

Michigan House of Representatives
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Higher Education
Rep. Scott VanSingel Chair

Muskegon Community College
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President

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Introduction

My colleagues and I are honored to present to you, Chair VanSingel, and members of the newly constituted Higher Education Subcommittee of the Michigan House Appropriations Committee. As a fiscal analyst many years ago with the Senate Fiscal Agency, I understand the challenges facing you and your staff and appreciate the opportunity to share information about my college and the community college movement. Today, I am presenting these notes along with a slide presentation highlighting some of what may be found herein. Please feel free to contact me as per my contact information below.

Muskegon Community College

Muskegon Community College offers 40 associate degree programs and 35 certificate programs and enrolls over 4,000 students in the Fall Semester and 7,000 students year-round. Serving West Michigan's lakeshore region, MCC offers classes in Muskegon (Main Campus and the Sturris Technology Center in Downtown Muskegon), in Ottawa County (Grand Haven, Coopersville, and Holland) and in Newaygo County at NCRESA in Fremont.

MCC was Michigan's top-ranked community college in 2017 by BestColleges.com for its gainful employment, graduation rates, and student earnings outcomes. MCC has earned acclaim as a national leader in student success as an Achieving the Dream Leader College. In 2016, MCC was ranked 27th nationally among the 1,100+ community and other two-year colleges by Value Colleges in its Top 50 Best Value Community Colleges in the U.S. rankings.

Like many of our sister institutions, Muskegon Community College has been an Achieving the Dream College since 2010, and attained Leader College status three years ago. Our institutions attain these accolades by working collaboratively, sharing broadly, and listening carefully to our students, colleagues, and community constituents.

History

The fourth oldest community college in Michigan, Muskegon Junior College was established in 1926 by the Muskegon Board of Education. Originally housed on the third floor of then-new Muskegon Senior High School, the College and high school enrollment had grown beyond the capacity of a single building by 1934.

The Junior College moved into the former Hackley School in downtown Muskegon across from Hackley Park. The building was presented to Muskegon Public Schools by its namesake, local

businessman and philanthropist Charles H. Hackley, after fire had destroyed the original Central School.

In the years after World War II, enrollment climbed quickly and the campus had to grow accordingly. The Muskegon Board of Education, which still operated the College, utilized available space in many of its buildings and rented other community facilities when enrollment exceeded the capacities of those buildings.

Until June 1951, Muskegon Junior College was primarily geared to those students intending to complete at least four years of college. After an enabling act by the Michigan Legislature, the name and educational scope of the College was changed. Muskegon Junior College was renamed Muskegon Community College to reflect the expanded nature of the College's programs.

The College now served a larger number of students with a wider variety of interests. Courses were added in retailing, the vocations, the technical fields, public health, and the trades. These courses enabled young men and women to prepare themselves for a specific field of employment with their two years of training beyond high school.

By the early 1960s, enrollment had topped 2,000 students. The College was operating full-time at Hackley, Vanderlaan, and Wilson schools and part-time at eight other locations. The time had come for another step in the development of the College. The Board of Education formed a Special Citizens Committee to study the entire program and make recommendations. The Committee made several proposals: the College be separated from the public school system; a county-wide community college district be created; a board of trustees be elected to plan, build, and operate the school; and a millage be voted in sufficient amount and for enough years to build and operate the College.

In April 1963, Muskegon County overwhelmingly approved the recommendations of the committee and elected the first Board of Trustees, which went to work immediately and by September had purchased the tract of land upon which the College exists today.

Alden B. Dow and Associates was named architect. By the summer of 1965, drawings were completed and construction began. The Vocational Technical Wing was completed and occupied in the fall of 1966. The following September the entire complex was placed in service. Formal dedication ceremonies were held October 22, 1967.

The first addition to the new campus was the Frauenthal Foundation Fine Arts Center, which was completed in 1968 and named for A. Harold Frauenthal, the Muskegon industrialist whose gift had made the Center possible.

When the new district was created, the name of the College was changed to Muskegon County Community College. In the spring of 1969 at the request of the Board of Trustees, the State Board of Education approved changing the name once again to Muskegon Community College.

In January 1995, a new era of educational opportunity opened with the completion of the Center for Higher Education addition to provide upper-level courses and programs offered by Ferris State, Grand Valley State, and Western Michigan universities. The 90,000 square foot facility, named in honor of former MCC President James L. Stevenson, is home to classrooms, a lecture hall, MCC-TV, Graphics and Printing.

In January 2006, the 40,000 square foot Hendrik Meijer Library Information Technology Center was added to the main building to offer students and the community the latest in communication capabilities, including wireless internet access, state-of-the-art library facilities/technologies and classrooms, and an internet café.

