

Keeping in Touch



MCC Early College students

2017 REPORT
TO THE COMMUNITY



Montcalm Community College

“Partnerships have positioned the college very well to continue its work in economic and community development.”

— Robert C. Ferrentino



From the President

A popular refrain we all hear around this time of year is “where did the year go? It was just spring, and now we’re prepping for ice and snow.” Chalk it up to “time flies when you’re having fun,” or to simply getting older; all I know is that when you’re working on exciting projects, time does have a tendency to move very quickly.

Such was the case at Montcalm Community College during the past year. Whether the focus was on our increased abilities to serve our manufacturing partners, continuing student success initiatives, or on strategies promoting both economic and talent development, 2017 was a year of innovation, collaboration and growth.

This year saw the introduction of the latest iteration of the college’s strategic plan. Four major institutional goals were established in the plan, encompassing the following critical areas:

1. Focusing on student success
2. Strengthening our future and capacity building
3. Expanding and strengthening community collaborations
4. Advancing the culture of institutional quality

Significant progress was made in 2017 on strategies revolving around the assessment of student learning, curriculum development, the nurturing of key collaborative efforts

with business and industry partners and an ongoing focus on continuous quality improvement in everything we do.

Economic and community development remains a clear area of focus. Partnerships with the Montcalm Alliance, West Michigan Works! and The Right Place have positioned the college very well to continue its work in this important arena. The college’s commitment to developing a more skilled workforce remains strong. Today, more than 275 students are enrolled in advanced technology and skilled trades programs, with 200 of them attending classes under the sponsorship of their employers. A majority of these students are following a customized apprenticeship program, ultimately leading to “journey person” status and its associated career and earnings growth.

In addition to the initiatives to enhance student learning, there were numerous happenings to celebrate throughout the year.

The completion of the Lena Meijer Heartland Trail Connector was accomplished over the summer. The trail extension links MCC’s Sidney campus to the popular Fred Meijer Heartland Trail. In conjunction with this, the completion of both the Robert E. Marston Pavilion and a greenhouse provide increased hands-on learning and recreational opportunities for our students, staff and community members.

Speaking of students, they continue to make us proud.

More than 370 credentials were awarded to graduates in the 2016-17 academic year, and many students excelled in local, regional and national competitions.

Performing arts continued to take center stage with wonderful performances by our Philharmonic Orchestra and Alumni & Friends Choir, and the college experienced continued growth in its Early College and dual enrollment programs.

In addition, 10 students and five college faculty and staff learned about the culture and history of India during a three-week study abroad exchange trip in May in partnership with the M.S. Panwar College of Technology and Communications of Solon in northern India.

These, and numerous other achievements, point to the fact that our students are engaged in their learning and they are succeeding in their efforts.

Students and community members should expect their community college to offer innovative teaching, excellent student support services and a learning environment where the attainment of students’ goals is the number one priority. I’m proud to say Montcalm Community College delivers on all three of these expectations. We invite you to join us on our Sidney and Greenville campuses and at our learning centers in Howard City and Ionia to see for yourself how students “Advance by Degree” at MCC.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Robert C. Ferrentino". The signature is fluid and cursive.

MCC President
Robert C. Ferrentino

Careers for Kids is a new initiative that takes high-tech manufacturing on the road.



Developing the area's workforce

Based on workplace demand and industry projections, a continued focus of the college is to create additional high-value programming tied to progressive advancements in a variety of career areas. Along with new programs, MCC is committed to fulfilling customized training needs for its business and industry partners. As industry demands evolution of a more skilled workforce, the college continues to position itself to be proactive in responding to those needs.

Curriculum and equipment enhancements to support programming in industrial technology, industrial automation maintenance, technical drafting and design, digital arts, nursing and business are just a few examples of how MCC is working to prepare students for careers in high-demand, high-wage fields.

In collaboration with K-12 partners, and business, industry and health organizations, MCC is working to establish a countywide, coordinated focus on career exploration, advising and development, where all students will receive needed support as they investigate and develop their unique interests.

Careers for Kids is a new initiative that aims to take high-tech manufacturing on the road. An enclosed utility trailer, set up with various pieces of advanced manufacturing equipment that allows students to use MCC's virtual reality welding trainers to gain hands-on experience welding; see the college's 3D printer work; receive candy from the college's Baxter and Sawyer robots; and see KUKA, FANUC and ABB robots in action; is being taken to area elementary, middle and high schools, as well as a variety of community events. During these visits, students learn about potential career opportunities while experiencing first-hand how the equipment functions.

