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Community College *Fall 2023*
Montcalm

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on the cover

Tanner Carr, of Lakeview, is pursuing a degree in Agricultural Operations at Montcalm Community College.

inside front cover

The newly renovated Kenneth J. Smith Instructional Building on MCC's Sidney campus features multiple areas for students to meet and collaborate.

to read this publication online

go to montcalm.edu/publications



Dear Friends of Montcalm Community College,

It certainly has been an interesting year for the college. For the first time in its almost 60 years of existence, we have found ourselves with an Interim President. Fortunately, due to professional development and formal educational training, we are confident that the planning and preparations that have occurred over the last several years have paid off and the college's leadership continues to move the vision, mission and goals of the institution forward as we continue to improve student success.

We hope that you have been able to follow along throughout the last year as our major gifts campaign was able to highlight student success stories which truly embody the campaign "*Transforming Lives, Empowering People.*" This not only occurs on an emotional level but on an economic level as well. A recent economic impact study revealed that the net impact of MCC's former students who are currently employed in our regional workforce amounted to \$40.6 million in added income. We are pleased that our efforts contribute to the increased economics of our region.

It is also important to note that there has never been a better time to attend college than right now. With the Michigan Reconnect program and the Michigan Achievement Scholarship, not to mention the more than \$400,000 in scholarships that the MCC Foundation has available, going to college now is more affordable than ever.

In addition to regular programming, the college offers high school students dual-enrolled classes as well as early college opportunities. Both programs are featured in this magazine.

Athletics are also making a comeback at MCC after more than 40 years. In addition to offering students the opportunity to earn a degree, they can improve their athletic skills at the college level, learn about and participate in community service, and teamwork. Athletics is more than just playing a sport; it offers the opportunity for students to develop leadership skills and qualities that will last them a lifetime.

We are pleased to announce that MCC has been awarded a \$2 million ADN to BSN grant to support our Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) students, and we have signed an agreement that will allow them to seamlessly complete their Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) with Saginaw Valley State University (SVSU). SVSU offers low-cost tuition and uses the same learning management system as MCC as well as the same brand of manikins for simulation purposes.

In the near future, you will see that MCC will be seeking renewal of a long-standing millage. This is just a renewal and does not increase the tax rate already being paid by our taxpayers. The levy was originally approved by voters in 1996 and has since been renewed twice. We hope you see the value the college offers to the community by educating our citizens who will help our region to prosper



and grow. In addition to traditional education courses, the college offers many recreational opportunities as well as life-skill enhancing courses on a noncredit basis. In everything the college does, good stewardship of funding is critical to our mission.

Above all, please remember that Montcalm Community College is YOUR college. We are here to serve you, our community.

If you have not been to campus lately, or are considering becoming a student, we would enjoy having you visit so we can show you around. Please contact us by calling **989-328-2111** or by emailing **outreach@montcalm.edu**. ■

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Connie Stewart". The script is fluid and cursive.

Connie Stewart, MBA, SPHR

Interim President
Montcalm Community College

'I grew up at MCC'

Interim President Connie Stewart had her start at the college she now leads

By Shelly Springborn

When Connie Stewart first came to Montcalm Community College, she was a young mother with two children who realized she needed an education to advance in her career. Now, she's the college's top leader.

Stewart, MBA, SPHR, was appointed interim president on July 1, for a one-year term.

"MCC changed my life," Stewart said. "I remember being scared to death the first time I walked into a classroom. I was working full-time and had two small children.

"It took me five years to earn my degree, but I did it," she said. "When I graduated, I wasn't the same person walking across the stage that I was when I first walked into a classroom. I grew up at MCC."

Stewart is a lifelong resident of Montcalm County with 36 years' experience working in accounting, human resources and high-level executive positions. She joined MCC in 2011 as its Director of Human Resources after working at Hitachi Magnetics Corporation for 16 years and eight years at Morbark Industries.

Stewart previously served as the college's Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. In that role, she led five divisions of the college: business office, facilities

(recreation and athletics), financial aid, human resources and information technology services, which she continues as interim president. She has been involved in small renovations at the college as well as the recent renovation of the Kenneth J. Smith Building on the college's Sidney campus.

In addition, she has been involved in strategic planning, facilities master planning, and previously served as MCC's Title IX and FOIA Coordinator, co-chair of the college's Emergency Management Leadership Team and as assistant treasurer on the college's Board of Trustees as well as the MCC Foundation board.

Stewart is an MCC alumna, earning her Associate Degree in Business Administration in 1993. She also earned her bachelor's degree in Organizational Development from Spring Arbor University in 2002 and her MBA from Western Governors University in 2013. She maintains an SPHR, (Senior Professional in Human Resources) certificate.

"I am proof that MCC lives up to its mission of transforming lives through quality education every day," Stewart said.

"I got my start in higher education at MCC and now I'm finishing my career here and helping others achieve their dreams." ■





Montcalm Community College and Saginaw Valley State University representatives recently signed an articulation agreement. Pictured, from left, are SVSU Assistant Director of the Academic Advisement Center Rachel Winter, MCC Dean of Health and Human Services Tracy Zamarron, MCC Interim President Connie Stewart, MCC Vice President for Academic Affairs Steve Fosgard, SVSU Dean of the College of Health & Human Services Marcia Mastracci Ditmyer and SVSU RN to BSN Coordinator and Advisor Megan Rule.

By Shelly Springborn

MCC pact with SVSU supports advanced training for nursing

Montcalm Community College (MCC) and Saginaw Valley State University (SVSU) recently signed an agreement that gives nursing students more education options.

An articulation agreement between the two institutions allows students from MCC to transfer the credits they earned from their Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) toward a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree at SVSU.

The partnership is part of a \$2 million grant that MCC has been awarded by the state of Michigan to train more individuals to enter the nursing profession.

“The whole purpose is to grow the nursing field,” said MCC Vice President for Academic Affairs Steve Fosgard. “Our partnership with Saginaw Valley will expand our nursing program including our capabilities and technology.”

The pathway allows MCC students to complete their ADN program at MCC and receive articulation credits toward their BSN. Students in the BSN program study nursing theory and concepts through courses such as community health, case management, leadership, evidence-based practice, and clinical reasoning that are not offered in an ADN program. These courses provide students with the skills and knowledge to handle complex nursing tasks and responsibilities. The partnership between MCC and SVSU will increase access and affordability of BSN attainment for the ADN graduates at MCC, using a seamless transitional approach from the community college to the 4-year university.

MCC Interim President Connie Stewart said partnering with SVSU is a natural extension of the learning environment students experience at MCC.

“We have a similar rural setting,” she said.

“In addition to the agreement providing a seamless transfer of credits between the institutions, our students will also have a seamless transition with learning resources. Both MCC and SVSU use the same student learning system and we have the same simulated manikins and other technology in our classrooms and labs. It’s nice because our students will be working in systems and with equipment that is already familiar to them,” she added.

“We enter this new partnership with MCC with great enthusiasm,” said Marcia Mastracci Ditmyer, Dean of SVSU’s College of Health and Human Services. “MCC offers an excellent associate degree nursing education and plays a vital role in preparing nurses to serve healthcare providers in the region. Through this partnership, we can continue to improve safe, high-quality health care services for future generations.”

The grant runs now through fall 2026 and will fund nursing student scholarships, equipment and systems upgrades, student materials and supplies, student advising, marketing efforts, faculty training and more.

“One of the keys to this program is expanding the number of seats and the number of people going into nursing and health care professions in general,” said MCC Dean of Health and Human Services Tracy Zamarron. “With the recent renovation of the Kenneth J. Smith Building, we have permanently

increased the number of seats in our nursing program from 32 to 40 each semester.

“This will have a big impact on our ability to prepare students to enter the nursing profession,” she added.

Fosgard said MCC is exploring ways in which the grant may also help MCC expand programming to better meet the needs of the health care industry.

“We’re finding out post-COVID that there is an increasing demand for respiratory therapists and physical therapists and there is potential for cross-training nurses in these areas through our university partnership,” he said. “Through part of the funds in this grant, we are able to add those labs and educate our students to get high-paying jobs.”

MCC is committed to working with industry leaders to best serve their needs and has in place both a Health and Human Services Advisory Committee and a Nursing Advisory Committee that will serve in an advisory capacity to the ADN-to-BSN grant and programming.

“We are excited to be partnering with SVSU to grow our nursing workforce. This is a great opportunity for students and for the growth of our health care industry,” Stewart said. ■

For more information:

Visit montcalm.edu/nursing

Call **989-328-1271**

Email healthcareers@montcalm.edu



Alumnus is 'grateful' for his MCC experience

Ethan Hetherington shares
his passion for education
at Vestaburg Middle School

Early College at Montcalm Community College alumnus Ethan Hetherington achieved his dream of becoming a teacher and is in his first year as a full-time social studies teacher at Vestaburg Middle School.

By Renae Gould

Ever since he was young, Ethan Hetherington has wanted to be a teacher. He used to play school with his sister, always looked up to his teachers and wanted to give students the same positive experiences he had in school.

Hetherington, 22, of Vestaburg, started his path toward a degree in education in Montcalm Community College's Early College Program. In the program, students earn a high school diploma and up to 60 college credits, tuition free. He attended MCC from 2017 to 2020.

"It sounded like a great program to save money on education and get to have some new opportunities," Hetherington said.

Hetherington graduated from MCC in May 2020 with an Associate of Science & Arts and transferred to Central Michigan University that August. He said his experiences at MCC helped prepare him to be successful at CMU.

