



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

**M**ontcalm 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. ■

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