



Northwestern Michigan College Update  
January 2014

## Strategic Leadership

### **First in Michigan to offer community college bachelor's degree**

Northwestern Michigan College, the state's first community college, is the first community college in Michigan to offer its own fully accredited bachelor's degree. The college has received official notice that the Higher Learning Commission's Institutional Actions Council has approved NMC's request to offer a bachelor of science in maritime technology.

Great Lakes Maritime Academy cadets Nathaniel Lammers and Matthew O'Donnell were the first two NMC students to receive the college's Bachelor of Science in Maritime Technology.

"This accreditation is important for a number of reasons to a number of our stakeholders," said NMC President Timothy J. Nelson. "For our students in the Northwestern Michigan College Great Lakes Maritime Academy it means they can graduate earlier, join the workforce earlier and accumulate a more traditional number of credit hours in pursuit of their bachelor's degree. Our estimate is that this degree path will save cadets in the neighborhood of \$10,000 and allow some to go to work a semester earlier. Given current starting rates for our maritime graduates that could mean as much as \$30,000 in extra earnings.

"This degree is also important to our college and to the state of Michigan. As the first community college in the state to achieve accreditation to offer a baccalaureate degree, our success in delivering this program can, and should, serve as an example that there is sound logic in allowing community colleges to provide baccalaureate credentials in fields that leverage their individual expertise and assets."

Jerry Achenbach, Superintendent of NMC's Great Lakes Maritime Academy said the new degree offering will benefit not only current students, but GLMA alumni as well. "The ability to offer a four-year degree will put us on an even playing field with the other six maritime academies in the nation. I look forward to working with our alumni in an effort to create a path for them to earn a four-year degree. It's an option that many of them have never had before."

NMC hosted a visit of the Higher Learning Commission in August to assure the accrediting body that the necessary curriculum and support services were in place to offer courses at a new degree level.

Community college baccalaureates were made possible when the Michigan State Legislature approved a bill in December 2012, subsequently signed by Michigan Governor Rick Snyder in January 2013, that authorized Michigan's 28 community colleges to offer bachelor's

degrees in four areas: maritime technology, energy production, culinary and cement technology.

“As we examine additional degrees in the areas of energy production and culinary, we can and will learn from our experiences in getting this degree established,” Nelson said. “This degree is important for industry that supported our pursuit of both legislation and accreditation. NMC’s maritime program will continue to graduate top talent for an important sector of our economy.”

NMC’s Great Lakes Maritime Academy was established in 1969. The academy is one of only seven in the nation, and the only located on a body of freshwater. The GLMA currently has 186 cadets enrolled and admits 60 per year.

The academy prepares college students to become merchant marine officers and business professionals in a global marketplace. Curricula ranges from seamanship, navigation and piloting to steam and diesel engineering, along with 276 days of commercial sea time. NMC maritime alumni sail with fleets of the Great Lakes and oceans, with many serving as masters or chief engineers. The GLMA boasts a 100 percent employment rate for graduates.

### **NMC Aviation now offers helicopter training**

Helicopter pilot training is now available through NMC’s Aviation division, offering students yet another option to expand their skill portfolio and career opportunities.

About five students will begin training at the end of January. The training and the helicopter are being provided by TC Helicopters, a local company that offers helicopter training, sightseeing and commercial helicopter services.

“The advantage is that there’s very few helicopter schools in the Great Lakes region. It’s an opportunity that we can bring close to home,” said Aaron Cook, NMC’s Director of Aviation.

“I think northern Michigan is underserved as far as helicopter training is concerned,” agreed Mike Terfehr, president of TC Helicopters. “It’s going to make it a lot more accessible for folks.”

Cook said he expects most students will still begin with fixed-wing training that

NMC already offers and then transition to rotor wing, or helicopters. As with fixed-wing aircraft, students can sit for several helicopter rating exams including private, instrument and commercial. All exams are administered by the FAA. Most students pursue a rating per semester, Cook said.

It will also create another option for the 20 percent of aviation students who come from the community, Cook said. Already pilots, such students aren’t pursuing a degree but simply want an opportunity to earn extra ratings.

“It’s another facet of aviation that students can be exposed to. We’re an international program and we draw students from all over the world. This is another offering that attracts students to us,” Cook said.

Terfehr said a helicopter simulator will also be available to students. He looks forward to employing some of the students as flight instructors, sightseeing pilots and, eventually, in commercial and utility operations.

“We want our graduates to work for us. This will help bridge the gap to the commercial helicopter world,” he said. “Highly-trained helicopter pilots are in demand. We’re going to work diligently to make sure our top graduates have job opportunities.”

Other career opportunities include oil platform transportation, power line inspection, air ambulance transport, corporate transportation, and work in the logging and fire fighting industry. Students could also pursue military or Coast Guard careers.