"I had a better idea of how to be prepared for college, as well as how to navigate the sometimes stressful environment college can be," Hetherington said. "I also learned more about how to ask for help when I needed it."

He liked the small environment, having more one-on-one time with instructors, and how MCC always felt like a community.

"I am so grateful for my time at MCC," Hetherington said. "If you would like to have a small-town, community-oriented environment with professors who really care about you, I will always highly recommend Montcalm Community College!"

In May 2023, he graduated from CMU with a bachelor's degree in education where he majored in social studies and minored in history. He is now back in the town where he started his education. He began teaching in Vestaburg as a long-term substitute in August 2021. In August 2023, he became a full-time social studies teacher at Vestaburg Middle School.

"MCC gave me so many great examples about how to help be there for students and build relationships in addition to teaching them content," he said. "My professors at MCC were top-notch."

“MCC gave me so many great examples about how to help be there for students and build relationships in addition to teaching them content.”

–Ethan Hetherington

“Jamie Hansen Hopkins and Andrea Martin were some huge influences solidifying why I wanted to be a teacher,” Hetherington said. “They were both excellent mentors who helped me further develop my passion for teaching and history. I would also like to acknowledge Dean Gage and Shannon Tripp from the Early College Program who rooted for me since day one. They were wonderful people to learn from and were huge influences in my success and decision to teach.”

Hetherington currently lives with his parents and is saving money to buy his own home. He enjoys spending time with friends, attending events, activities, and sports at the school, playing piano, and reading.

Shannon Tripp, associate superintendent of the CTE/Early College program, said the goal of the program is to teach students the professional skills they need to be successful, as well as ensure they graduate with an associate degree, 60 transferable credits, or two certificates. More than 300 students have enrolled in Early College at Montcalm Community College since it was established in 2013.

“Our original goal when starting the early college program was to raise the education level of students who would then hopefully come back and work in Montcalm County,” Tripp said. “As we raise the education level of the students in the county, it improves the lives of everyone in the county.” ■



At Early College, students benefit from a personalized learning environment that fosters the development of critical thinking skills within an innovative curriculum that promotes excellence in the fields of math, English, social studies and science. Students spend their entire school day at Montcalm Community College for grades 11-13.

Early College accepts up to 45 students per year, and students must apply for admission to the program during their sophomore year of high school the spring prior to enrolling. Participants earn a high school diploma and up to 60 college credits, tuition free.

Each participating school is allotted seats based on its total school headcount. Participating schools include Belding, Carson City-Crystal, Central Montcalm, Greenville, Lakeview, Montabella, Saranac, Tri County and Vestaburg.

Shannon Tripp, associate superintendent of the CTE/Early College program, visits all participating high schools each spring and offers multiple informational meetings so students and their families can learn more about the program. Whether your school district participates in the program or not, you may be eligible to become an Early College student.

Applications are available at the parent night informational meetings, at the counseling office at participating high schools, or by stopping by MCC. ■

For more information:

Visit montcalm.edu/early-college

Call 616-225-5706

Email earlycollege@montcalm.edu

'A rewarding career'

MCC Nursing Instructor Nicole Kalinowski brings 20 years of experience to the classroom

By Shanika P. Carter

"I want to foster an environment where the students trust me to guide them in their knowledge and skill development in becoming successful maternity and pediatric nurses," shared Nicole Kalinowski, RN who joined Montcalm Community College in August as a full-time Nursing and Allied Health instructor.

With 14 years of RN experience, Kalinowski holds the knowledge and hands-on expertise to successfully guide students in the field of nursing. She knows firsthand the challenges of being a nursing student in a rigorous program, stating that it took discipline, determination and dedication to make it through.

A graduate of Rockford Public Schools, Kalinowski earned her Associate of Science degree from Grand Rapids Community College, and both her Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Nursing degrees from Grand Valley State University (GVSU). Finally, she earned her Master of Science in Nursing from Michigan State University with an advanced practice degree as a Clinical Nurse Specialist with an education emphasis.

Fortunate that she chose this path of nursing, Kalinowski has been able to work in various roles in the field, including serving as a bedside RN for adults and pediatrics, working in emergency medicine, and working as a nursing supervisor, an advanced practice RN and clinical nurse specialist, and now a nursing instructor.

"As an instructor, you put a lot of pressure on yourself to make sure your students are going to be successful and safe nurses."

—Nicole Kalinowski

Besides teaching at MCC, Kalinowski has taught at Grand Rapids Community College, leading nursing students in clinicals. She knew, even growing up, that she always wanted to be a teacher, but instruction has also had its challenges.

"As an instructor, you put a lot of pressure on yourself to make sure your students are going to be successful and safe nurses," Kalinowski said. "You want your students to learn and do well, but you can only bring them so far, and then the rest is up to them."

An active mother residing in Cedar Springs, Kalinowski has worked for Corewell Health (formerly Spectrum Health) for more than 20 years, having served in leadership and currently serving as a clinical nurse specialist in a pediatric emergency department. As a college student, Kalinowski had the realization that the best nurses were the ones who were the best teachers for their patients.

Even with the challenges that come with working in various roles in the field of health care and nursing, Kalinowski said it has all been worth it because nursing is a rewarding career.

"You are always learning, you are challenged daily, and you literally make a significant impact on the lives of the patients you care for and the community you serve. You'll never feel a greater sense of appreciation than you do as a nurse." ■

Exercising with friends at MCC

is part of Kathy VanSickler's routine

By Renae Gould

What started as a way to exercise and bond with friends turned into a routine for Kathy VanSickler, 77, of Vestaburg.

Now she's a "regular" at Montcalm Community College's Recreation & Fitness Center, on the college's Sidney campus.

"I come for the pool," she said. "I enjoy swimming. I started back in the early 2000s, coming with co-workers from school."

VanSickler would come in the evenings after work, but since she retired in 2004 from Vestaburg Public Schools, she now comes to MCC at 7 a.m., five days a week. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, she swims her short one-mile route, going the horizontal length of the pool. That's followed up by water aerobics. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, she swims her long one-mile route, going the vertical length of the pool. Again, she follows that with water aerobics.

"I like to get everything in by 9 a.m., head home, and enjoy the rest of my day," she said.

At the time she started using MCC's pool, she came because it was an inexpensive way to stay in shape.

"I like water," VanSickler said. "I grew up on the water."

Originally from Howell, VanSickler attended Central Michigan University and graduated with a bachelor of science in education. She met her husband of 55 years at CMU. After she graduated, she started teaching in Vestaburg. Her husband went into the Army for the Vietnam War, and when he got back, he was a student teacher at Vestaburg.

She ended her 28-year career at Vestaburg teaching fifth grade. Over the years, she taught second grade, a second-third-grade combination, adults, and helped in the preschool.

"I took some time off to raise my kids," VanSickler said. "Then, I went back to teaching at Vestaburg."

She and her husband have one son and two daughters. Her son lives in North Carolina, one daughter lives in a northwest suburb of Chicago, Ill., and the other daughter lives in Vestaburg. Both of her daughters are in education, with one

teaching at Montabella Community Schools. She has 10 grandchildren and one great grandchild.

In her years using MCC's pool, she became friends with Lifeguard Sandy Warner.

"She made it fun," VanSickler said. "She went on some road trips with me to visit my kids."

She continues to come to MCC because the pool is clean, the temperature is consistent, and the price is right. She is part of the SilverSneakers® program, through which seniors aged 65 or older may enroll for fitness center memberships at no cost through select Medicare plans.

"I like the people who work there and the people who come," she said. "We have formed quite a friendship."

MCC Auxiliary Services Coordinator Jessa Michaels said VanSickler is a joy to be around.

"Kathy is consistently here five days a week," Micheals said.

"She swims a mile in the pool every morning before water aerobics. That's 36 laps! She then does water aerobics and when the teacher isn't here, she takes it upon herself to teach the class for the other students. She always stops at the desk to say 'hello' and she always has a smile on her face and a happy, cheerful attitude. This place wouldn't be the same without her here!"

In her spare time, VanSickler enjoys playing golf, traveling, playing cards, being with friends, and attending sporting events. She and her husband are Detroit Lions season ticket holders. ■





Welding sparks interest for area high schoolers

Three Belding High School students are working on their welding skills through dual enrollment at Montcalm Community College. Pictured from left are Nickolas Albert, MCC Welding Instructor Andrew Nielsen, Rodrigo Pilar and Brad Jenks.

By Renae Gould

Three Belding High School students are preparing for their future as welders at Montcalm Community College.

Nickolas Albert, Brad Jenks, and Rodrigo Pilar are taking welding classes at MCC's Greenville campus through the college's dual enrollment program, which allows students to earn college and high school credits simultaneously.

Albert, 18, is attending MCC to prepare for welding school at MIAT College of Technology in Canton, Mich.

"I like to run arc, which is also called stick," Albert said. "My favorite rod is 7018."

Jenks, 16, said he enjoys welding with friends at MCC and is taking the classes because he could spend a lot more time welding, while learning a new skill that not everyone has

Pilar's favorite part of attending college.

"I'd like to use welding as a career path and MCC is a great opportunity to start," 17-year-old Pilar said.

The trio all are enjoying their dual-enrollment experience. Albert and Jenks said their favorite part of attending MCC is that it's close to home. Pilar said he likes hanging out with people who have the same interests as him.

