

from the president

Dr. Stacy H. Young

It's hard to believe I'm wrapping up my first year at Montcalm Community College, and while some of the year's activities may not have been traditional, they have been memorable.

Just a couple of months after I joined MCC's team, we were faced with moving our classes online due to the coronavirus global pandemic. Since then, it has been a whirlwind of trying to stay on top of the latest data, and make decisions for the good of our students, our community members and the college as a whole, all while continuing to deliver the high-quality education our students and community deserve.

It's a time where I can honestly say that "size is our advantage."

We are fortunate to have an environment where we are able to react quickly in an ever-changing landscape. In March, we were faced with moving our classes from in-person to online in a matter of a few short days. As coronavirus picked up momentum, our faculty had been preparing for the shift, and we were successful in changing our delivery format. Our staff also worked to continue to provide student support services in the virtual environment, while everyone adapted to working remotely.

While navigating the pandemic, economic and community development continued to be a key area of focus. Through a variety of

industry partnerships, MCC's commitment to developing a more highly skilled workforce remains strong. We continue to collaborate with business and industry leaders, area K-12 educators, community members and others to further economic and workforce development throughout our area.

We have seen growth in both our dual enrollment and Early College programs this year. Both of these programs help high schoolers get ahead on their college education. And to make it even better, participation in these programs is free for eligible high schoolers!

With the coronavirus shut-down, we became creative in celebrating student successes this year. Unfortunately, we were unable to host our annual commencement ceremony in May. Instead, we celebrated on July 11 with a drive-thru celebration on our Sidney campus.

To help students persevere in the face of the pandemic, the MCC Foundation awarded an additional \$63,723 in student aid for those attending summer classes. With this generous support, we were able to help 271 students attend college classes over the summer.

Another amazing accomplishment is that we created an enrollment task force this year, comprised of individuals from every area of the college who are focusing on aligning



and integrating our recruiting efforts. Our team has been innovative and creative in its work, and we are poised for a strong future.

Futures for Frontliners provides another opportunity for students to get ahead on their college education. This statewide program offers tuition-free college for people who worked on the frontlines during the pandemic this spring. This is just one more way in which we are working to support our mission.

Speaking of the college's mission, our Strategic Planning Committee has worked tirelessly this year to gather input from a variety of college influencers and revise our Mission, Vision and Values statements, as well as develop a strategic plan to guide the college for the next three years. We plan to roll this out in January 2021.

When I came to Montcalm Community College in January, I felt like I was "coming home." Thank you for your continued support of the college, and for inspiring and empowering our community of learners. ■