Keeping pace with the dynamic changes happening here at Muskegon Community College requires periodic updates. One of my distinct honors as president is to share our many accomplishments.

Since the last Reflections, the College celebrated the grand opening of the Lakeshore Fab Lab and the Rooks|Sarnacola Entrepreneur Institute. Joining us in early June at the downtown locale were students, residents, business leaders, elected officials and philanthropists. (see page 16).

Our Sturrus Technology Center hosted Governor Rick Snyder and other State leaders for the signing of the Marshall Plan for Talent, an initiative intended to fundamentally restructure Michigan’s education and talent development system. (see page 9).

On main campus, much is happening as well. Our world record-setting Automotive Technology program moved into its new home – a renovated and expanded Plant Building located to the north of the Stevenson Center for Higher Education. Moreover, the grand opening of the $14 million, MCC Health and Wellness Center on Nov. 27 will transform our campus. (see page 19). Beginning in January, our students and staff will begin to reap the benefits of the well-designed, 52,000 square foot facility. A collaborative effort of the College, Mercy Health, and Grand Valley State University, the Center will house multiple MCC programs, including Health and Physical Education, Medical Assistant, and our new Simulated Mannequin laboratories. Notably, a fully equipped and staffed Mercy Health Primary Care Clinic will address the medical needs of the underserved eastern quadrant of Muskegon County.

In September, we welcomed a new sculpture piece on campus that honors the late Dr. Doris Rucks, who was a prominent figure in the community. She served as an esteemed faculty member at MCC and Grand Valley State University. MCC alumnus Ari Norris sculpted the piece located near the Stevenson Center Entrance. (see page 15 and back cover)

In October, the return of the dueling pianos show highlighted the 2018 Founder’s Day Celebration. More than $18,000 was raised to benefit the Jayhawk Pantry which helps feed our students who might otherwise go without a daily meal. (see page 12 and 13).

We are constantly seeking to improve the educational experience for our students and our contributions as a community partner. I wholeheartedly invite you to stop by campus to see our changes firsthand and to fully participate in all that MCC has to offer.

Dale K. Nesbary, Ph.D.
President
Muskegon Community College
O n a late August evening at Fifth Third Ballpark, MCC alumnus Denny Baxter ’74 gazes down from the conference room windows and surveys the colorful landscape which, 25 years earlier, he and business partner Lew Chamberlain created from nothing.

They recognized the opportunity to create something unique in West Michigan. They brought together a unique group of businesses that included the West Michigan Whitecaps, a minor league baseball team; Blue Cap Entertainment, a concert and special event production company; and other businesses that contributed to the overall entertainment and event experience.

The Whitecaps, along with the other businesses, have all contributed to the success of Fifth Third Ballpark and the community it serves.

Denny Baxter ’74
Living the Dream

By Peter S. Keppel
MCC Communications Manager

Denny Baxter ’74 has always loved baseball. He grew up in Muskegon, Michigan, and played baseball throughout his life. After attending Muskegon Community College and Muskegon Heights Public Schools, he became a certified public accountant and began his career path in the financial industry.

Baxter’s passion for baseball came from his father, who was a professional baseball player. He played for the Detroit Tigers and the Cleveland Indians, and his love for the game was infectious.

Baxter credits his time at MCC as being a foundation piece in terms of what he became. It was at MCC that he learned the importance of education and the value of a strong work ethic.

After earning his degree from MCC, Baxter attended Michigan State University and received his master’s degree in business administration.

Baxter’s journey through his professional career led him to become the president and CEO of Blue Cap Entertainment, a company that produces concerts and special events at Fifth Third Ballpark.

Baxter’s passion for baseball has never wavered. Along the way, they have met different people who don’t know how it happened. It was like one action after another and here I am. It certainly wasn’t planned.”

Baxter’s success is a testament to the power of passion and dedication. He has always loved baseball, and his commitment to the sport has allowed him to achieve success in his business endeavors.

Baxter’s story is one of perseverance and hard work. He has never given up on his dream of making baseball a reality in the Midwest. His dedication and determination have allowed him to turn his passion into a successful business that continues to thrive.

Baxter’s success is a reminder that with hard work, dedication, and a passion for what you do, anything is possible. His story is a testament to the power of the human spirit and the potential that lies within all of us.

“Lew and I let folks do their job,” says Baxter, “and you’ve got 30 years and people literally would say to your face, ‘You’re an idiot.’ You’re out of your mind. Sports do not conquer the world. I was the guy that was making things happen.”

Baxter has always been a believer in making things happen. He has always been a go-getter, and he has never been afraid to take risks in order to achieve his goals.

Baxter’s story is one of resilience and determination. He has faced many challenges throughout his career, but he has never given up on his dream of making baseball a reality in the Midwest.

Baxter’s success is a testament to the power of passion and dedication. He has always loved baseball, and his commitment to the sport has allowed him to achieve success in his business endeavors.