"It gets me out of classes I don't want to do, and take classes I want to do," said Jenks, who eventually would like to be a pipeline welder.

"It's giving me a look into what I'm going into, whenever I go off to college," said Pilar who plans to attend MIAT College of Technology and then get a job on the pipeline.

"I like the instructor," Albert said. "He knows what he is doing and has helped me a lot."

“I’d like to use welding as a career path and MCC is a great opportunity to start.”

–Rodrigo Pilar

In the future, Albert wants to establish his own business servicing customers with his own welding rig.

Welding is one of the few career choices that is in high demand at all times. Since welders are needed in almost every industry, it gives people the flexibility to switch industries without changing careers. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, a welder that is highly skilled and trained in a specialty can earn close to \$100,000 annually. In 2022, welders without a specific focus averaged \$50,460, though these specialty jobs can earn significantly more. The median age for welders is the mid-50s. This means in the next 10 years, they will be retiring, and more welders will be needed to fill that void.

MCC offers an associate degree, certificate and job training program in welding.

Upon completion of the Associate of Applied Science in Welding, students will have the knowledge, understanding and techniques needed to produce quality elements. Graduates have the knowledge to be brazing and soldering workers and are prepared for a variety of entry-level welding positions. They should also have sufficient skills for American Welding Society Certification.

Coursework for MCC’s Welding Technology Certificate stresses the development of techniques and understanding of quality weldments. Effects of heat and stress on welded materials are studied and practiced in the laboratory. Completion of this certificate program prepares students to work in a career welding metal parts together according to layouts, blueprints or work orders using a gas welding or brazing and any combination of arc welding processes.

Students will learn basic welding techniques in the Welding training program, which can lead to an entry-level job in web welding. ■

For more information:

Visit montcalm.edu

Call **989-328-1277**

Email studentservices@montcalm.edu



dualenrollment

Earn college credits while still in high school

Dual enrollment at Montcalm Community College allows students in the ninth- through twelfth-grades to take college-level courses while still in high school and receive both high school and college credit. Through dual enrollment, students can take up to 10 college classes, and their high school helps pay tuition and fees up to an approved dollar amount.

This semester, more than 500 high school students are taking dual-enrollment courses at MCC and attend in-person or virtually. Some of the MCC courses count as both high school and college courses, while others are strictly for college credit. Plus, dual-enrolled students who wish to continue their college coursework at MCC after graduating from high school may do so without reapplying for admission.

Many dual enrollment courses also fulfill the requirements for the Michigan Transfer Agreement (MTA). The MTA allows students to complete general education requirements at one college or university, then transfer those courses to meet general education requirements at another college or university, without any special exceptions. To fulfill the MTA, students must successfully complete at least 30 credits.

For more information:

Visit montcalm.edu/dual-enrollment

Call **989-328-1277**

Email studentservices@montcalm.edu

Return of the Centurions

MCC athletic teams enjoy successful fall season and are gearing up for spring



By Shelly Springborn

Centurion athletics at Montcalm Community College made its comeback this fall after more than 40 years.

“We have had an amazing fall season,” said Interim President Connie Stewart. “The addition of athletics has really contributed to the sense of community on our campus. It has been fun to watch our athletes and to feel the excitement.”

This fall, MCC athletes competed in women’s volleyball, men’s and women’s cross country, clay target shooting and men’s golf.

“We have a lot of talented individuals both as student-athletes and on our coaching staff,” said MCC Athletic Director Hunter Redman. “They have all worked hard and competed well this fall.”

MCC’s women’s volleyball finished the season strong, completing the 2023 season with an overall record of 7-15 and a Michigan Community College Athletic Association (MCCAA) Northern Conference record of 3-9. In addition, two players earned all-conference recognition.

The men’s and women’s cross country runners competed in seven meets this fall, with some individuals posting personal bests and making consistent improvements in their overall performances.

“We have had a great season this year,” said Head Coach Kevin Sweeney. “Our runners support and cheer for each other and really came together as a team.”

The college’s clay target shooting team competed in five meets at the Flat River Conservation Club in two disciplines – trap and skeet shooting – as well as a tournament at Hillsdale College where they competed against teams from other

colleges and placed third overall in the skeet discipline giving them a podium finish.

MCC’s men’s golf played in eight non-league invitationals, with one player twice being named MCCA Western Conference Golfer of the Week. The team ended the season with a first and second-place finish and is gearing up for its regular season to kick off in April 2024.

Men’s and women’s bowling is also set to start its regular season in January 2024 and recruiting is under way for men’s and women’s basketball, which will debut fall 2024.

Stewart said she is happy to see so much support in the community for athletics.

“Athletics offer life-learning lessons on the field and through teamwork that our students may or may not be able to discover in the classroom,” she said. “Athletics contribute to characteristics such as good sportsmanship, persistence, completion and work ethic – all of which are crucial to personal and professional success. Being part of an athletic team promotes the fundamental values of hard work, drive and pushing yourself to the limit to help you attain goals you may never have thought you could achieve.”

MCC continues to focus on recruiting athletes and coaches. Visit montcalm.edu/athletics to complete an interest form in any of the college’s six athletic program areas. ■

For more information:

Visit montcalm.edu/athletics

Call **989-328-1095**

Email athletics@montcalm.edu

Larry Petersen led MCC's first basketball team

By Shelly Springborn

Larry Petersen has fond memories as Montcalm Community College's first basketball coach.

He was appointed to the position during the MCC Board of Trustees meeting on Oct. 10, 1967.

"We didn't have a gym," Petersen said. "We played anywhere we could.

"One night, we went clear to Blanchard just to practice," he recalled. "Stanton and Sheridan had gymnasiums where we practiced, too."

Home games were played at Central Montcalm and Greenville.

The team made its debut on Nov. 12, 1967, against Grand Rapids Baptist Bible College at Central Christian High School in Grand Rapids. It was the first of a 15-game schedule of which eight were played at the Central Montcalm High School gymnasium.

In an article from *The Daily News* dated Nov. 11, 1967, Petersen said he was optimistic about the team's ability, even though it was lacking in height.

"We will have to depend on speed both offensively and defensively," he said in the article.

Their work paid off with the Centurions downing Grand Rapids Baptist College 76-58.

It was the start of a three-year coaching run for Petersen.

The longtime Stanton-area resident, now age 85, said he doesn't remember all the details anymore, but he got a glimmer in his eyes when he talked about those years and how his experiences shaped his lengthy career in education.

Petersen was working as the local director of migrant education and one of the events for the summer program was to visit MCC.

"There was a lot of construction going on out there," Petersen recalled.

During that visit, he met Dean of Students Robert Tupper.

Shortly thereafter, Petersen had just taken a job as the

principal at Central Montcalm Middle School when Tupper contacted him.

"Bob told me the student body at MCC was working to get college sports going, specifically basketball," he said.

It was a role near and dear to Petersen's heart.

"I went and talked with Superintendent Jake Helms about the opportunity," Petersen said.

As they say, "the rest is history."

Petersen left Central Montcalm to coach basketball at MCC. After three years as the college's basketball coach, he had the opportunity to lead the college's physical education program, so he transitioned into that position.

"We had basic activity-type courses," he said. "We played table tennis, had a bowling class at the bowling alley in Sheridan and an archery class at Packard's indoor archery place at Turk Lake.

"Then we made some contacts with Central Michigan University and I taught Foundations of Physical Education, which transferred to CMU," he said.

Looking back, Petersen said the addition of baseball for a year at MCC was "a real highlight" in his career when the team defeated Central Michigan's JV team under Petersen's coaching.

In the early 1970s with the Vietnam draft, enrollments declined and "of course, physical education was the first to be cut," Petersen said.

That took him back to where his educational career began – Central Montcalm Public Schools – where he served as varsity baseball coach from 1974 through 1994, and taught history, social studies, senior government and Michigan history.

He also coached junior varsity basketball during his career at Central Montcalm.

"All my years in education were good to me," he said. ■



MCC millage question coming in 2024

By Shelly Springborn



The Montcalm Community College Board of Trustees will be asking voters to consider a proposal to renew the college's operating millage in 2024.

The levy is 1.1487 mills and currently provides approximately \$3.6 million annually toward MCC's operating budget, or about 19% of the total budget. It is a proposal to renew a levy that has been in place since 1996, when voters agreed to establish a mill levy to protect and improve the College's programming and facilities, and to keep tuition and fees affordable. Voters renewed this modest millage, which sunsets every 10 years, in both 2005 and 2014.

MCC Interim President Connie Stewart said the millage funds key operations that are vital to the college's core mission of "Transforming Lives Through Quality Education."

"The mill levy plays an important role in keeping college affordable, recruiting and retaining quality faculty, adding and refining programs to meet the needs of Michigan's fastest growing industries, keeping instructional technology and tools updated, and taking workforce training to the next level," Stewart said.

"Community is our middle name," Stewart said. "In addition to our credit classes, we also have many noncredit classes and other offerings that provide opportunities for learners of all ages and backgrounds."

MCC has been at the forefront of higher education and job training in our region since 1965, positively impacting the lives of more than 125,000 learners since its inception. MCC is a small college with big reach, delivering tremendous value to more than 1,600 students enrolled each semester.

"MCC drives job creation and economic development in our region," Stewart said. "The area's largest employers and small businesses rely on MCC when it comes to job training. We're training the next generation of nurses, business leaders, entrepreneurs, computer technicians, skilled trades professionals, agricultural workers and more."