Recent Innovation

Building upon its two decades of offering classes in Grand Haven, MCC opened its Ottawa County Center in 2012 in the Grand Haven Community Center and will soon open a permanent site in Grand Haven Township.

That same year, MCC and the Muskegon Area Intermediate School District (MAISD) launched the Early College of Muskegon County offering select high school students an intense five-year program leading to both a high school diploma and an associate's degree. The concept was expanded and MCC offered Early College of Newaygo County, North Ottawa County Early College and South Ottawa Early College. MCC serves between 450 and 500 students each year, one of the largest early colleges in Michigan and the largest in West Michigan.

In November 2013, Muskegon voters approved \$24 million to support four MCC facilities expansion projects outlined in the College's 2010-2015 Master Plan. Since 2013, the College has raised in excess of \$20 million in grants and private funds (MEDC, Capital Outlay, US EDA Generous Donors) to provide additional support for what has become the largest infrastructure initiative since moving to our main campus in 1967.

MCC signed a purchase agreement in September 2014 to acquire the former Muskegon Chronicle building and an adjacent parking lot for a downtown campus. In December 2017, the \$18.7 million Peter and Carolyn I. Sturru Technology Center opened as the new home to MCC's Applied Technology programs in CAD, Electronics/Automation, Engineering, Alternative Energy, Machining, Metal Casting, Materials, and Welding, as well as to MCC's Experiential Learning Program.

In June 2015, local developer Jonathan Rooks donated the former Masonic Temple to MCC for its Entrepreneurial Studies program and related business-generating activities. Nick Sarnicola, a West Michigan native and highly successful entrepreneur, and his wife, Ashley, then created a \$200,000 permanent endowment through their NextGen Foundation to the Foundation for Muskegon Community College to support an annual \$10,000 cash award for the best business idea generated by an MCC entrepreneurial program graduate. The Rooks-Sarnicola Entrepreneur Institute opened in June 2018 and is home to the Lakeshore Fab Lab.

In August 2015, MCC opened its \$9.6 million Science Center, home to the MCC Life Sciences Department and the College's biology labs and research areas. The facility earned the

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold Certification – one of only four buildings in Muskegon to have received this high honor – for its sustainable strategies used in its design and construction.

The same year, MCC purchased the Muskegon Family YMCA's West Western Avenue property on Muskegon Lake for \$1.17 million as part of the college's community-focused health and wellness initiative, which also included the construction of a new center on campus. The former YMCA facility was re-opened in 2016 as the MCC Lakeshore Fitness Center.

In Fall 2018, MCC opened its million-dollar Automotive Building, the former location of its Physical Plant Building, which is home to its Automotive Technology (AAS), Automotive Repair Entrepreneur (EAAS) degrees and its Automotive Technology Certificate, along with its faculty and student built world-record holding electric dragster Short Circuit.

In November 2018, the 52,000 square foot \$14.1 million MCC Health and Wellness Center opened on the main campus. The facility houses the College's Health, Physical Education and Recreation Department; the Medical Assistant Program; the Athletic Department Office; a state-of-the-art Health Simulation Lab for MCC students in nursing, respiratory therapy, and medical assistant programs; learning spaces and classrooms; the Ron Gaffner Multipurpose Room; a regulation wood floor gymnasium; a one-tenth mile indoor running track; and a fitness center. The Mercy Health Physician Partners Primary Care Center, a collaboration between MCC, Mercy Health, and Grand Valley State University, are also located onsite.

Muskegon Community College is also upgrading and renovating facilities for its Arts and Humanities Department. The \$9 million project, scheduled to be completed for the Fall Semester 2019, involves renovating the former Applied Technology building and moving visual arts and music into the newly refurbished and modernized spaces that will be accessible for students with disabilities.

The Art Department, which boasts award-winning faculty and students, remains popular with students who desire to transfer to a four-year college to complete their remaining art courses. The Music Program is strong and robust, having recently had two ensembles perform at Carnegie Hall's famed Isaac Stern Auditorium.

