



2020 Community Report

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Dr. Stacy H. Young, at right, succeeded Robert C. Ferrentino to become MCC's sixth president.



MCC welcomes its first **female** president

By Shelly Springborn

During this unprecedented time, Montcalm Community College transitioned to a new top leader in 2020.

Dr. Stacy H. Young joined MCC Jan. 1 as the institution's sixth president and the first woman to hold the top leadership position at the college, succeeding Robert C. Ferrentino, J.D., who served as president for 10 years.

With extensive business experience and her doctoral degree in Leadership with an emphasis in Higher Education Administration, Dr. Young has served students in education for more than 22 years as adjunct faculty, faculty, chairperson, dean and now president.

During her first year, Dr. Young has navigated the college through the coronavirus pandemic; led a strategic planning process with a committee working on reviewing and revising the college's mission, vision and values statements and charting a course for the next three years; conducted student focus groups during the coronavirus shut-down to identify needs in an effort to better serve our students; tackled academic initiatives such as diversity, inclusion, equity, program reviews and part-time versus full-time students; enhanced college communications; collaborated with planners on needs for facilities improvements; all while working to build personal relationships with students, staff, faculty and community members.

Her expertise was quickly recognized as she took the helm and was immediately faced with a nearly decade-long decline in student enrollment.

At the beginning of the year, Dr. Young convened an Enrollment Task Force to focus on needs and strategies to grow student numbers. Comprised of representatives from all areas of the college, the group reviewed recruiting processes and worked together to devise a plan to enhance

student recruiting and retention initiatives. The group worked tirelessly throughout the spring – navigating the shutdown of the college due to the coronavirus pandemic – and ultimately increased summer enrollment by eight percent through creative recruiting and marketing initiatives. This was done remotely, without the usual in-person school visits and recruiting events traditionally used to attract students. In addition, college staff completed advanced training in July with Ruffalo Noel Levitz and continue to work with this organization to enhance recruiting practices.

Less than three months into her tenure, Dr. Young was faced with a quickly emerging global pandemic. With heightening concerns over coronavirus, on March 16 spring classes were moved to an online format. On March 19, the college's buildings were closed, and employees began working remotely. This continued through much of the summer, with small groups of employees returning to the college's campuses until all were back on site just a week before fall classes began on Aug. 22.

MCC's instructors and staff were prepared for the shift to online, and while the transition had some challenges, many students reported that they felt supported during the change. Although facilities were closed, all college support services – such as tutoring, advising, testing and others – were available online for the remainder of spring semester, throughout the summer and again during fall semester.

The college successfully returned to in-person instruction for fall semester, with some modifications, including four class formats – in-person, online, hybrid and live online.

"We heard from many students that they wanted to be back on campus, while others simply were not comfortable in the classroom setting, but still wanted face-to-face instruction," Young said.

MCC's new live online option provides both, offering in-person instruction from the comfort of another

location through a real-time online presentation. More than \$250,000 in technology investments were needed to implement this option in classrooms across both campuses. These upgrades were partially funded by the MCC Foundation as well as a grant through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which was enacted to provide direct economic assistance for American workers, families and small businesses during the coronavirus pandemic.

“We’re embracing options to reduce barriers for students and offer the level of instruction they want and deserve,” Young added.

As a precautionary measure, MCC finished its final month of fall semester online and is poised to resume in-person instruction with the start of spring classes on Jan. 16, 2021.

As the college continues to navigate a spike in coronavirus cases in Montcalm County and surrounding areas, Young said, “This virus demands that we remain alert and make

constant adjustments to our plans.”

Although the pandemic has occupied much of the year, other needs continue to be addressed.

With aging facilities, college leaders continue to look at building capacity for the future to support increasing demand for additional instruction in high-demand, high-wage program areas such as health care, business, skilled trades, advanced manufacturing and others.

“Needs for instruction have vastly changed since the college was established more than 50 years ago,” Dr. Young said. “We are considering our options for remodeling some instructional spaces to make them better suited to the advanced training we deliver”.

“Critical areas are the facilities used for classes in life sciences, health care and some of our general education coursework,” she said. “It is imperative that we are able to keep up with the leading-edge instruction needed to train workers in these high-demand, high-wage careers.”

A challenge for MCC and other institutions of higher education is to provide relevant hands-on training for health care professionals in the current coronavirus environment.