Building a world class learning environment

MCC celebrated its 50th Commencement on May 5. Since its establishment in 1965, more than 100,000 learners have passed through the college's doors.

The college maintains accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) through its participation in the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP), and hosted a site visit with HLC reviewers this year. Under AQIP, the faculty, staff and administration at MCC focus on continuous quality improvement each day.

With changes in curriculum and delivery of course material, passing grades in all general education courses have increased since 2010.

For the fourth year, MCC was honored as a Michigan Veteran Affairs Agency (MVAA) certified Veteran-Friendly School at the gold level for its commitment to supporting the needs of student veterans and dependents as they work to achieve their educational goals.

MCC also offers a variety of co-curricular activities and clubs that support learning.

- ◀ An enclosed utility trailer housing various pieces of advanced manufacturing equipment provides K-12 students hands-on opportunities.
- ▶ MCC celebrated its 50th annual commencement ceremony May 5 on the college's Sidney campus.

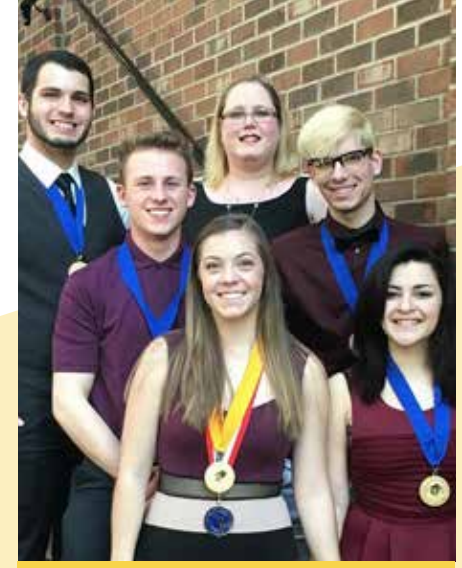




MCC students received numerous awards and honors during 2017

Highlights of achievements

- Four MCC students earned high honors during the Business Professionals of America (BPA) State Leadership Conference in February and qualified to compete at the organization's national conference. They included Jessica Bannister, of Sand Lake; Collin Blatt, of Lakeview; Justin Brackenbury, of Stanton; and Heidi Simon, of Ionia.
- Six MCC students were honored in May for their essays in the college's "Dreamin's Free" contest. The winning essays were written by Heather Stead, of Ithaca, and Bayley Wolfe, of Cedar Springs. The runners up were Eujin Wolf, of Vestaburg, and Rocky Pabon, of Greenville. Honorable mentions were awarded to Dezirae Lincoln, of Greenville, and Hannah Giles, of Vestaburg. Fifty-three entries were received in the contest, which was established in 2011 to encourage students to express and achieve their dreams.



Highlights from the 2016-17 academic year

- In March, two members of MCC's Alpha Tau Alpha (ATA) Chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) Honor Society were honored at the All-Michigan Academic Awards Program. Heather Simon, of Ionia, and Connor Wyckoff, of Gowen, were selected to represent MCC as its 2017 All-Michigan Scholars for their academic achievements, community service involvement and demonstrated qualities of leadership.
- MCC's ATA-PTK honor society was named one of the Top 100 chapters internationally out of 1,300 chapters worldwide during the organization's Annual Convention in April. To be named a Top 100 Chapter in PTK, chapters must complete an Honors in Action Project and College Project, and write and submit reports that chronicle them.
- 2017 All-Michigan Scholars and members of the MCC Alpha Tau Alpha Chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Heather Simon, of Ionia, and Connor Wyckoff, of Gowen.
- 287 students earned 177 associate degrees, 178 certificates, and 18 job training certificates of completion
- 2,129 students enrolled in credit classes
- The average age of MCC's credit students was 26
- MCC's average class size was 16 students
- 64 percent of the credit students were female
- 935 people enrolled in career and personal development noncredit classes
- 474 students were dual enrolled (high school students taking MCC classes for both high school and college credit) and completed 2,576 credit hours
- MCC offered 58 credit classes online and 98 hybrid (partially online and partially in the classroom) courses
- 49 veterans enrolled in credit classes

- ▲ MCC's Alpha Tau Alpha (ATA) Chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society members earned several honors at the organization's 2017 annual convention. Pictured, in front from left, are Heather Simon of Ionia and Hannah Rauch of Stanton; in the middle from left, are Conner Wyckoff of Gowen and Justin Brockschmidt of Sand Lake; in back from left, are Eric Campbell of Fenwick and ATA Co-advisor Jennifer VanderSlik.



