

MCC students are “a major league talent”



By Shanika P. Carter

Dr. Lance Miller, adjunct instructor at Montcalm Community College (MCC), jokes about being the oldest person on staff, as well as the one with the least amount of hair.

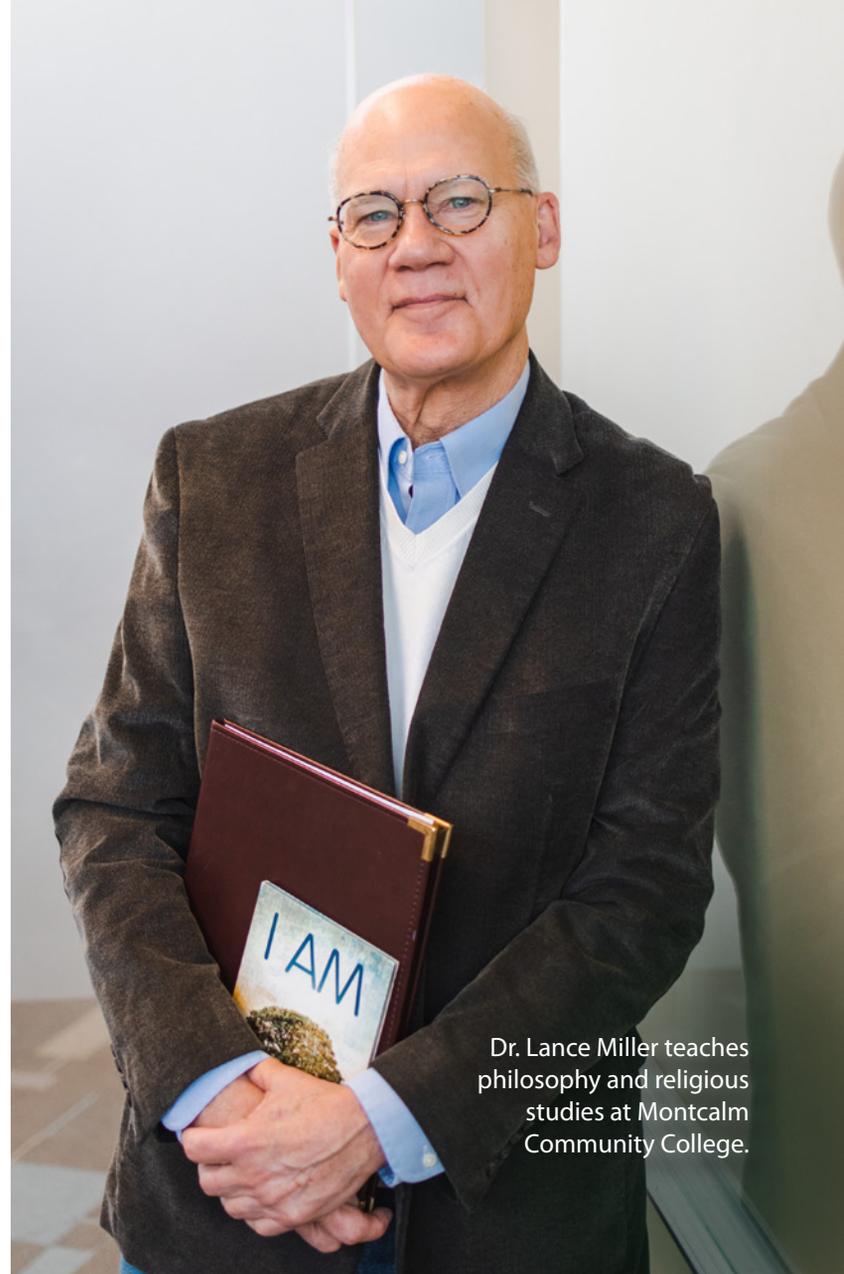
“I’ve been here at MCC since 1997 and have had students in classes that inform me that their mom or dad were in my classes years ago,” Dr. Miller said.

Beginning his teaching career at the college level in 1987, Dr. Miller has worked in both full and part-time roles for several universities and colleges, which has further elevated his experience and wisdom. With MCC, he feels his time as an adjunct instructor has been one that gives him the opportunity to concentrate on providing a quality teaching experience to students who are just as academically prepared as students at bigger colleges.

Miller said that when he is asked about the differences between teaching students at other colleges versus students in a rural environment such as MCC, he responds to these questions by informing them of the students’ thirst to learn and their open-mindedness.

“There is an attitude out there in some high-brow academic circles that a small rural community college, such as MCC, consists of students who are learning how to learn on a rudimentary level,” Dr. Miller explained. “However, it is my experience comparing some reputable universities with MCC that students here have as much aptitude as anywhere else.”

A teacher of philosophy and religious studies, Dr. Miller’s courses embody a deep personal meaning and relate to life issues. His students bring their real-world experiences to



Dr. Lance Miller teaches philosophy and religious studies at Montcalm Community College.

the classroom, which end up making the courses personal for them too. Dr. Miller said his classes are delivered in a manner where he witnesses, and participates in, each individual feeding and learning from one another in the process.

Referring to MCC students as “major league talent,” he added, “I’ve learned as much from students as they have from me.”

Dr. Miller is fulfilled in what he does as an educator, with a teaching philosophy that applies to life.

“Following the inner guide is important – that is, finding what is most meaningful, what enhances life for oneself and others,” he said. “One needs to go deep to find that, though, and sometimes it’s the pain that takes us there.” ■