Baxter’s story is one of perseverance and hard work. He has never given up on his dream of making baseball a reality in the Midwest. His dedication and determination have allowed him to turn his passion into a successful business that continues to thrive.

Baxter’s success is a reminder that with hard work, dedication, and a passion for what you do, anything is possible. His story is a testament to the power of the human spirit and the potential that lies within all of us.

Baxter never wavered. Along the way, they have met different people who don’t know how it happened. It was like one action after another and here I am. It certainly wasn’t planned.”

Baxter’s success is a testament to the power of passion and dedication. He has always loved baseball, and his commitment to the sport has allowed him to achieve success in his business endeavors.

Baxter’s story is one of perseverance and hard work. He has never given up on his dream of making baseball a reality in the Midwest. His dedication and determination have allowed him to turn his passion into a successful business that continues to thrive.

Baxter’s success is a reminder that with hard work, dedication, and a passion for what you do, anything is possible. His story is a testament to the power of the human spirit and the potential that lies within all of us.
Muskegon Community College is more than a stepping stone for a local family; it is a family affair that has lasted over 60 years! Start, stay and succeed is the foundation for the Grant family legacy that began in 1958 with the patriarch of the family William Grant and his wife shortly after in 1962 Janet Grant. All of the siblings, all of their children, and seven of their grandchildren have attended Muskegon Community College. Now the third generations has recently completed their stay and are on to successful careers. Born and raised in Western Michigan, Muskegon Community College was the ideal options with a diversity of career interests and transfer options after completion. Current MCC faculty and education coordinator, Jennifer Jones is in the middle of the pack. She has taught for eight years in the current position and reached out to family members to piece together the highlights. The timeline shows the career paths, and highlights the college and universities where they continued their education. “MCC was the best start for me and my children. Life has brought me full circle coming back home and doing what I love at an institution that started my career on the right path!” said Jones.

“Many of the professors were absolutely world class. Muskegon Community College is a great start.”

~ Bill Grant

“I believe community college really makes a difference, especially with the residents in our town.”

~ Jan Grant

“MCC was the perfect college for me for my first two years and a good transition between high school and university. I enjoyed my time there and value the education I received from quality teachers and professors.”

~ Julie Hylen Nash

“Many of the professors were absolutely world class. Muskegon Community College is a great start.”

~ Bill Grant

“I believe community college really makes a difference, especially with the residents in our town.”

~ Jan Grant

“MCC was the perfect college for me for my first two years and a good transition between high school and university. I enjoyed my time there and value the education I received from quality teachers and professors.”

~ Julie Hylen Nash

“MCC was the perfect college for me for my first two years and a good transition between high school and university. I enjoyed my time there and value the education I received from quality teachers and professors.”

~ Julie Hylen Nash

“Many of the professors were absolutely world class. Muskegon Community College is a great start.”

~ Bill Grant

“I believe community college really makes a difference, especially with the residents in our town.”

~ Jan Grant

“MCC was the perfect college for me for my first two years and a good transition between high school and university. I enjoyed my time there and value the education I received from quality teachers and professors.”

~ Julie Hylen Nash
Cody Theil Wins Inaugural $10,000 Sarnicola Entrepreneur Award

By Peter D. Koryzno
MCC Communications Manager

Governor Tours MCC and Signs Marshall Plan for Talent

Gov. Rick Snyder visited Muskegon Community College’s Sturms Technology Center in Downtown Muskegon on June 26 when he signed into law the Marshall Plan for Talent.

The initiative is designed to connect employers with educators, to pair students with in-demand careers, and to encourage apprenticeships and memberships with an educational focus on certifications and occupational licensing.

During his visit, Snyder also toured the Lakeshore Fab Lab, located in MCC’s Rooks/Sarnicola Entrepreneur Institute, as well as two of the college’s applied technology programs – automation and welding – inside MCC’s Sturms Technology Center.

The Marshall Plan for Talent will:
Set aside $100 million to prepare students for the 21st century economy, including $10.5 million for career navigators, who are dedicated to help guide students toward their career and associated academic goals. These navigators will be supported by additional tools such as a web-based career exploration platform that connects students to internships, job shadowing opportunities, and other such options in their local area.

Let schools change the way they educate students, using a competency-based approach that results in high-demand skills and credentials.

Allow funding to be used for equipment, additional staff, new curriculum, professional development, industry mentors, testing fees, and other tools schools need to deliver these experiences to students.

Create Marshall Plan Talent Consortiums – groups of educators and employers that partner to change the way students are prepared for careers. This will truly connect educators and employers to ensure that students experience a seamless transition from school to employment to lifelong learning.

Fund $20 million in scholarships and stipends for high school students and low-income residents to get high-demand credentials.

