences that I've ever had as an instructor.

Monica Chavez: One thing that we talk a lot about in libraries is library anxiety, and it was really fun to just kind of be a quote unquote normal person rather than people seeing me as this authority figure. I know I'm very intimidating, but it was good, because I think the students, they ended up having really good feedback. They talked about how much fun it was, and hopefully by seeing us in that classroom, when they do think about needing help, they'll think, okay, I saw Monica, or I saw Pauline, or I saw Jared, or I saw Kolap, and feel comfortable enough getting information from us.

Monica Chavez: But hey Pauline, do you want to talk about what you've been doing with STEP this summer?

Pauline Swartz: Sure. So we actually developed library bingo for STEP, because we were given a half an hour, and we're like, what are we going to do in half an hour? And we were not in a computer classroom. We were like, oh, we have to go all the way up the hill to building 12. So, this is what I'm thinking. "It's going to be hot. I have to walk up the hill." So we're like, how do we make this fun and informative? So Jared, and Eva, and Esteban, and I got together, and were like, "What are we going to do?" Because we were going to teach them, and Eva had ... it all started with a handout that Eva had that looked like a grid. It looked kind of like a tic-tac-toe chart, or a table, or whatever. And so we're like, "We need to make this a game." And so I'm like, "Okay, not tic-tac-toe, but how about bingo? Right." And so just the logistics were very difficult, and at one point Esteban's like, "Pauline, bingo's not going to happen. It's just not going to happen." But we kept thinking about it, and they figured it out. I mean, really, I was just kind of like, "Bingo, bingo, bingo." But I had no idea. So really it was Jared, and Esteban, and Eva who figured out how to make it happen.

Pauline Swartz: And so this was done specifically for STEP, or at least it was developed for STEP, and we can reuse it all the time. I think it's been very successful. And so when I was doing it just a few days ago with Emily's class, your STEP class, and I think they had a lot of fun. What do you think?

Emily Versace: They were really engaged. They loved it. They each had a paper that had like a bingo page with each of the topics, and Pauline actually let them pick the card. There was a stack of laminated cards with library information on them, and they would pull one out, and it would say something like library workshops and everyone would mark off library workshops on their paper, and then Pauline would talk about library workshops.

Emily Versace: So every time she did a class, she presented it in a different order, and one of the things the students really loved, too, was that there were prizes. So when they achieved bingo, they were very excited to win a fun prize. But I really love the way the library has been embracing innovative teaching styles to make the workshops really fun and engaging, because we know from research that when students are having fun, it really helps them retain the information, and we also know that when students feel relaxed and at home, they learn better, too. And so I just love the way the library has been so proactive in making the library a place that students associate with being comfortable, belonging, there's people who want to help them, who are excited that they're there, and I feel like the library faculty and staff have really been working together to make this a welcoming, wonderful, fun place for students to learn, and utilize research, and all kinds of technology. So go librarians, woo woo.

Pauline Swartz: And I think it's working because we've seen a lot of the STEP students in the library and the Bridge students, too. Just yesterday I was helping a student, and he said, "You came to my class." And he waited in line for me, and he's like, "You came to my class, and I feel comfortable talking to you, because I saw you there in my class." And all he needed was help with a copier, but he didn't want to ask anybody else. He waited for me. I'm like, "Oh that's really nice." And then he said, "What you showed me in that class really helped me with my paper, and I got a good grade." I'm like, "Oh that's so cool." Because we usually don't get to hear that, the outcome of our work, so that was really nice to hear.

Emily Versace: And just thinking of this past summer, I feel like I heard you guys did a special collaboration with Bridge, as well. Could you share what you guys did?

Pauline Swartz: So that was a LIT 3 class with Cynthia Flores as the professor. It's a multicultural literature class. Basically, what we did is the students had to look up different terms related to what they were learning in their LIT class, like acculturation, assimilation, words like that. And so what we did was we divided the class into four kind of big groups, and within those groups they were divided up into teams, and each group had a term that they had to look up using reliable information from our library resources, and they had to come up with their own original definition of the term, and state how it relates back to what they're learning in class. So that was the information literacy component.

Pauline Swartz: To make it kind of fun, not that that's not fun, of course, but to make it even more fun, we made it into a bracket tournament kind of based like off of March Madness. Sweet 16 was the bracket that we were working with. So the students were broken up into teams, and they had to create a visual representation of their term as a meme. And so the memes were put up on our brackets, and the bracket is currently located in my office window. It's this gigantic chart. You can take a look at it. So the memes were put on the brackets, and then the students voted on which mean would go onto the next round. And so a champion was declared on Tuesday, I think it was.

Emily Versace: And talking about these collaborations that you guys did with Bridge did with STEP, it's sounding like you're not just a welcoming place for students, but maybe a welcoming place for faculty and other disciplines who might want to collaborate with you. Would you say that's the case?

Pauline Swartz: Absolutely. We're all about collaboration.

Emily Versace: All right. So if you've got ideas and you want librarians to work with you and your students, come on by.

Emily Versace: One of the great things about the library is their amazing equipment and technology that they make available for our campus. Monika, I feel like you are working on a big project with OER. Could you just briefly let us know what that is, and why we should be excited about it?

Monica Chavez: So OER is Open Educational Resources, and essentially it's free open educational materials, namely textbooks, that faculty can use in their classes. One of the great things about OER is that the movement behind OER is really dedicated to access and equity, and that's one of the great reasons that the library is really promoting the use of OER, is because it allows students to have access to the materials on the first day, and by having access on the first day, it creates, essentially, a more equitable environment for our students.

Emily Versace: I heard that there's some things going on, as well, with something called KIC.

Kolap Samel: What we're real excited for for this year is the KIC scanner, which stands for the Knowledge Imaging Center. It's beyond a regular scanner, just because first of all it's free, free for the students to scan. So you're wanting to scan what? Scan documents, images, and most importantly what we see students use it for, textbooks. So it's free to scan textbook that they could scan to their email, to their flash drive, and view for later on. So for students who cannot afford textbook, they're welcome to come to the library, check out a library reserve textbook, and scan it to their heart's content. I do know that for visually impaired students, it will scan the document and convert it to an audio file, so we do understand about the concept of access. It could scan into a PDF format and various other formats.

Kolap Samel: I believe what Pauline loves to really talk about is the the edit feature of the scanner where you can insert emojis or clip arts. I've actually seen a student scan a photo of herself, maybe, and add features of emoji, like you would see in a phone, so that's one of the more interesting fact about the scanner. But once again, it's a free service for the students, and we hope that will increase student access to the information, ultimately to better ensure their success at Mount SAC.

Christina Barsi: Thank you for listening to the Magic Mountie podcast. Remember to subscribe on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or wherever you like to get your podcasts, so you can listen in the car, in your office, or however you like to listen. Once you subscribe, we'd love to hear what you think by leaving us a review. And don't forget to share your favorite episodes.