In addition to fixed-wing and rotor wing training, NMC Aviation also offers training in unmanned aerial vehicles.

### **Leading the way in unmanned systems**

NMC offers more than 50 spots in associate degree programs in unmanned vehicles that explore water, land or air. NMC is the only college in the nation with five years of experience in offering all three specializations. Our unique campus locations on a harbor and near an airport give students direct access to the laboratories and research vessels and remote vehicles needed for the programs. Starting salaries in unmanned systems start at \$60,000 and reach \$100,000 or more within just a few years.

NMC is one of 24 public entities in the state of Michigan who have combined to apply with the Federal Aviation Administration to become an Unmanned Aircraft System Test Site. The FAA has released a Screening Information Request (SIR) to commence the selection process for six UAS Test Sites as required by the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012.

### **Harbor project underway**

The Northwestern Michigan College Board of Trustees and the Traverse City Commission both approved their portions of an agreement that has authorized the Army Corps of Engineers to begin a complete rebuild of the harbor at NMC’s Great Lakes Campus on West Grand Traverse Bay. The Corps will pay for \$2 million of the \$2.6 million project with NMC to fund the remainder. The project includes the creation of a new 280 feet long by 15 feet wide break wall, and the dredging and removal of approximately 16,000 cubic yards of sand. Work on the project began in October, and will be concluded in the spring.

## **Student Success**

### **Reverse Transfer Agreements**

NMC has signed reverse transfer agreements with eleven Michigan universities that allow for a more seamless process for students who transfer from NMC to those universities to receive their associate’s degree upon completion of their final requirements. Agreements are in place with Central Michigan University, Davenport University, Ferris State University, Grand Valley State University, Lake Superior State University, Michigan State University, Michigan Technological University, Northern Michigan University, Spring Arbor University, Western Michigan University and Northern Michigan University.

### **NMC awards conferred**

In addition to establishing reverse transfer agreements with universities across the state, NMC's Student Services have implemented a number of initiatives aimed at increasing the student completion rate. These efforts continue to pay off as the number of NMC awards conferred is at all-time high levels.

#### *Awards conferred*

2009-2010 – 475

2010-2011 – 618

2011-2012 – 706

2012-2013 – 943

2013-2014 – 933

### **New program: Engineering Technology**

Engineering technology education focuses primarily on the applied aspects of science and engineering aimed at preparing graduates for practice in that portion of the technological spectrum closest to product improvement, manufacturing, construction, and engineering operational functions.

The NMC Engineering Technology degree offers students a broad based curriculum across all areas of technical education, preparing the graduates for emerging job markets and highly technical fields. The program is designed to allow students to focus on areas of interest or specialize in four specializations; environmental testing, electronics, photonics and marine technology. Unmanned systems are a major part of the curriculum.

In an effort to better serve the manufacturers in our area, NMC has created a number of short courses, with industry specific training in advanced manufacturing. This shift in focus allows the college to quickly train or re-train workers to keep up with changing technologies and manufacturing processes. In an effort to better serve the manufacturers in our area, NMC has created a number of short courses, with industry specific training in advanced manufacturing. This shift in focus allows the college to quickly train or re-train workers to keep up with changing technologies and manufacturing processes. NMC has developed expertise in Lean Manufacturing, Lean Office, and Lean Healthcare. Trainers provide workplace-specific training in these areas with documented savings in company bottom lines in terms of strengthened employee performance and waste reduction in manufacturing processes.

### **Early College offerings increase**

Thanks to Early College agreements with Suttons Bay Public Schools and the Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District (TBAISD), and agreements where NMC instructors are teaching college-level courses at Traverse City West High School, Suttons Bay, Grand Traverse Academy and TBAISD, the number of high school students taking NMC courses is up 69 percent over last year. There were 259 students in 2012-2013, compared to 153 in 2011-2012.

NMC and Traverse City Area Public Schools are exploring Early College agreements and working on ways to align English and math curricula to make for a smoother transition for TCAPS students to NMC.

NMC and TCAPS are partnering on a program that will bring Chinese students to Traverse City through collaboration with the Weiming Education Group. Students will enroll in TCAPS as juniors and be dual enrolled at NMC during their senior year of high school. TCAPS and NMC hosted a visit of representatives from Weiming who are interested in co-developing a learning and living center to facilitate such exchanges.

### **Outreach Services**

In order to meet growing needs in three key areas, NMC has created a new office of Outreach Services. The office provides focused support for veterans, current military personnel and their families; high school students dual enrolled or enrolled in early and middle college; and support for international education opportunities including incoming international students, study abroad programs for NMC students, visiting professorships and collaborative projects with international partners.