"The mill levy helps fund the ever-changing equipment and curriculum needs of many MCC programs, from nursing to advanced manufacturing and skilled trades, all of which rely heavily on training students using real-world tools and up-to-date technology," Stewart said. "For example, the college's nursing students work in teaching labs that are similar to an actual hospital and health care examination rooms, learning on the same tools that are used in health care offices."

According to an economic impact study completed in 2021, the net impact of MCC's former students currently employed in the regional workforce amounted to \$40.6 million in added income in FY 2019-20.

MCC Board of Trustees Chairperson Karen Carbonelli said the millage is vital to supporting our region.

“Proceeds from the millage help the college deliver superior educational and job training opportunities that are affordable,” Carbonelli said. “This supports our overall economy as we continue to play a key role in economic development and support the strength and stability of our area.”

With campuses in Sidney and Greenville, MCC offers more than 50 degree, certificate and job training programs; courses for transfer to other institutions; online courses; cultural events; and career and personal development courses. ■

For more information:

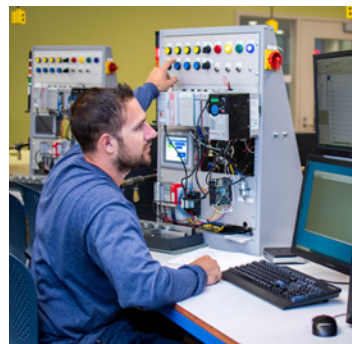
Visit montcalm.edu/renewal

Call **989-328-1243**

Email renewal@montcalm.edu

What specifically does the mill levy fund?

- Keeping college affordable
- Providing workforce training and apprenticeship programs
- Recruiting and retaining quality faculty and staff
- Replacing outdated instructional tools and technology
- Introducing new programs focused on high-demand, high-wage career fields
- Supporting student services
- Supporting day-to-day operations and facilities maintenance
- Maintaining more than 50 associate degree, certificate and job training programs



Andrew Nielsen enjoys the **'a ha moments'** in his classroom

By Renae Gould

Andrew Nielsen is an advanced manufacturing and welding technologies instructor at Montcalm Community College.

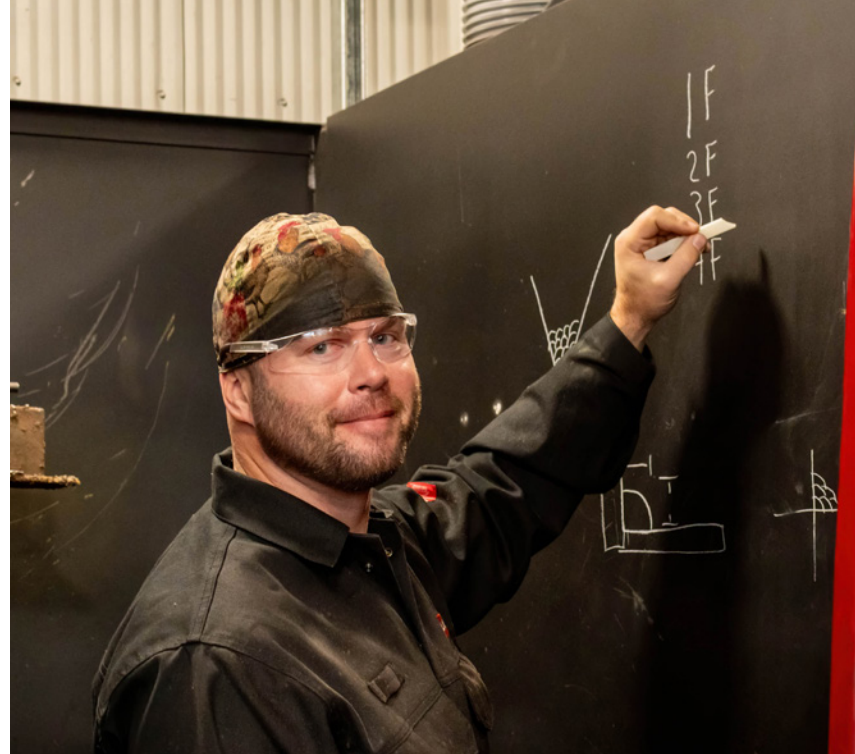
"I am a huge believer in see one, do one, and teach one," Nielsen said. "I like to teach the theory of what we are going to accomplish in the lab, head to the lab, show the students how to accomplish the task and then let them try it, let them fail, but fail forward. I believe you learn more from failure than success."

Nielsen graduated from Belding High School in 2003. He then attended Olivet College where he played football and baseball and earned his Bachelor of Arts in Management in 2008. After that, he spent five years in the North Dakota oil fields. He decided he wanted to return home and study metal fabrication.

Through an apprenticeship with Greenville Tool and Die, he started his journeyman certification courses at MCC in 2017. Nielsen earned an Apprenticeship Training Certificate in welding from MCC in 2020, with high honors, and now teaches welding, machining and automation classes on MCC's Greenville campus. He is also an AWS Certified Welding Inspector.

"I really enjoy the 'a ha' moments that you see in students as they are practicing through the modules, and suddenly, something clicks, and they are creating desired results," Nielsen said.

Aside from his work at MCC and the North Dakota oil fields, he also worked in grounds maintenance at Candlestone Inn & Golf in Belding and at the Double R Ranch in Smyrna doing



horse trail guides, campground maintenance, canoe running and golf course maintenance.

He and his wife, Bridget, have been married for almost seven years and reside in Rockford. They have two sons, Lincoln and Roman. He likes to travel around Michigan and the United States, mostly hiking trails through mountain ranges. He can't wait until his children are old enough to ride motorcycles and ATVs around Michigan's awesome trails.

Jason Becker and Jody Collier are two people he admires. Both gentlemen have worked hard in their trade and are now valuable resources of information on YouTube and podcasts. They are both lifelong learners and give back to the welding community by freely sharing their knowledge.

If he hadn't gone into teaching, Nielsen said he was close to becoming a heavy machine operator. He said it would be awesome to drive bulldozers, front end loaders and cranes.

Nielsen feels that his work ethic and integrity are the best skills he brings to his job.

"I show up, do what I say I'm going to do, (or at least give it my best shot) and try to learn something from the task," he said.

Visiting Alaska and driving a monster truck are two things on his bucket list, and he said doing both at the same time would be ideal.

His personal motto is "Stuff happens. Deal with it and try to find the best way to overcome it." ■

'It was a perfect fit'

Lakeview's Tanner Carr is pursuing a degree in Agricultural Operations at MCC

By Renae Gould

Farming is a way of life for Tanner Carr.

It also brought him to Montcalm Community College to pursue a degree in Agricultural Operations, offered in partnership with the Michigan State University Institute of Agricultural Technology (MSU-IAT).

"It was a perfect fit for the career path I was choosing to continue," said the 20-year-old from Lakeview.

Carr works on his family's cash crop farm, which was established in 1879. They grow about 2,500 acres of corn, soybeans, wheat, peas, and sweet corn in Montcalm and Mecosta Counties.

"I am 6th generation, and I started working regularly at the age of 14," he said. "My favorite part about farming is the management aspect. I enjoy overseeing the tasks and making the logistics flow to complete every task. In addition, I enjoy seeing the crop finish to maturity and being harvested. At this point, we can evaluate the year and the work that was done to get to this point."

Carr is also a member of MCC's Ag Club, which is open to all students interested in plant, animal and environmental science. The club offers students educational, professional, charitable and social activities to further enhance the leadership and technical skills necessary for personal growth, career success and community service.

"The Ag Club is a great entity," he said. "It is nice to gather with people that all care about agriculture and want to give back to the community. My favorite part is being able to plant items in our greenhouse."

Ag Club Adviser Brian Gardner said Carr is always looking for experiences that will help him on his farm.

"He's a good person," Gardner said. "He helps others around him. He wants to take a drone class through MSU and he wants to take Spanish to help out on the farm. This summer, he brought a bunch of sweet corn from the farm in and cooked it for Ag Club."

Carr is also active in Montcalm County Farm Bureau and serves as an elected member of the Board of Directors.

"I enjoy being a member on the Farm Bureau board, because it allows me to expand my knowledge of other commodities or livestock in the county," he said. "I like to hear issues one grower may be experiencing and be able to talk amongst ourselves for a potential solution."

In his spare time, he enjoys hunting, specifically in Wyoming and the surrounding states out west. He is also a firefighter with the Lakeview District Fire Department. ■

For more information:

Visit montcalm.edu/agriculture

Call 989-328-1090

Email brian.gardner@montcalm.edu



Irish visitors promote study abroad program



Representatives from the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) in Northern Ireland recently visit Montcalm Community College and area farms. Above, pictured from left are CAFRE Senior Equine Lecturer Alison Morris, CAFRE Advisor Alan Johnston, Mares Vanderploeg and CAFRE Head of Food Education Fintan McCann.



By Renae Gould

Montcalm Community College's Agriculture Club had some special visitors this fall. Three representatives of the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) in Northern Ireland came to the college's Sidney campus to discuss their study abroad program.

They started their day with a visit to Main Farms in Lakeview, Trufant, and Greenville, where they saw potato harvest, storage, and shipping. Their next stop was MCC's Sidney campus where they toured the greenhouse and had lunch with members of the Ag Club. After a tour of campus, they ended their day with a visit to Vanderploeg Friesian Farms and Vanderploeg Holsteins in Ithaca, a large-scale dairy and world-class horse farm.