“More than ever, we are relying on classroom instruction as health care facilities are forced to limit in-person, hands-on training due to coronavirus,” Dr. Young said. “We have technology that allows us to deliver this instruction, but we do not have enough capacity to sustain the need for more trained workers.”

Moreover, as a champion for Futures for Frontliners, a statewide program that offers free tuition at a community college for qualified applicants who worked on the frontline during the pandemic, MCC continued to build capacity to meet the demand and deliver the quality instruction needed to retrain area workers through this program. ■



MCC President Dr. Stacy H. Young enjoys connecting with students, staff, faculty and community members.

Highlights of college and student achievements



By Shelly Springborn

MCC celebrated its 53rd Commencement on July 11 during a drive-thru ceremony. While it was not the traditional pomp and circumstance due to the coronavirus shutdown, the college celebrated the accomplishments of its graduates, who persevered during the final months of their education to complete their college credentials. A total of 212 associate degrees and 128 certificates were awarded to 265 students for the 2019-2020 academic year.

With the need to show off our campuses in the pandemic environment, MCC developed a new virtual tour this year so people can “visit” the college without making a trip to one of our campuses. This tour shows MCC’s Sidney and Greenville campuses, classrooms, instructional labs, service areas, outdoor facilities and more, and may be viewed on our website at montcalm.edu/virtual-tour.

Speaking of “going virtual,” MCC got creative in connecting with its community of learners as the pandemic progressed. Services such as counseling and advising,

tutoring, testing, Writing Center and Math Center support, library and others embraced students in the virtual environment; a series of student sessions was presented over the summer during which MCC staff provided an overview of various services and students could ask questions during real-time interaction; a series of program visits to learn about MCC’s offerings was presented throughout the fall in a live online format; and the college implemented a Live Chat feature on its website with highly trained staff available to answer questions almost instantly.

Early College at Montcalm Community College continued to grow. This year, the seventh class of Early College students graduated. All of the students earned a certificate or degree, 15 are pursuing additional education, four are working full-time jobs in their respective fields. Thirty-one Early College students are expected to graduate in May 2021, while 34 are in the class of 2022 and 31 are in the class of 2023. Participating schools include Belding, Carson City-Crystal,

Central Montcalm, Greenville, Ionia, Lakeview, Montabella, Saranac, Tri County and Vestaburg.

Dual enrollment also remained strong, with 392 students completing 3,044 credit hours. 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: Carson City-Crystal High School, Carson City-Crystal Alternative Education, Central Montcalm High School, Fellowship Baptist Academy, Fulton High School, Greenville High School, Gull Lake Community Schools, Ionia High School, Lakeview High School, Michigan Connections Academy, Michigan Great Lakes Virtual Academy, Montabella High School, Niles High School, Northridge High School, Saranac High School, Tri County High School and Vestaburg High School.

For the sixth year, MCC was honored

Highlights from 2019-2020

- 314 students earned 390 associate degrees, certificates and job training certificates of completion
- 1,945 students enrolled in credit classes
- The average age of MCC's credit students was 25
- MCC's average class size was 15 students
- 61 percent of the credit students were female
- 392 students were dual enrolled (high school students taking MCC classes for both high school and college credit) and completed 3,044 credit hours
- MCC offered 95 credit classes online and 63 hybrid (partially online and partially in the classroom) courses
- 34 veterans enrolled in credit classes

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.

Before the pandemic shut down in-person activities, six MCC students earned high honors during the Business Professionals of America (BPA) State Leadership Conference at Davenport University in February. While they qualified to attend the national Leadership Conference in May in Washington, D.C., the conference was cancelled. They included Gabriella Anderson, of Sidney; Jessi Osterman, of Carson City; Kristina Rousseau, of Stanwood; Steven Tripp, Jr., of Greenville; Steven Tripp, Sr., of Greenville; and Chrysti Velting, of Greenville.

A total of 952 students were named to MCC's honors lists during the academic year, including 468 during the 2019 fall semester and 484 during the 2020 spring semester.