### **Services for veterans**

NMC is actively committed to helping our military beneficiaries achieve success. A few investments we have made to that end include:

- When an NMC employee who is a reservist is called to active duty, NMC makes up the difference between their military pay and their NMC pay. We continue their family enrollment in all benefits.
- NMC provides no interest loans to veterans who are waiting for processing of their benefit checks so they can enroll immediately.
- NMC is ranked in the top 15% of Military Friendly Schools in the United States and is a Yellow Ribbon School.
- Since 2008, we have been a signatory to the Department of Defense agreement providing in-state (out-of-district) tuition for active duty military and their dependents regardless of their legal residence.
- NMC established an office of Military and Veteran Services in 2012. It has a direct budget of \$145,000 and works with faculty, staff and students to create an environment that leads to veterans success.
- NMC hosted "Hiring Our Heroes" resulting in 23 jobs to veterans offered "on-the-spot."
- Our records indicate that 256 veterans are currently enrolled and using their VA educational benefits.

## **Networked Workforce**

### **Industry Outreach**

NMC is a participant in the New Jobs Training Program that allows funding for new jobs through personal tax withholding in collaboration with the Michigan Department of Treasury. Five new agreements have gone into effect since January 1 representing over 80 new jobs in the region meeting wage/hour requirements, and bringing the total number to nearly 200. These jobs are in advanced manufacturing and value-added agriculture. NMC recently received another award in the amount of \$500,000 as part of the New Jobs Training Program that will allow for the creation of even more jobs in the area.

## **Energy production plans**

NMC has had talks with Traverse City Light and Power about the possibility of the creation of co-generation plants at the main Front Street campus, the University Center and at Aero Park Labs. The natural gas powered co-generation units would create a surplus of energy that could be sent back to the grid at three areas of great energy demand. The Front Street campus is next to Traverse City Central High School, the University Center is next to the area's largest user of electricity, Hillshire Brands, and Aero Park is located amidst all of the business development at the Cherry Capital Airport. TC Light and Power has a shared interest in the project and talks are ongoing.

## **Lifelong Relationships**

### **NMC creates opportunities for life**

NMC serves more than 50,000 learners each year. More than 6,500 credit students, 10,000 Extended Education students of all ages, 1,500 students at the University Center and thousands of visitors to the Dennon Museum Center.

A survey of area residents showed positive impressions of NMC overall (97%), academic reputation (98%) and the value of an NMC education (94%).

The most recent economic impact study shows NMC returns \$2.30 for every \$1 of local and state tax money invested, and \$5.30 in future income for every \$1 students spend on their education at the college.

## **Financial Thriveability**

### **Enrollment update**

Spring semester 2014 enrollment at NMC is 4,396, a decrease of five percent from spring 2013. Enrollment for Fall 2013 was 4,728, an increase over spring 2013 and two percent lower than fall 2012. NMC had record enrollments in Fall and Spring 2011, and the recent declines were projected. NMC's fall 2013 decline is much less than most of Michigan's 27 other community colleges.

### **Budget matters**

NMC once again passed a balanced budget for fiscal year '14, and the FY '13 budget showed a slight surplus.

### **Five-year capital outlay plan**

The capital outlay project request submitted for fiscal year 2015 by Northwestern Michigan College is a multi-disciplinary Student Learning and Simulation Center.

The purpose of the project is to provide a facility to integrate relevant student services and learning support functions, space for student organizations and simulation-based experiential learning and dynamic teaching. These new spaces in the form of flexible capacity multipurpose classrooms and student learning, simulation and interaction areas, will enable students and faculty to use a range of technologies for presentations, communication, simulation and collaboration.

The project scope is to renovate the current West Hall building on campus and expand the building to allow for an additional 35,000 square feet for a Student Learning and Simulation Center. The multi-disciplinary center would include learning spaces designed to promote interactive learning experiences, simulation-based experiential learning and dynamic teaching.

**Cost containment initiatives**

NMC has undertaken a number of initiatives to create savings.

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Estimated Savings</b>	<b>Frequency of Savings</b>
Savings through personnel restructuring and succession planning—reduction of 27 positions or 21.5 FTE in fiscal year 2013	\$758,000	Ongoing
Sharing of Technology Director with Traverse City Area Public Schools	\$50,000	Ongoing
Benefits	\$100,000  \$558,000	We have a recurring bid process to regularly test the marketplace for benefits best practices and prices.  Beginning in January of FY12 employees began sharing in health care costs equal to 20% of the total annual cost. In FY 2014 this amount will be over \$500,000.
Computer and Networking Expenses	\$94,000	Ongoing annual savings through bids
Infrastructure Efficiencies	\$200,000	Ongoing annual savings through integrated and energy efficient lighting, heating and air systems.
Purchased service contracts - three to four annual contracts will be rebid.	\$75,000	Ongoing annual savings through bid process.
Energy Conservation	\$15,000	Ongoing savings through green efforts.

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