**Thirty-two
Early College students
are expected to graduate
in May 2018, while 29 are
in the 2019 class and 34 are
in the 2020 class.**

◀ Siblings Kailee and Tyler McGarvey, of Vestaburg, opted to enroll in Early College at Montcalm Community College so they could earn a college degree as part of their high school learning experience.

Partnerships expand opportunities

MCC works collaboratively with area high schools and a variety of colleges and universities to offer more educational options to students.

The college continues to grow its partnerships to enhance its focus on developing talent, working collaboratively to provide vital support to families and individuals through increased access to Early College, dual enrollment and career mentoring to chart a course for each learner from preschool through the community college level.

Early College continues to grow

During MCC's May commencement ceremony, the second class of 21 Early College at Montcalm Community College students graduated. All of the students earned a certificate or degree, 12 are pursuing additional education, seven are working at full-time jobs in their respective fields and two joined the military. Thirty-two Early College students are expected to graduate in May 2018, while 29 are in the 2019 class and 34 are in the 2020 class.

Early College is a partnership between MCC and the Montcalm Area Intermediate School District, which allows high school students to complete up to two years of college or an associate degree or certificate as part of their high school learning experience. Students enter the program in their junior year. Growth in the last year includes the addition of two new partners, including Ionia Public Schools and Tri County Area Schools. Other

participating schools include Belding, Carson City-Crystal, Central Montcalm, Greenville, Lakeview, Montabella and Vestaburg.

Six Early College students were invited to join the college's honor society, having earned at least 12 college credits while maintaining a 3.5 GPA or higher. For their academic achievements, 28 percent of all Early College students earned a place on the college's honor roll during the 2016-17 fall semester and 51 percent during the spring semester, by earning a 3.3 or higher GPA. In addition, Early College students from all school districts scored higher on the SAT test – a standardized test widely used for college admissions – than students in any school district in Montcalm or Ionia counties, and they also exceeded the state average.

Dual enrollment helps high school students earn college credits

Dual enrollment allows high school students to take college courses while still in high school. During the 2016-17 academic year, 474 high school students from Alma, Belding, Carson City Alternative Education, Carson City-Crystal, Cedar Springs, Central Montcalm, Fellowship Baptist Academy, Fulton, Great Lakes Cyber Academy, Greenville, Ionia Flat River Academy, Lakeview, Lowell, Montabella, Saranac, Success Virtual, Tri County, Vestaburg and home schools participated in dual enrollment classes. Combined, they completed 2,576 credit hours of college coursework.

Transfer agreements offer students more opportunities

Transfer agreements with several colleges and universities allow students to take up to three years of coursework at MCC before transferring to another institution, and these agreements pave the way for the seamless transfer of credits. Students can utilize these agreements to transfer from MCC to institutions such as Aquinas College, Central Michigan University, Cleary University, Cornerstone University, Davenport University, Ferris State University, Michigan State University, Northwood University, Saginaw Valley State University, Walsh College, Western Governors University, Western Michigan University and others to pursue studies in fields such as accounting, agriculture, animal science, business, health care, information technology, landscape management, management, manufacturing technology, marketing and nursing.

Partnership expands agricultural programming, facilities

Two years ago, MCC partnered with the Michigan State University (MSU) Institute of Agricultural Technology (IAT) to bring its Agricultural Operations, Fruit and Vegetable Crop Management and Landscape Management two-year programs to MCC.

