

'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." ■