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). ■

MCC's 2019-2020 budget



Income

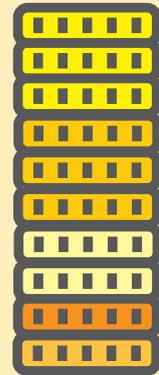
Property Tax - 38%

Tuition & Fees - 37%

State Appropriations - 23%

Other - 1%

Grants - 1%



Expenditures

Instruction - 37%

Institutional Administration - 22%

Physical Plant - 11%

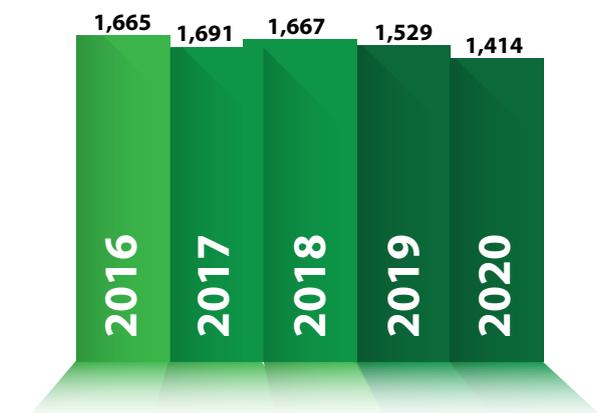
Instructional Support - 11%

Debt Services & Other - 8%

Student Services - 9%

Public Service - 2%

2016-2020 Fall Semester Credit Headcount





Developing the area's workforce

By Shelly Springborn



MCC student Scott Christensen prepares to test a program for the robotic arm.

Based on workplace demand and industry projections, a continued focus for Montcalm Community College this year was to maintain high-value programming tied to advancements in a variety of skilled trades career areas.

During this unprecedented pandemic year, MCC's workforce development team has continued to be outward-looking to respond to the needs of the changing labor market while companies sometimes simply struggled with basic operations due to the statewide shutdown, precautions to reduce the risk of workplace sickness and more.

As industry partners worked to maintain adequate staffing levels, the college remained flexible in its ability to provide necessary training through shifts to online instruction

and heightened precautions in its in-person lab and classroom settings. The college quickly addressed new social distancing requirements in labs and other areas to help ensure a safe instructional environment, as well as adjusting scheduling to accommodate student needs.

MCC also continued to partner with several area businesses to provide customized training through the Michigan New Jobs Training Program (MNJTP), which allows community colleges to provide free training for employers that are creating new jobs and/or expanding operations in Michigan. However, due to coronavirus, MCC Dean for Industrial Education and Workforce Training Susan Hatto said much of that training was placed on hold and is being revisited as the year ends.

That didn't stop the college from



Caleb Watson, of Ionia, learns how to make pneumatic connections.

industry-related programs, with 124 of them attending classes under the sponsorship of their employers. A majority of these students are following a customized apprenticeship program, ultimately leading to “journeyman” status and its associated career and earnings growth.

A challenge as the pandemic continues is to consider employers’ uncertainty over what skills their workers will need and how those will change as the economy recovers, potentially leading to additional realignment of the college’s offerings and delivery methods.

Because many occupational programs, such as welding, robotics

and others, rely on in-person, hands-on instruction, MCC is continuing to explore creative ways to support students and businesses as the pandemic continues and faculty adopt new ways of teaching.

“We are sensitive to the fact that training is important for area businesses, but mitigating COVID is also important,” Hatto said. “As the community’s training partner, we are committed to remaining flexible to meet evolving industry and employer needs for skilled workers.”

For more information

Visit montcalm.edu/workforce

Email susan.hatto@montcalm.edu

Call 989-328-1254

continuing to plan for building capacity in key areas to serve industry needs as businesses came back online after the shutdown.

Hatto and her team have continued to assist companies in seeking funding for workforce training. The college has also devised a plan to enhance its equipment, curriculum development and tuition assistance through grants and other funding options.

“This will allow us to take our curriculum and training equipment to where we need to be to better serve area businesses as industry standards change,” Hatto said.

During the pandemic, MCC’s partnerships with local businesses to provide customized apprenticeship training remained strong. Today, 150 students are enrolled in



MCC Welding Instructor Andrew Naranjo, right, helps Peter Ricci, of Sumner, learn techniques using a cutting torch.



MCC's cultural offerings **continued** amid pandemic

By Shelly Springborn

At MCC, 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.

While 2020 began with a variety of traditional, in-person presentations, the year's offerings quickly shifted as the college navigated the coronavirus pandemic. As the college, a variety of entertainment venues and non-essential businesses shut down in March, in-person events such as MCC's annual Chicago trip, Lifelong Learners presentations, musical performances and more were canceled.