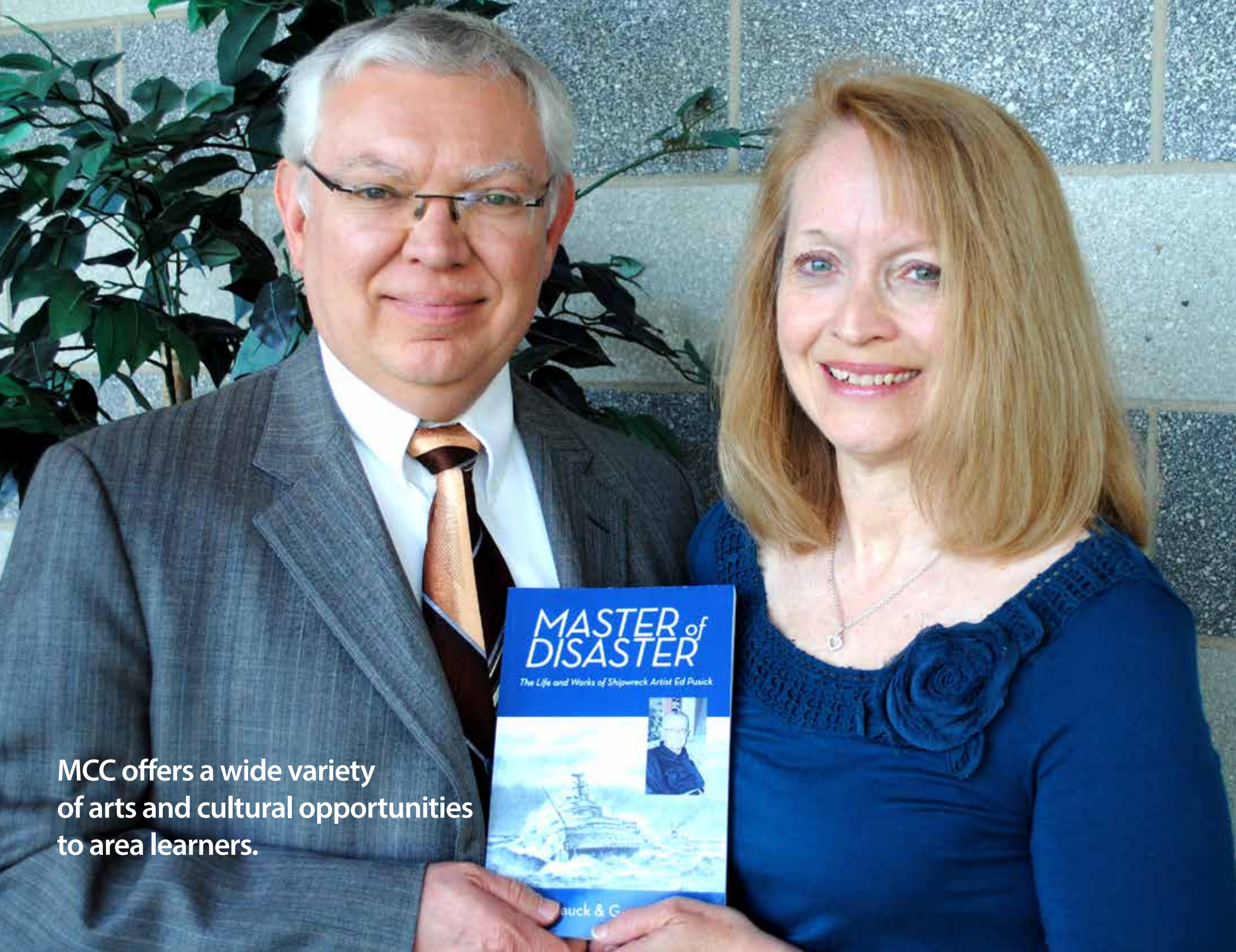
Since then, MCC's agricultural programming has grown to include the addition of a greenhouse on the college's Sidney campus. The fully automated greenhouse opened in the spring and is being used to enhance curriculum in the fields of agricultural and other sciences.



▲ **Agriculture Program Coordinator Merry Kim Meyers works with students who are interested in pursuing education in the field of agriculture through a unique partnership between MCC and the Michigan State University Institute of Agricultural Technology.**

In the fall, a FarmBot Genesis robotic farming machine was installed atop and around a small garden. It can perform almost all gardening processes prior to harvesting, including planting seeds, monitoring conditions, mechanical weed control and watering. It enhances the college's curriculum by demonstrating precision and innovation in vegetable crop production.

For the second year, MCC and MSU's IAT have co-sponsored the Montcalm County 4-H Fair, featuring programs and activities throughout the event aimed at connecting with youths who are interested in agriculture. This year, MCC also presented a scholarship to the winner of the Showmanship Sweepstakes and recognized all other showmanship winners for their achievements.