"We have been visiting Michigan for 25 plus years," said Alan Johnston, an adviser with CAFRE.

CAFRE representatives always come this time of year to be a part of Michigan State University's study abroad fair, but this is the first time they have visited MCC.

"It was because of Brian (Gardner) that we came to visit MCC," Johnston said. "He was over in Ireland last April visiting our campuses."

Johnston, along with Alison Morris and Fintan McCann, talked about CAFRE's programs and their three campuses. They have 1,800 students in their programs. All three campuses are in rural settings, but only a couple miles from a bigger city. The campuses are Greenmount, where students study animal science and horticulture; Loughry, where students learn the business and technology side of food production; and Enniskillen, where students study everything equine.

"Our programs are theory-based, but also practical," Johnston said. "They learn by doing and getting their hands dirty."

The study abroad partnership with CAFRE has included 180 students from Michigan. Two MCC students in the Institute of Agricultural Technology program, which is a joint program with MSU, Jeff Marek and Emily German, will be traveling to CAFRE in January as study abroad students. The program runs for four months and they will be studying at the Greenmount campus. The modules, or classes, the students will take have to be related to what they're studying here and will be used as part of their degree program. They try to balance the ratio of students that come here and that go to Ireland.

Study Abroad

Two Montcalm Community College agriculture students will be traveling to Ireland in January to study abroad.

They will be attending classes at the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) in Northern Ireland for four months.

Emily German, 19, of Lowell, said she's excited to see how they run their farms in Ireland because they are a lot more animal based.

"I'm excited to experience new things," she said. "I haven't really traveled much out of the state."

Jeff Marek, 20, of Howard City, is looking forward to seeing the potato production at CAFRE, since he works on a potato farm here.

"I'm really interested in learning about a different culture, especially behind the scenes of the agriculture world," he said.

German likes MCC because the classes aren't big, and she can get to know everyone pretty easily. Her favorite class, so far, has been Animal Science.

"That's the side of agriculture I'm going into, and it's been the most helpful, so far," she said.

Marek said another MCC student got him interested in the Agricultural Operations program. His favorite class, so far, has been Crop Science.

"I believe the professor was the best and I was interested in learning more in-depth about the crops," he said.

He works at Main Farms, which is 14,700 acres of cash crops in Lakeview, Trufant and Greenville. He runs fertilizer and helps with tillage.

German works at Double R Ranch in Belding as a guide and takes people on horseback through the woods. She has worked there for four years. She rides horses quite a bit and she barrel races, too. She hopes to become an artificial insemination technician and has applied for an internship in this field for next summer.

Marek is focused on finishing college right now, but he hopes to be a full-time firefighter in the future. ■

For more information:

Visit montcalm.edu/agriculture

Call **989-328-1090**

Email brian.gardner@montcalm.edu

Johnston said the average size of a farm in Northern Ireland is 80 to 100 acres and there are 50,000 farms in the area. Many of the farm owners contract out the work on their farms because there isn't enough equipment to go around.

CAFRE is funded and run by the Department of Agriculture. It may be a smaller program, but it has a lot of technology. In the food technology area, there is a brewery, bakery, chocolate making and ice cream making.

Gardner, MSU-MCC ag program coordinator and Ag Club adviser, said CAFRE is an awesome opportunity for MCC's ag tech students to study abroad. He said it was nice to start off the day at Main Farms because his student, Marek, works at the farm and got to give them the tour.

"To see it first-hand was mind boggling to them," Gardner said about the Irish visitors' reaction to the large-scale Michigan agricultural operations. ■



CAFRE representatives toured Main Farms during their visit. Pictured, from left, are CAFRE Senior Equine Lecturer Alison Morris, CAFRE Head of Food Education Fintan McCann, MCC student and Main Farms employee Jeff Marek and CAFRE Advisor Alan Johnston.

Why choose a career in agriculture?

- For every farmer there are 24 ag-based careers.
- The demand for well-trained ag professionals continues to increase as the world's population increases and usable farmland decreases.
- Michigan has a \$104 billion annual agriculture economy.
- Michigan is second only to California in the number of ag commodities grown in state.
- Jobs in agriculture include: agricultural lenders, crop scouts, animal herdsman, landscape designers, implement operators, farmers, commodity marketers, seed salespeople, implement dealers, food processors, ag tourism professionals, ag educators, and many, many more.

For more information:

Visit montcalm.edu/agriculture

Call **989-328-1090**

Email brian.gardner@montcalm.edu

MCC offers agriculture program in partnership with MSU IAT

By Shelly Springborn

Montcalm Community College (MCC) offers the Agricultural Operations degree program in cooperation with the Institute of Agricultural Technology at Michigan State University (MSU).

Through this partnership, students earn an associate degree at MCC while at the same time earning a two-year certificate at MSU. It also allows students to access resources in academics, financial aid, career services and student life at both institutions.

This program is for students who are interested in gaining in-depth agricultural industry and business knowledge to apply to their own operations or to launch careers in the industry. It integrates a wide range of disciplines including business, leadership, technology and compliance through hands-on laboratory learning and classroom formats as well as a required internship.

MCC-MSU Ag Program Coordinator Brian Gardner works on MCC's Sidney campus, assisting students with agriculture career planning, professional internship placement, financial aid decisions and enrolling in necessary courses. He said the program is perfect for recent high school graduates or for those who are seeking retraining for a new career opportunity.

"Agriculture in our county is our heritage, and it is also our future. We know how important it is to us in everyday life, and we're working to enhance what we do with education to make it an even brighter future for us," Gardner said.

In addition to a cost savings whereby students pay MCC's tuition rate while attending the college, yet earn dual-enrollment credits with MSU, Gardner said every student involved in the program will complete an agricultural internship.

"The opportunity to gain hands-on knowledge will set them apart from those who only have classroom instruction," he said.

Of the credits required for certification, the majority are delivered by MCC and the remainder are delivered by MSU. It is possible for a student to complete one of these programs and transfer to a four-year agricultural degree program at MSU. All MSU courses are offered on MCC's campus or online. ■



fast facts

During the 2022-2023 academic year:



STUDENTS ARE
COMING TO MCC FROM

123

CITIES AND VILLAGES

96%

OF STUDENTS REPORT THEY
ARE MEETING THEIR GOALS
AT MCC

125+

TRANSFER
AGREEMENTS WITH
OTHER INSTITUTIONS

360,000

NEW WELDING PROFESSIONALS
ARE PROJECTED TO BE NEEDED
BY 2027 ACROSS THE COUNTRY
SOURCE: WELDING WORKFORCE DATA

15

AVERAGE
CLASS SIZE

\$22,000

THE AVERAGE AMOUNT PER YEAR
AN ASSOCIATE DEGREE HOLDER
EARNS OVER A PERSON WITH A
HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

springregistration

There's still time to register for spring classes at MCC

By Shelly Springborn

Do you know that earning a two-year degree can put more money in your pocket? That's right. On average, workers with a two-year degree earn \$22,000 more per year than those without this credential.

Regardless of your situation, age or educational background, one thing that is certain is higher education will change your life! Montcalm Community College is here to serve you and help you achieve success.

And, there's still time to register for spring classes at MCC!

High school student

Are you a junior or senior in high school? Investigate taking online or in-person classes now toward your future degree. We also have more than 125 transfer agreements with colleges and universities in and out of Michigan. Start here to save money and time!

High school graduate

Are you a high school graduate? Not sure where to start? Don't forget, our four-year partner schools tell us that our students do better when they start at MCC than their students who do all four years with them. MCC is a great place to establish a strong foundation before transferring on to another school.

University student

Are you a university student taking classes at home virtually instead of on campus? Did you know many of your first- and second-year classes can be taken at MCC at a lower tuition rate? Those same classes can transfer back to the university. Why not save money this year?

Mid-career and workforce training

Are you currently in the workforce but looking for a change or seeking new skills? We can help. You can take a class or two to sharpen your skills or pursue an associate degree, certificate or job training credential. Did you know we also customize workforce training and apprenticeship programs to meet the needs of our area business partners?

In-Seat Classes

Are you someone who knows that you prefer to take classes in person? At MCC, students can choose how they learn. Students can come to campus for in-seat courses, tune in live online, take a hybrid class or a fully online course. It is truly a "learn how you like" environment.

Technical Careers

Interested in technical careers like welding or another hands-on field? We have those, too!

Undecided Student

We have a career advisor ready to help you determine what career path will be best for you!

Why College?

Education changes lives. At MCC, we live our mission of "Transforming Lives Through Quality Education" every day. Our reality is that 75 percent of Michigan jobs in the future will require some training past high school. In order to compete for future jobs, students will have to have more training than their parents and grandparents did. MCC offers you the ability to acquire the skills necessary to compete in future job markets. ■

For more information:

Visit montcalm.edu

Call **989-328-1277**

Email studentservices@montcalm.edu



Almost free college!

MCC supports Michigan Reconnect for free or reduced tuition for those who qualify



By Shelly Springborn

Montcalm Community College is serving as a champion to support the Michigan Reconnect program in an effort to help address a widening skills gap within the state's workforce.

Michigan Reconnect will help pay the costs of tuition or training for eligible adults who want to pursue an associate degree or technical degree.

In addition to the original Michigan Reconnect program, for those age 25 and older, for a limited time only, Michigan residents who are age 21 to 24 and have obtained a high school diploma or equivalent are eligible, too.

