



2021 Community Report

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MCC President Stacy H. Young, Ph.D., at left, shows Nursing Instructor Kim Holt blueprints for the renovation of the Kenneth J. Smith Instructional Building.



cultivatingcommunity

'Transforming Lives, Empowering People'

MCC's upcoming campaign aims at building capacity for the future

By Shelly Springborn

Enriching the community college experience for students is a fundamental component of advancing higher education. Montcalm Community College's upcoming "Transforming Lives, Empowering People" campaign is designed to allocate \$7 million to developing programs to help our students gain access and be successful during their journey at MCC and beyond.

According to the most recent report from the National Center for Education Statistics, 41 percent of all undergraduate students in the United States are enrolled at community colleges. Inspired by our community of learners, more than 125,000 learners have passed through our doors since the college was established in 1965, making MCC a critical component of our community's long-term success.

The focus of MCC's 2021-2024 strategic plan is to continue this legacy by increasing enrollment, improving student success and access, enhancing our facilities and placing a renewed emphasis on engaging our community.

MCC's upcoming "Transforming Lives, Empowering People" campaign includes six major initiatives that aim to enhance and expand student access, our campus and positively impact our community.

The primary initiative is renovation of the Kenneth J. Smith Instructional Building. The Smith Building contains nearly half of the classroom space on MCC's Sidney campus and is the center for instruction in our nursing program, as well as courses in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). The center will include specialized classrooms, labs and student learning spaces.

The additional initiatives focus on enhancing STEM program development and promoting student success through new targeted scholarships for first generation students, mid-career students and program-specific scholarships, as well as the MCC Express Conductor Program to provide additional one-on-one support for students.

Results of a recent feasibility study conducted by an independent consultant on behalf of MCC showed overwhelming support for the campaign initiatives.

Ninety-six percent of respondents are favorable toward MCC, noting that the college has a long-standing history of serving as a responsive community partner. An overwhelming majority – 95 percent of the interviewees – believe there is critical need for creating a STEM teaching and learning center to provide hands-on training for



Renovation of the Kenneth J. Smith Instructional Building will include creation of specialized classrooms, labs and student learning spaces.



An artist rendering shows the new outside façade of the Kenneth J. Smith Instructional Building on MCC's Sidney campus.

students. Additionally, support for the creation of targeted scholarships ranged from 91 to 95 percent depending on the particular scholarship.

MCC President Stacy H. Young, Ph.D., said there are many factors contributing to kicking off a project of this magnitude at this time.

"We have aging facilities," Dr. Young said. "From a facilities management perspective, we are at a critical time where we need to make some major repairs and upgrades to some of our structures, the Smith Building being high on the priority list.

"Also, critical to most of today's expanding and emerging careers is competency in one or more of the STEM programs, curricula or courses," Dr. Young said. "MCC's commitment to preparing students for lifelong success requires that we provide more specialized STEM teaching and learning opportunities."

MCC creates value in a variety of ways. A recent study to determine the economic impact MCC has in its service area showed the college plays a key role in helping students increase their employability and achieve their individual potential, thus influencing both the lives of its students and the regional economy.

MCC adds economic value to the community as an employer and also as a large-scale buyer of goods and services. According to the survey, MCC added \$53.7 million in income to the MCC service area economy during 2019-2020, supporting 949 regional jobs. This means that one out of every 88 jobs in the MCC service area is supported by the activities of MCC and its students.

In addition, the average MCC associate-degree graduate from fiscal year 2019-2020 will see earnings that are \$8,600 higher per year than a person with a high school diploma or equivalent working in Michigan. Over a working lifetime, the benefits of the associate degree over a high school diploma will amount to about \$369,800 in higher earnings per graduate. The present value of the cumulative higher future earnings that MCC's fiscal 2019-2020 students will receive over their working careers is \$43.5 million.

"Educating the students in our service area helps grow the economy of our entire community and supports our mission of transforming lives through quality education," Dr. Young said. ■