MCC offers a wide variety of arts and cultural opportunities to area learners.

Lifelong learning

MCC has long been committed to serving learners of all ages.

The college established its Lifelong Learners in 1998 to provide academic experiences to adults age 18 and older, regardless of their formal education. The college also offers a variety of recreation, arts and cultural opportunities, summer camps for youths, and partners with local organizations to bring special events to the area for all learners.

Adults age 60 and older, who live in the college's district, may take MCC credit courses tuition free. Senior citizens are not required to pay college services fees for one course per semester.

In addition, MCC offers hundreds of noncredit course offerings each semester to enhance career development and personal enrichment.



◀ MCC Dean of Arts & Sciences Gary Hauck gave an informational presentation to the college's Lifelong Learners group in June featuring his book, "Master of Disaster, The Life and Works of Shipwreck Artist Ed Pusick," which he co-authored with his wife, Lois.

Delivering programs

MCC delivers quality programs and services in a way that makes them accessible and affordable to all.

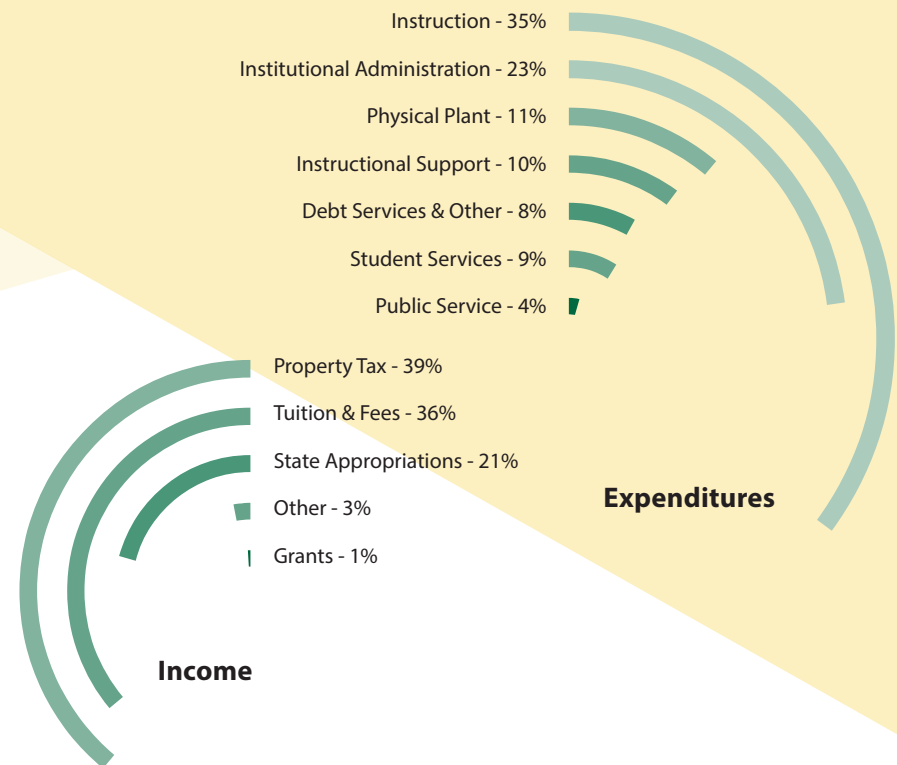
With average semester enrollments of about 1,700 students, MCC combines state-of-the-art facilities and technology with its highly qualified instructors, small class sizes and affordable tuition to meet the educational needs of its community. MCC offers more than 60 associate degree, certificate and job-training programs; courses for transfer to bachelor's degree programs; online courses; and articulations with other colleges that offer students a seamless transfer; and career and personal development noncredit courses.

In addition to its campuses in Sidney and Greenville, the college offers courses at its classrooms in the Panhandle Area Center in Howard City and at Ionia Public Schools' Administration Building.

2010-2017 MCC FALL SEMESTER CREDIT HEADCOUNT



MCC's 2016-2017 budget





Montcalm Heritage Village came to life with reenactments during the 31st annual Heritage Festival in August.

Collaborations enhance cultural offerings

At MCC, sustainable access to the arts, cultural offerings, recreation and enhanced educational opportunities are integral parts of our personal connections with people in the communities we serve.