However, the new pandemic environment was just a temporary setback, as college planners crafted new and

innovative programs and delivery methods to continue to provide opportunities in a virtual setting.

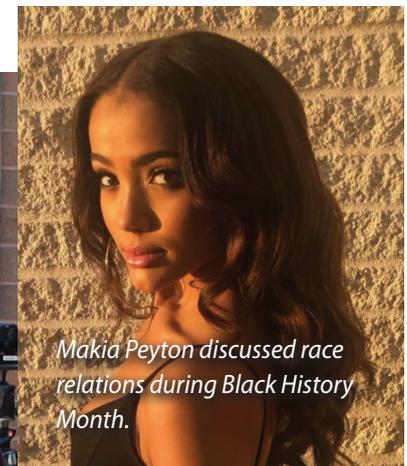
The MCC Alumni & Friends Choir has a long history of musical performances dating back to its establishment in the 1970s. The group's spring concert was one of many performances that was canceled due to the pandemic. However, Alumni & Friends Choir Director Val Vander Mark took the opportunity to do something different to engage the community.

Vander Mark worked with Duane Weed of DW Video and 26 musicians in nine groups to record a musical performance of MCC's Alma Mater and the song "Aquarius." The compilation video was recorded early in the summer in different local community spots, including both MCC campuses, as well as locations in Stanton, Sheridan and Greenville, over the course of a three-day period.

At the time, Vander Mark said, "It was a monumental task, but it's a work of love."



The MCC Alumni & Friends Choir recorded a virtual performance to connect with the community amid the pandemic.



Makia Peyton discussed race relations during Black History Month.



Dr. Louis Moore explored societal injustices during an online presentation this fall.

The video was presented on the college's website and YouTube channel, as well as through its social media, receiving many positive reviews as viewers looked to remain engaged with the college and their local community.

Cultural Events Highlights

In January, a standing-room-only crowd of MCC students and staff experienced "The Meeting," a theatrical production of a theoretical but fictional meeting of two of the most important men of modern times: Malcolm X and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Performed by the Ebony Road Players, the two men debated their varying approaches to the same social problems as they differed in their philosophies.

MCC celebrated Black History Month on both of its campuses during the month of February. A timeline highlighting 60 key historical points that illustrated how black history has helped shape our nation was displayed.

On Feb. 10, the college hosted Makia Peyton, advocate for social justice and oratory speaker. Peyton, a 15-year-old advocate for social justice and oratory speaker, visited MCC in honor of the college's celebration of Black History Month, discussing her experiences with social injustice and race relations in today's world.

The MCC Library brought together its community of readers during its seventh MCC Reads program from January through March. MCC Reads aims to bring together students, staff, faculty and community friends to read the same book and enhance shared learning.

To celebrate Women's History Month in March, MCC Psychology Instructor Jessica Snyder presented "Gender Stereotypes in Advertising," during which she showed a variety of commercials that illustrated the progression of advertising over the past 80-plus years, prompting laughter and reflections about the changes in women's roles throughout history. In addition, the college showed the movie "Iron Jawed Angels." Prior to the movie showing, many employees dressed in clothing similar to suffragette attire to help raise awareness about the achievement of women's suffrage.

MCC partnered with the World Affairs Council to offer its lectures virtually. On March 16, the first day of online classes due to the pandemic shutdown, Lindsey Sheppard, a fellow with the International Security Program at Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS) presented "The Future is Now: Artificial Intelligence and National Security." The presentation was livestreamed, and participants were able to ask questions during the program. It was funded by the MCC Foundation Stanley and Blanche Ash Community College Enhancement Fund.

In September, MCC moved its annual Constitution Day program to a live online presentation with Social Science Instructor Dr. Todd Adkins.

As the nation continued to experience uncertainty amid the pandemic, the college livestreamed "Visible Injustice, A Talk with Dr. Louis Moore." From an academic perspective, Dr. Moore explored injustices that have long occurred but are recently more visible in society, including protests, civil unrest and calls for change.

In November, MCC celebrated Veterans Day with a moment of silence for all veterans, as well as a live online presentation by Jas Boothe, a former Army officer who shared her experiences to overcome a variety of obstacles in her life. The college also celebrated Native American Month. ■

For more information

Visit montcalm.edu/arts-and-culture
Email cultural-events@montcalm.edu
Call 989-328-1065