Information for those ages 21 to 24:

- Apply and enroll in a community or tribal college no later than fall semester 2024.
- Complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid).
- Have lived in Michigan for at least a year.
- Have a high school diploma or equivalent or certificate of completion.
- Have not yet completed a college degree.
- Don't wait — apply to Michigan Reconnect by Friday, Nov. 15, 2024, at www.michigan.gov/Reconnect.

Information for those ages 25 and older:

- High school graduate or equivalent
- Michigan resident for at least one year
- Not yet completed a college degree (associate or bachelor's)
- Apply to Michigan Reconnect at www.michigan.gov/Reconnect.

Michigan Reconnect pays the remaining balance of tuition and mandatory fees after other state and federal financial aid have been applied for students attending a Michigan community college. In addition, Michigan Reconnect only pays the in-district tuition for any of Michigan's public community colleges. You will be responsible for covering the difference between the in-district and out-of-district tuition rates of the community college you plan to attend if you live out of the district and if you do not have other scholarships or awards to cover the difference. ■

For more information:

Visit montcalm.edu/reconnect

Call **989-328-1277**

Email studentservices@montcalm.edu

Highlights of college and student achievements



Clockwise from top, members of Montcalm Community College's Business Professionals of America Club earned high honors during contests this year; MCC was honored as a Michigan Veteran Affairs Agency (MVAA) Veteran-Friendly School for the ninth year; MCC Foundation scholarship recipients were recognized during an annual celebration; MCC's 56th Commencement was May 5.

By Lexie Barnwell

Montcalm Community College celebrated its 56th commencement on May 5 during a celebration in the gymnasium on the college's Sidney campus. A total of 239 degrees and certificates were awarded to graduates for the 2022-2023 academic year.

The 2023-2024 academic year marks the eleventh year for Early College at Montcalm Community College. This year, 16 students are expected to graduate with a certificate or degree, 19 are on track to graduate in 2025 and 25 in 2026. Early College at MCC is a free program that allows students to leave their home high school to attend MCC for three years starting their junior year. Upon graduation, they receive their high school diploma and an associate degree or certificate from MCC. Schools participating in the Early College program include Belding, Carson City-Crystal, Central Montcalm, Greenville, Lakeview, Montabella, Saranac, Tri County and Vestaburg.

This fall, 523 high school students are also dual-enrolled in classes at Montcalm Community College. Dual enrollment at MCC allows students to take college-level courses while still in high school and receive both high school and college

credit. Through dual enrollment, students can take up to 10 college classes, and their high school helps pay tuition and fees up to an approved dollar amount. Schools participating this fall include: Algoma Christian School, Alma High School, Belding High School, Carson City-Crystal High School, Cedar Springs High School, Central Montcalm High School, Fellowship Baptist Academy, Fulton High School, Greenville High School, iCademy Global, Ionia High School, Lakeview High School, Montabella High School, Morley Stanwood High School, Niles High School, Portland High School, Saranac High School, Success Virtual Learning Centers, Tri County High School and Vestaburg High School.

For the ninth year, MCC was honored as a Michigan Veteran Friendly 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.

Seven MCC students earned high honors during the Business Professionals of America (BPA) National Leadership Conference, which was held in Anaheim, Calif. They

included Claire Scott of Beal City, Noelle Kyes of Belding, Kyleigh Mills of Greenville, Sawyer Bowers of Greenville, Jaxson Clark of Greenville, Lindsey Olger of Sheridan and Emily Throop of Stanton.

A total of 1,001 students were named to MCC's honors lists during the academic year, including 463 during the 2022 fall semester and 538 during the 2023 spring semester.

MCC's ever-popular summer camps for youths offered a variety of opportunities in areas such as arts, agriculture, Legos®, law enforcement, drones, STEM learning, welding, computers and more.

The college maintains accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission through its participation in the Open Pathway component, which affords institutions the opportunity to pursue improvement projects that meet their current needs and aspirations. In addition, MCC's nursing program maintains accreditation through the National League for Nursing Commission for Nursing Education Accreditation (NLN CNEA). ■

For more information:

Visit montcalm.edu

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During the 2022-2023 academic year:

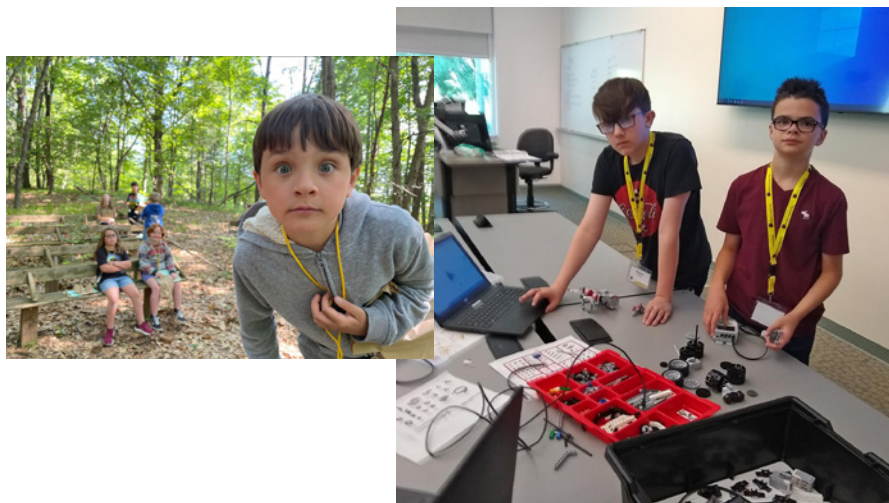
207 students earned 178 associate degrees, 111 certificates

2,070 students enrolled in credit classes

The average age of MCC credit students was 24

MCC's average class size was 15 students

63% of course sections offered were online, live online or hybrid delivery; 37% were in-person



MCC's 2022-2023 budget



Income

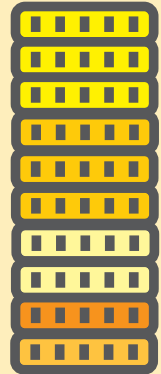
Property Tax - 42%

Tuition & Fees - 34%

State Appropriations - 22%

Other - 1%

Grants - 1%



Expenditures

Instruction - 39%

Institutional Administration - 19%

Physical Plant - 12%

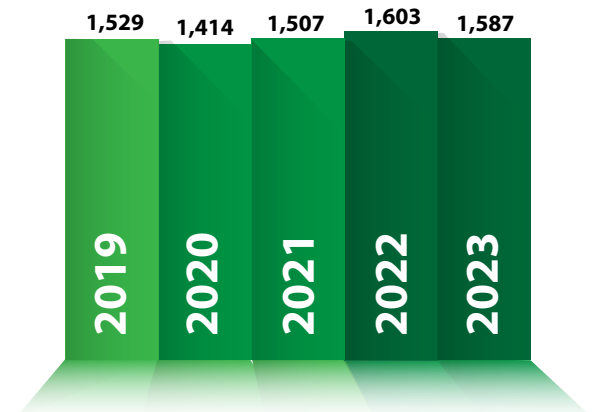
Instructional Support - 10%

Debt Services & Other - 8%

Student Services - 10%

Public Service - 2%

2019-2023 Fall Semester Credit Headcount





MCC's *'Transforming Lives, Empowering People'* campaign supports students

By Shelly Springborn

Nearly \$4 million has been raised to support Montcalm Community College's *"Transforming Lives, Empowering People"* campaign.

"We are so grateful to all of our supporters for their campaign pledges," said Lisa Lund, Executive Director of the MCC Foundation. "This campaign brought together our community for the common goal of supporting students in achieving their educational dreams."

According to a 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 MCC's doors since the college was established in 1965, making MCC a critical component of our community's long-term success.

The focus of the college's 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 *"Transforming Lives, Empowering People"* campaign supported this.

At the heart of the campaign was the renovation of the Kenneth J. Smith Instructional Building on MCC's Sidney campus. The building was named after the college's first instructor of biological sciences – Kenneth J. Smith, who joined MCC in 1965.

The newly remodeled Smith Building reopened this spring. It houses more than half of MCC's Sidney campus instructional space. The top level is home to The Center for STEM Learning and the lower level is The Center for Nursing & Health Careers.

The building features specialized classrooms, advanced labs and inviting student spaces to give students top-class STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) learning experiences. Home to the college's nursing, allied health and science offerings, the facility boasts high-tech science and nursing simulation tools, lab equipment, inviting student spaces and leading-edge technology, all aimed at delivering coursework in areas such as nursing, anatomy and physiology, biology, chemistry, mathematics, sciences and more.

In addition to the building renovation, the *“Transforming Lives, Empowering People”* campaign included five additional initiatives to support students – through scholarships, curriculum enhancements and the MCC Express Conductor Program.

Three scholarship initiatives included:

- First-generation scholarships to benefit students who are the first in their family to go to college.
- Mid-career scholarships to benefit middle-income students who do not qualify for financial aid, but also do not have the means to pay cash for college.
- Program-specific scholarships to benefit students in specific program pathways.

“Through the campaign, the college has received significant support for scholarships,” Lund said. “Scholarships are a component that are near and dear to many people’s hearts because they want to have a direct impact for students.

“This funding plays a vital role in enhancing the educational opportunities for a variety of students by helping alleviate some of the financial burden of attending college, which allows them to focus more on achieving their education,” she added.

The MCC Express Conductor Program supports MCC’s overall student success initiatives by pairing students with a mentor to help them during every step of their journey while at MCC.