Through a generous endowment, the MCCF Stanley and Blanche Ash Community College Enhancement Fund provides funding to support a variety of endeavors.

MCC's cultural opportunities include an annual Chicago trip; an annual trip to Stratford, Ontario, Canada, to view a Shakespeare production; musical presentations by local, regional and national artists; theater productions; art exhibits; Montcalm Heritage Festival; lectures and more.

Cultural events highlights

- MCC presented its 2017 Ash Lectureship Series. Presentations included "Latin America Today" by Jason Beaubian, National Public Radio global health and development correspondent; "Women in the World Today" by Dr. Annie Dandavati, director of the Philadelphia Center, Hope

College's East Coast site; and "The Syrian Refugee Crisis" by Dr. Rihab Sawah, Syrian immigrant and professor of physics at St. Louis Community College–Florissant Valley in Ferguson, Mo.

- Dr. Timothy McGrew, professor and chairman of the Department of Philosophy at Western Michigan University, presented "The Case for Theism" in March.
- As part of the college's "Caring for Community" service learning project, an activity day was held in April on MCC's Sidney campus which focused on enhancing services for those in our community with a special component aimed at providing essential items for low income and homeless populations in the area.
- MCC's Alumni & Friends Choir and Philharmonic Orchestra performed two concerts during the year.

- Montcalm Heritage Village celebrated its 31st anniversary during Heritage Festival, held each year during the first weekend in August. Since its establishment, Montcalm Heritage Village has grown to include 28 buildings on the college's Sidney campus, and it features hundreds of artifacts from local areas depicting life in Michigan at the turn of the 20th century.
- MCC partnered with the public libraries of Montcalm County to offer One Book One County Montcalm programming, which encourages area residents to read the same book at the same time and share it with their family and friends. The program was established in 2005.

◀ MCC student Nate Tenhave portrays the original owner and proprietor of the Sidney General Store, Lem Fish, during the 31st annual Heritage Festival.

▶ In July, storyteller, historian and author Dr. Willie W. Payne presented "The Underground Railroad Michigan Connection" during the kickoff of the 2017 One Book One County Montcalm reading program, which featured the book "Homegoing" by Yaa Gyasi.





MCC students, faculty and staff were immersed in India's culture during their study abroad trip in May.

Collaborations enhance cultural offerings - continued

Study abroad and international connections

In today's global society, students increasingly need international experience to round out their education.

Through a unique partnership, 15 MCC students, faculty and staff participated in a study abroad exchange trip May 6 through 29 with the M.S. Panwar College of Technology and Communications of Solon in northern India. During the exchange, they were immersed in the country's rich culture as they discovered the beautiful region of the Himalayas, studied the Hindi language and experienced the colorful history and customs of this exotic land. Participants included students William Allington, Mackenzie Bell, Brandon Brown-Ford, Cynthia Carraba, Naomi Colburn, Luis Garza III, Grace Price, Heather Simon, Heidi Simon, Mindy Thompson, MCC Business Instructor Bill Bishop and his wife, Rhonda Bishop, MCC President Bob Ferrentino, MCC Dean of Arts & Sciences Gary Hauck and MCC Vice President for Academic Affairs Rob Spohr.

During the summer, MCC hosted Dr. Brijender Panwar, who founded the M.S. Panwar Community and Technical College in Solon, India, 10 years ago in honor of his father. While here, he taught as an adjunct instructor in sociology and communications.

Recreational offerings and service learning

MCC provides a variety of recreational opportunities. Its fitness center, gymnasium, climbing wall, NCAA-sized pool, Kenneth J. Lehman Nature Trails, tennis courts and sand volleyball court are open to community members, students and staff.

A project to connect MCC's Sidney campus to the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail was completed in August. It was the culmination of more than three years of collaborative work between MCC and the MCC Foundation with the Meijer Foundation, the Michigan Department of Transportation, the Montcalm Area Intermediate School District, the Road Commission for Montcalm County and the Friends of the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail.

The Lena Meijer Heartland Trail Connector provides walking and bicycle access to the Montcalm Area Career Center (MACC), the Community Dental Clinic, Montcalm

Heritage Village, the Kenneth J. Lehman Nature Trails, the Stanton State Game Area, an outdoor classroom, an ongoing prairie restoration project and other recreational offerings on the college's Sidney campus. In addition, MACC Construction Trades program students partnered with the college to build the Robert E. Marston pavilion on MCC's Sidney campus along the trail and adjacent to the college's greenhouse. The structure is intended to provide a gathering place for a variety of uses.