Additional Highlights and Points of Pride of Muskegon Community College:

- All 13 colleges and universities in West Michigan are members of Talent 2025 and working together to improve our regional economy via the following working groups:
 - Early Childhood Development Working Group
 - Higher Education Working Group
 - HR Council Working Group
 - K-12 Education Working Group
 - K-12 to Post-Secondary Completion Working Group
 - Returning Citizens Working Group
 - Staffing Firm Roundtable
 - Talent Attraction and Retention Working Group
 - Talent Demand Working Group

- Work Ready Communities Working Group
 - Workforce Development Working Group
 - Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Working Group
- **Business and Talent.** MCC provides Customized Business Training, Workforce Analysis, College Credit Courses and Training, and Business Internships. During the past year MCC provided trainings for 35 discrete businesses and has partnered with over 200 local and regional businesses during the past 10 years, including Arconic (Alcoa), ADAC, Anderson, Nichols Paper, Eagle Alloy Group, Global, Gentex, Shape, JSJ, Mercy Health, Hines, and many others.
 - **The Jayhawk Hub,** a one-stop location for providing MCC students with a wider range of student support services and resources ranging from a food pantry to tax preparation, opened Jan. 14 2019. MCC Provost and Executive Vice President Dr. John Selmon noted, “This is another excellent example of the institution’s commitment to supporting student success and completion initiatives. It’s just simply Jayhawks helping Jayhawks.” One in eight people in West Michigan is food insecure. This program helps the College ensure the success of our students by meeting this and other needs.
 - **The MCC Nursing Program graduates** continue to be among the best in the nation. In 2018, they once again exceeded both state and national averages on their first time pass rates on the National Council Licensing Examination for RNs and LPNs. On the NCLEX-LPN side, Muskegon Community College graduates had a 98.2% first time pass rate, compared to just 84.5% nationally. Meanwhile, on the NCLEX-RN exam, MCC graduates enjoyed a perfect 100% first time pass rate versus 87.85% in the nation.
 - **Muskegon and Newaygo Promise Scholarship Program.** The Muskegon Area Promise is a program providing two free years of college for qualified (3.5 GPA and above) students residing in the Muskegon Area Intermediate School District. Similarly, the Newaygo Promise provides two free years of college for qualified (3.0) students residing in Newaygo and living within the boundaries of the NCRESA Intermediate School District. These robust programs serve 450 and 150 students in Muskegon and Newaygo respectively. The graduation rates of MCC’s Promise students routinely exceeds 80 percent.
 - **MCC boasts one of the largest early college programs in Michigan,** with 499 students enrolled in Muskegon, Newaygo, North Ottawa, and South Ottawa counties. Early College Muskegon County is a program that allows selected students to extend high school by one year in order to earn both their diploma and up to 62 college credits from Muskegon Community College at no cost to the student. Students receive special support to help improve their academic performance as they complete both high school and college coursework and secure their future education and career related goals.
 - **Sturris Technology Center.** Situated in Muskegon’s historic downtown, the \$14.2 million Center houses MCC’s Applied Technology programs in CAD/CNC, Electronics/Automation, Alternative Energy, Welding, Machining, Materials Testing, Foundry, Engineering, and Alternative Energy. The 85,000 sq. ft. facility also contains the Rooks|Sarnicola Entrepreneur Institute, with its Ann and Richard Kraft Rapid Prototype

Center, Lakeshore Fab Lab, MCC Bookstore, and Best Financial Credit Union. MCC's Experiential Learning classroom is located within the Center, too.

- MCC is one of only 19 members nationally of the National Science Foundation's Community College Undergraduate Research Initiative. "Most undergraduate research that's conducted by students in their undergraduate years is done usually during their junior and senior year at a four-year institution," said Darren Mattone, MCC's Undergraduate Research Program Director. "MCC is unique in that we are starting students very early in their college career doing research, starting with a question, researching the question, developing a hypothesis, and carrying out and researching their topic on their own. This isn't a canned lab activity."
- MCC is the most prolific producer of respiratory therapists in West Michigan, which includes delivering real-time and interactive television didactic classes to Northwest Michigan students in Traverse City at Munson Medical Center. The students take the same courses as the Muskegon-based students, complete their clinical rotations at Munson, and receive their diplomas from MCC.
- The college's sleek electric dragster, "Short Circuit," constructed by MCC students and faculty, can top speeds of 100 mph. On September 9, 2015, the vehicle reached 110.57 mph in 11.7421 seconds while streaking across the quarter-mile track at US-131 Motorsports Park in Martin, Michigan. The finish time marked the third world record in three years for "Short Circuit," now competing in the DR/C 192-volt class.
- Our university partners – Ferris State University and Grand Valley State University – offer courses in MCC's James L. Stevenson Center for Higher Education.
- MCC offers 17 men's and women's intercollegiate sports – the most of any Michigan community college.
- MCC's University Park Golf Course is the only community college-owned golf course in the state.
- A 15-acre forested setting situated adjacent to the MCC main building, the Kasey Hartz Nature Area, is an outdoor learning laboratory of trails, streams, fauna and flora protected for the enjoyment and education of students of all ages.

MCC is fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to share today. Please feel free to contact me as follows:

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