MCC Interim President Connie Stewart said the college is realizing increased student success and retention rates since the program was implemented nearly two years ago.

“From the first point of contact to the time they enter classes, and throughout their time at MCC, students have one person they are connecting with who can assist them every step of the way,” Stewart said. “What we are finding is that students are much more likely to be engaged and seek help early on.”

Lund said the campaign will soon be coming to close.

“We do have some building naming opportunities still available, and opportunities to support scholarships, curriculum development and the MCC Express Program,” Lund said. “There are many ways in which contributions may be made, including cash gifts, pledges, gifts of stock, planned giving and others.” ■

For more information:

Visit montcalm.edu/MCCF

Call **989-328-1284**

Email MCCFoundation@montcalm.edu



Connecting with community through cultural offerings

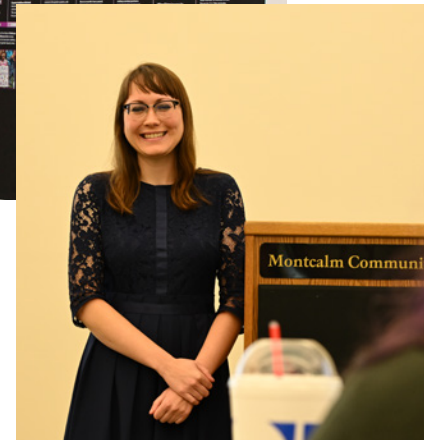
By Andrea Plowman

At Montcalm Community College, 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 within the MCC Foundation provides funding to support a variety of endeavors.

MCC planners continue to craft new and innovative programs and delivery methods to provide opportunities in-person and virtually. Highlights of this year's cultural offerings include:

- The MCC Library brought together its community of readers during its ninth MCC Reads program.
- In recognition of Martin Luther King, Jr., Day, MCC hosted Nyshell Lawrence, owner of Socialight Society, and Kendra McNeil, owner of We Are LIT, to discuss how literacy continues the work of Dr. King.
- In February, the college celebrated Black History Month with a timeline on both of its campuses depicting key historical events and highlighting people who made significant contributions to black history from 1619 through the present.
- MCC hosted Edgar L. Page to celebrate Black History Month with a dance performance entitled, "The Movement in the Movements."
- MCC partnered with the World Affairs Council to host a virtual talk on climate change.
- MCC brought to campus "Magic in March" by Preston Lyford, who was on Season 16 of America's Got Talent.
- To celebrate Women's History Month in March, the college displayed a timeline highlighting key historical points that look back at barriers women have overcome to be accepted as equals to men in society and in the workplace.



- In March, the college celebrated Women's History Month with "Gender Issues in Medical Care," presented by Jessica Snyder.
- MCC got "Styled for Success: A Workwear Fashion Show and Event" in April where models and speakers shared their expertise on a variety of career-related topics.
- In April and November, the MCC Alumni & Friends Choir presented a concert.
- In April, the college celebrated World Health Day with "The Crack Chronicles, Dissection of a Demon," presented by Syreeta Drake.
- In celebration of Asian American/Pacific Islander Heritage (AAPI) Month, posters depicting key historical events and highlighting people who made significant contributions to AAPI heritage were on display on MCC's Sidney campus during the month of May.
- In June, MCC celebrated Pride Month with a timeline featuring key historical events, people and activities on display on its Sidney campus, and hosted a panel of speakers from the Stonewall Speakers Foundation to talk with students about their coming out stories.
- In September, MCC hosted its annual Constitution Day program with Social Science Instructor Andrea Martin.
- In November, MCC celebrated Veterans Day with an in-person and virtual program that included a moment of silence for all veterans, a veterans roll call and a live online presentation.
- The college also celebrated Indigenous Peoples Month in November with Seth Sutton's Teaching Thanksgiving presentation. ■

For more information:

Visit montcalm.edu/arts-and-culture



Mission Statement

To support MCC’s efforts to anticipate and address community needs through relationship cultivation and resource stewardship.

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Words from our MCCF President

For the past two years, the Montcalm Community College Foundation (MCCF) has proudly promoted opportunities within Montcalm Community College’s Major Gifts Campaign *“Transforming Lives, Empowering People.”*

Through this campaign, many individuals, families, and organizations have generously invested in the college’s mission to transform lives through quality education. I am proud to share that this campaign has generated nearly \$4 million in new investments so far. This investment has resulted in modernized teaching and learning spaces, expanded student scholarship opportunities, and enhanced student support programming — truly *“Transforming Lives, Empowering People.”*

Therefore, it seems appropriate to choose Transforming Together as the 2023 year-end message theme, because this is exactly what we have done, and what we will continue to do each year, for the good of our students, our workforce and the many communities connected to Montcalm Community College.

Throughout the past year, MCC and the surrounding communities connected through several events. It was wonderful to see so many friends join us on campus. Events such as the annual Scholarship Celebration, the Kenneth J. Smith

Building Open House, and the MCCF Pancake Breakfast provided opportunities for us to celebrate our greater shared purpose. If you have not been on campus recently, you are invited to visit and see the wonderful transformation and updates. Reach out to MCCF Executive Director Lisa Lund to schedule a personal or group tour.

This magazine highlights examples of activities and initiatives that the Montcalm Community College Foundation has supported. The MCCF takes seriously its mission of supporting the college to enhance futures for all and is delighted to share this information with you.

As 2023 moves to a close, you are welcome to consider your legacy in this special, transformative work that will impact future generations in our community. Be part of the Transforming Together experience! Please consider partnering with the MCC Foundation as we work together to continue to transform lives and empower people, creating brighter futures for all.

Jane Anderson Beach
President, MCC Foundation

Endowed Scholarship Funds

The MCC Foundation deeply appreciates the individuals, families, and businesses that have committed to providing lasting support to our students through endowed scholarships.

MCCF Allen & Ellen Kohn Scholarship
 MCCF Allen E. & Janet A. Kohn Scholarship
 MCCF Alumni & Friends Scholarship
 MCCF Anna Hertz-McCoy Memorial Scholarship
 MCCF Ardene (Diz) Oswald Memorial Scholarship
 MCCF Beatrice & Manfred Doser Memorial Scholarship-Chemistry/Engineering
 MCCF Beatrice & Manfred Doser Memorial Scholarship-Volunteerism
 MCCF Beth Anderson Memorial Current or Returning Student Scholarship
 MCCF Beth Anderson Memorial New Student Scholarship
 MCCF Camille Widdifield Memorial Scholarship
 MCCF Clifford J. Bedore Jr. Memorial Scholarship
 MCCF Copp Family Scholarship
 MCCF Corewell Health Nursing Scholarship*
 MCCF CW4 Larry L. Lofts Scholarship*
 MCCF David W. Drake Scholarship
 MCCF Don & Emma Goodell Scholarship
 MCCF Donald C. Burns Presidential Scholarship
 MCCF Doris M. Arntz Scholarship
 MCCF Dr. Gordon DeVries/Dr. Thomas Deurloo Scholarship
 MCCF Dr. Stacy Horner Young Presidential Scholarship
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 MCCF Edward Reddig Scholarship
 MCCF Erika A. Walters Scholarship
 MCCF Erin Kae Kitchenmaster Scholarship
 MCCF Faber Family Scholarship
 MCCF Family of Michelle Mater Gibson Agricultural Scholarship
 MCCF George & Janet Ravell Family Scholarship
 MCCF Grace Anne Hatto-Adler Memorial Scholarship
 MCCF Grace M. Sagendorf Scholarship
 MCCF Harold & Ruth Force Family Scholarship
 MCCF Herbert N. Stoutenburg Scholarship
 MCCF Isabella Bank Scholarship*
 MCCF Jan & Mike McCrackin Family/Harvey Milling Agriculture Scholarship

MCCF Jan & Mike McCrackin Family/
 Irma McCrackin Memorial Nursing Scholarship
 MCCF Josh Fish Memorial Scholarship
 MCCF Judy K. DeVolder Nutt Scholarship
 MCCF Karen Hansen Nursing Scholarship
 MCCF Kenneth & Jacalyn Smith Scholarship
 MCCF Kenneth J. & Gail E. Lehman Scholarship
 MCCF Kenric Jones DeLong Service Scholarship: Kenny's Community Cash
 MCCF Kevin Carbonelli Memorial Scholarship
 MCCF Leslie K. Morford Scholarship
 MCCF Louise D. Buescher Scholarship
 MCCF Mall Family Foundation Nursing Scholarship*
 MCCF Martin L. Lund Memorial Scholarship*
 MCCF Maureen Burns Scholarship
 MCCF MCC Education Support Personnel Association Scholarship
 MCCF MCC Employee Endowed Scholarship
 MCCF "MCC Made Me" Scholarship*
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 MCCF Merry Kim Meyers Agriculture Scholarship
 MCCF Michael J. Seaman Memorial Scholarship
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 MCCF Nancy Fox Scholarship
 MCCF Nancy Steele Allen Edwards Memorial Nursing Scholarship
 MCCF Orville Trebian Scholarship*
 MCCF Patricia Ann Hinrichs Scholarship*
 MCCF Robert E. Campbell Memorial Scholarship
 MCCF Robert Ferrentino Presidential Scholarship
 MCCF Roger Higginson Memorial Scholarship
 MCCF Ruth Paddock Bedore Transfer Award
 MCCF Stafford Family Scholarship
 MCCF Stanley & Blanche Ash Scholarship
 MCCF Travis L. Bingaman Memorial Scholarship
 MCCF William & Harriette Cook Scholarship
 MCCF General Scholarship Fund

**Scholarship funds marked with an asterisk (*) have been established since last year's MCCF report.*

Consider giving the gift of legacy this holiday season. Contact us to establish a new endowed scholarship to honor your loved one.