In September, the college's Nature Trails committee hosted its third annual Bramble Ramble, a 5K trail run and walk on the Kenneth J. Lehman Nature Trails. In addition, the group welcomes community volunteers several times annually to help maintain more than four miles of trails that span more than 100 acres of land.

Through service learning projects, MCC's students, instructors and staff support community activities such as local food pantries, clothing collections, health clinics, blood drives and efforts to combat homelessness.

- ◀ MCC students and staff with members of the St. John's Church, the National Church of India, in Solon.
- ▶ The Lena Meijer Heartland Trail Connector, completed in August, connects the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail to MCC's Sidney campus.



Collaboration with regional partners was the key to many successes in the past year.



From the Foundation

Developing talent for Montcalm tomorrow

Strengthening our workforce is key to strengthening our region. Increasingly, today's jobs require workers with at least some post-secondary education, yet only 51 percent of our high school graduates enroll in college and only 24 percent of adults in our region have earned a college degree.

Montcalm Community College and its two boards, the Foundation Board and the Board of Trustees, are working with regional partners to address this challenge. During 2016 and 2017, MCC hosted people from education, business, human services and community development organizations in a series of conversations to explore the issue. Each community conversation explored and expanded on

- providing more consistent career exploration activities beginning with youngsters and continuing through high school and college;
- increasing access to a range of educational opportunities including workforce training, dual enrollment, Early College, and new and revised college-level programs;
- systematizing the preschool through college experience for students; and
- increasing employability skills.

The newly established Creating Futures Consortium was a direct result of the community-wide conversations. Headed by Dr. Roger Coles, housed in the MCC Foundation Farmhouse and funded by the MCC Foundation Ash Community College Enhancement Fund, the goal of the consortium is to serve as a conduit to bring regional partners together to meet these needs.

For more information about the consortium, contact Coles at Roger.Coles@montcalm.edu or 989-328-1260, or MCCF Executive Director Terry Smith at terrys@montcalm.edu or 989-328-1284.

Making a difference with grants

The Foundation's Making a Difference grant program provides funds to MCC employees for projects that enhance teaching and learning and the cultural, social and economic components of the college's mission. During the 2016-17 academic year, Making a Difference grants supported a FarmBot Genesis robotic farming machine, musical performances and a workshop during the 30th annual Heritage Festival, True Colors facilitator training, and accreditation activities for MCC's nursing program. More than \$240,000 has funded more than 135 projects since the grant program was established in 1991.

Making a difference with scholarships

More than 40 endowed scholarship funds provide awards to support students as they pursue their degrees and certificates at MCC. Seven new scholarship funds were established in the past year: the Ruth Paddock Bedore Transfer Award, Kevin Carbonelli Memorial Scholarship, George & Janet Ravell Family Scholarship, Kenric Jones DeLong Service Scholarship, Erika A. Walters Scholarship, Karen Hansen Nursing Scholarship and Michael J. Seaman Memorial Scholarship. MCC and the Foundation provided more than 300 awards totaling more \$230,000 during the 2016-17 academic year.

Ash Community College Enhancement Fund

The Foundation's Ash Community College Enhancement Fund, established via a bequest from Stanley and Blanche Ash, provided more than \$139,000 in 2016-17 to support Early College at MCC, the advanced technology trailer supporting the Careers for Kids initiative, curriculum software, security cameras, the study abroad experience in India, the Lena Meijer Heartland Trail Connector, and grant-writing services. The fund also supported numerous cultural activities at MCC, including the three Ash lectures exploring Latin America, women's roles and Syria.

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◀ **Community members met during three Community Conversations this year to address the need to strengthen the area's workforce.**



The MCC Foundation awarded more than 300 scholarships for the 2017-18 academic year.

▲ From left, MCC President Robert Ferrentino, MCCF Donald C. Burns Presidential Scholarship recipient Rogena Brinks, MCC Foundation President Jane Anderson Beach and MCC Emeritus President Donald Burns.

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Montcalm Community College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (hlcommission.org), a regional accreditation agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

Thank you to the many people who support MCC through the MCC Foundation.