

Barb Brauher finds support with MCC Express

Barb Brauher, of Vestaburg, is getting extra support from the MCC Express Conductor Program as she works on her associate degree in Medical Office Administration at Montcalm Community College.

“During my first semester, I didn’t know that 15 credits would be so much work, but with the help of my completion coach, Lacey, and help from The Writing Center, I was able to find my center and focus better. I was overwhelmed with a ton of stress, at first, and Lacey had me focus on ‘one thing’ that took my mind from the mountain of stress to that ‘one thing.’ That key point of purposefully creating tunnel vision to a priority helped bring in everything else. I focused on writing all my assignments down and their due dates in a planner. I printed out the goals of my asynchronous courses to have a list to check off work I completed. Having little reminders and lists to keep everything organized helped greatly. I learned how to better manage my time and forgive myself for mistakes. I’m not a perfectionist, but I do like to put forth my best effort,” Brauher said.

“I know if I ever have challenges that arise, I can ask my completion coach for help and guidance. That means so much to me because I don’t have supportive parents. My children cheer me on, and by showing them I can achieve my dreams, I hope to encourage them to never give up,” she added.

Brauher said she waited 25 years to attend college, beginning in fall 2021, and was paired with a conductor through the MCC Express program. Conductors aim at helping students feel comfortable throughout their college journey so they get the most out of their college experience. In addition, Brauher qualified for the Michigan Reconnect program, which is for Michigan residents aged 25 or older who have obtained a high school diploma



or equivalent but have not earned a college credential. It helps pay the costs of tuition or training for eligible adults who want to pursue an associate degree or skills certificate.

“I never applied to college as a young adult because it was very intimidating, and my parents didn’t help me get well educated about how college worked, especially community college. I waited 25 years, so my kids would be old enough to maintain their own health and wellness,” she said.

“My husband, Scott, is my biggest supporter. He always said, ‘Whatever you want to do, I’ll always support your decisions,’” Brauher said. “I have made questionable decisions in the past, but the choice to attend college to earn a degree is one of the best choices I have made.”

Brauher said she is also grateful for the college’s support.

“Thank you so much for being my coach and being there for me. Without you, I would still be scrambling to find my footing. It was hard to watch my older daughter go through Early College and all the tears and stress she had. I didn’t know how to help. Now, my son will begin in the fall. I know how to better help him navigate his way through college. It’s a big learning curve coming back, and I’m glad I did,” she said. ■

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