"Transforming Lives, Empowering People"

a *Community* campaign

We Are Transforming Together!

By joining together, we can do even more to transform the lives of students and transform our community. Give online now or contact us for more information on how you can help meet critical needs.



Estate Planning

Find information on planned giving, including sample bequest language, by visiting montcalm.edu/planned-giving.

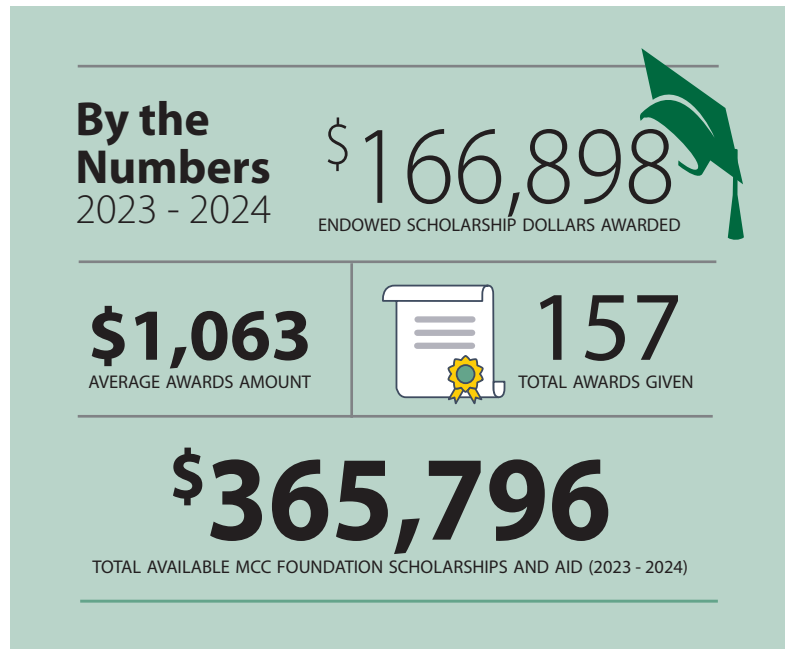
If you have a resolution for 2024 to get your affairs in order, we can help! Join us on April 24, 2024, as MCC offers a "Estate Planning Basics" workshop in partnership with local legal and financial professionals. For more event information and to register, visit montcalm.edu/events.



Christa Baldwin Receives MCC Distinguished Alumni Award

Montcalm Community College awarded its annual Distinguished Alumni Award to Christa Baldwin during MCC's 56th Annual Commencement Ceremony on May 5, 2023.

Read the full story here: montcalm.edu/meet-our-alumni



For more information about the MCC Foundation, please contact us:

Montcalm Community College Foundation
2800 College Drive • Sidney, MI 48885

Find us online: montcalm.edu/mccf

Give online: montcalm.edu/give

Federal Tax ID Number: **38-2371295**

Ash College Community Enhancement Fund Highlights

MCC Express Program Helps Students Navigate and Engage

The MCCF is proud to support the MCC Express Conductor Program which is continuing to expand and gain momentum!

This program pairs a mentor, called a Conductor, with a student to help successfully navigate their MCC college experience. With support of a Michigan College Access Network AmeriCorps Grant which supports two full-time Completion Coach positions, the MCC Express program has grown to include 11 full- and part-time Conductors/Coaches. Conductors reach out to students to answer questions, provide encouragement, provide reminders of key deadlines and share available resources.

“He’s (my MCAN Completion Coach) helped in many ways, by leading me to the right resources I need for figuring out my major, scholarships, financial aid and so much more.”

MCC Student- Ashlea Fuhrman



General Fund Highlights

Unique Project Encourages MCC Students to Achieve Their Dreams

MCCF Making a Difference grants (MAD Grants) inspire innovation in teaching and learning.

MAD Grant: MCC Biology Instructor Dr. Michelle Gibson created the Achieving Your Dreams program.

In her Making a Difference grant proposal, Dr. Gibson requested 2,000 Achieving Your Dreams booklets that are available to students in the MCC library. Students use the booklets to write down their goals and dreams and also earn ink stamps by attending various campus activities.

Dr. Gibson reported that during the 2022-2023 school year, 890 students received booklets. Students who completed their booklets received raffle tickets for each of their stamps and a chance to win gift cards. Ten students won gift cards in a raffle during the college’s Night Against Procrastination event in April. She said it was great because many of the students who attended the event won gift cards.

Dr. Gibson helped create a web page and a short video that shares information about the program. Learn more about this program by visiting montcalm.edu/achieve-your-dreams.



Developing Talent Fund Highlights

New MCC Program Videos Produced

With support from this fund, the college was able to create three new MCC program videos. These videos are tools that can be used to further educate our community about MCC programs of business, psychology and criminal justice. With online accessibility, the videos can be presented in person or links can be shared virtually with businesses, parents and prospective students who are exploring career options.

You can view and share these videos now by visiting montcalm.edu/program-videos.



MCC Nursing Program Trailer Enhancements

MCC students actively serve our community. Because of the MCCF support provided to enhance the MCC nursing program trailer, nursing students have been able to directly interact with people in community at various events, such as health fairs. The trailer's bold branding also creates additional awareness about MCC and draws attention to the many opportunities in health careers.

We **appreciate** the continued support of our MCC Foundation donors

(Recognizing gifts received from July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023)

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Montcalm Community College prepares students for great careers in high-demand, high-wage fields. We offer small class sizes and class times that fit students' schedules on our campuses in Sidney and Greenville. For more information, visit montcalm.edu or call (989) 328-1277.

Associate degree programs

Accounting, A.A.S.
Agricultural Operations, A.A.S.
(Michigan State University)
Associate of Science & Arts
Business Entrepreneurship, A.A.S.
Business Management, A.A.S.
Business Marketing, A.A.S.
Computer Network Administration
Criminal Justice A.A.S.
Digital Arts A.A.S.
Early Childhood Education, A.A.S.
Education Support, A.A.S.
Industrial Automation Maintenance A.A.S.
Medical Office Administration, A.A.S.
MiTransfer Pathway
Arts Associate of Arts
Biology Associate of Science
Business Associate of Science
Communication Associate of Arts
Criminal Justice Associate of Science
Exercise Science Associate of Science
Psychology Associate of Arts
Social Work Associate of Arts

Office Administration, A.A.S.
Registered Nursing (ADN), A.A.S
Skilled Trades, A.A.S.
Sports Management, A.A.S
Technical Design in Manufacturing, A.A.S.
Web Developer & Programming, A.A.S.
Welding, A.A.S.

Certificate programs

Apprenticeship Training
Business Management Certificate
Computer Technology Certificate
Criminal Justice/Corrections Certificate
Cyber Defense transfer program
Digital Arts Certificate
Early Childhood Development Certificate
Industrial Automation Maintenance Certificate
Information Processing Assistant Certificate
Liberal Studies Certificate
(Michigan Transfer Agreement)
Skilled Trades-Machinist Certificate
Skilled Trades-Maintenance Mechanic Certificate
Skilled Trades-Tool & Die Maker/Designer Certificate
Web Developer & Programming, Certificate
Welding Technology Certificate

Bachelor's degrees through articulation

Business Administration Professional Track, A.A.S.
(Leading to B.S. at Ferris State University)

Nursing Professional Track, A.A.S.
(Leading to B.S.N. Through Articulation to Partner Institutions)

Job training programs

- Business Management Job Training Program
- Child Development Associate Job Training Program
- Digital Arts Job Training Program
- Manufacturing Fundamentals Job Training Program
- Michigan Corrections Officer Training
- Office Applications Job Training Program
- Programming Job Training Program
- Web Developer Job Training Program
- Welding Job Training Program

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Montcalm Community College prepares students for great careers in high-demand, high-wage fields. We offer small class sizes and class times that fit students' schedules on our campuses in Sidney and Greenville. For more information, visit montcalm.edu or call **989-328-1277**.

Transfer

The MiTransfer Pathway degrees are intended to set students up to transfer for a bachelor's degree to a participating college or university through the MiTransfer Pathways Project agreement. Students interested in pursuing this program are strongly encouraged to meet with an MCC counselor in addition to a counselor from the college or university they intend to transfer to determine their plan.

MiTransfer Pathway Arts Associate of Arts

Visit montcalm.edu/mitransfer-art for more information.

MiTransfer Pathway Biology Associate of Science

Visit montcalm.edu/mitransfer-biology for more information.

MiTransfer Pathway Business Associate of Science

Visit montcalm.edu/mitransfer-business for more information.

MiTransfer Pathway Communication Associate of Arts

Visit montcalm.edu/mitransfer-communication for more information.

MiTransfer Pathway Criminal Justice Associate of Science

Visit montcalm.edu/mitransfer-criminal-justice for more information.

MiTransfer Pathway Exercise Science Associate of Science

Visit montcalm.edu/mitransfer-exercise-science for more information.

MiTransfer Pathway Psychology Associate of Arts

Visit montcalm.edu/mitransfer-psychology for more information.

MiTransfer Pathway Social Work Associate of Arts

Visit montcalm.edu/mitransfer-socialwork for more information.



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