Establish the Innovative Educator Corps, a group of highly-skilled, proven, innovative educators that are nominated by their local employers to partner to change the way students are prepared for careers. This will truly connect educators and employers to ensure that students experience a seamless transition from school to employment to lifelong learning.

Create an awareness campaign for attracting businesses and talent to Michigan.

Cody Theil was a successful entrepreneur and was recognized for his hard work and dedication. He was awarded the Sarnicola Entrepreneur Award, which includes a $10,000 grant from West Michigan. The award is given to startups and owners who show a real passion for their craft and show a continuous improvement in their service. Theil's winning concept is to create a marketing company that taps into an entire generation of hardworking young adults who are not being utilized. His team is composed of an unbeatable team of creatives and technical minds who are waiting to be given their chance. His team will connect this resource with today's small businesses and promising startups, who are "being crushed by the increasing costs of creative work." They're moving at a fast pace and don't have the time to do it themselves. "Because I am part of this generation, I believe in us, and I know we can deliver," continued Theil. "We are a generation of的思想家 who will face each challenge with raw creativity and natural talent. It will be largely reimbursed in knowledge, experience, and portfolio work. While they will be paid, our costs per hour will be much lower than our fellow firms." While all businesses can benefit from our service, we will primarily be targeting small businesses. Preferably those who are heavily invested in the West Michigan area and show a real passion for their craft and believe in their businesses. We will also be targeting startups and owners who show natural zeal.

An Indiana native whose family moved to West Michigan when he was an infant, Theil graduated from Western Michigan Christian High School in 2015. During his junior year, he set his sights on a graphic design career. He enrolled at MCC in Fall 2016 when the Graphic Design Program was in a period of transition. Theil praises MCC Business Department faculty members Kevin Kyser, David Stadal, and Christopher VanOosterhout for making a difference in his life.

"They were just my biggest advocates," he explained. "They worked so hard to get a schedule for me and to get my courses. They really believed in me. Two years ago, I had no idea what college was about. You kind of always get this idea that you’re going to be just another student, another number. But the fact that I got to come here and sit down with the business chair and put together a customized plan, it’s unreal!

He developed his award-winning concept in Stadal’s Entrepreneurship Capstone class at the same time he first learned of the Sarnicola Entrepreneur Award. "On the first day of class, he told us a successful business doesn’t just sell a product or service, it solves a problem," recounted Theil. "I thought about what’s my biggest problem. It was the fact that I was a student working on my portfolio and had a little bit of success meeting with clients, but whenever I would email or call an agency, they didn’t pay any attention to me because I’m just a kid. I really saw an opportunity to provide a solution for both businesses and students.

As for the award, Theil remembered thinking that at the time that it would be great to win, but that it was something out of reach. "Then suddenly you’re sitting in front of this webcam presenting your plan to Nick Sarnicola. It’s the most nerve-racking experience. I’ve spent two years fine tuning this plan and then it finally comes down to this and it hits you and the sweat starts pouring out. What was really cool was meeting him in person and just shaking his hand. He gives you a hug and he’s the most genuine, warmest person. The fact that he’s real. It was a shock to me."

The Sarnicola Entrepreneur Award competitive process itself included two rounds of business plan presentations. In the first round each student had to present to a judging panel comprised of John Brocci and Ozelia Aaron from SCORE and Patrick Adams. The committee then selected two finalists, Theil and Ashley Jagnecki, to present directly to Sarnicola.

Nick was very impressed with both presentations but in the end Cody’s unique and timely idea for a student-based marketing agency that would offer more with Nick than Ashley’s Mexican-themed food truck," explained Stadal. "All the judges thought Ashley’s idea was extremely viable and encouraged her to pursue that dream!" Stadal admittedly was impressed with all the MCC students who competed for the Sarnicola Entrepreneur Award. "All have the potential to be strong, local, entrepreneurs," he said.

MCC’s Entrepreneur Program continues to help high school, college, college students, and adults to develop strong business ideas for local businesses to grow our economy. For more information, please call David Stadal at (231) 777-0304.

"Not only is Cody an immensely talented designer and excellent communicator, he possesses a natural drive that will serve him well as a young entrepreneur," said MCC Graphic Design Instructor Kevin Kyser.

The Sarnicola Entrepreneur Award is aimed at providing a solution for both businesses and students.

The Sarnicola Entrepreneur Award is an annual competition that recognizes emerging entrepreneurs and their innovative ideas. The award was established by Nick and Ashley Sarnicola and the NextGen Foundation, presented to a Muskegon Community College MCC student whose entrepreneurial concept is judged the best in an annual competition. Nick Sarnicola announced the winner on June 1 at the MCC Rooks/Sarnicola Entrepreneur Institute and Lakeshore Fab Lab Grand Opening in downtown Muskegon.

A surprised Theil, fighting back tears of joy, told the audience of more than 100 attendees, "Two years ago, I didn’t even no how to enroll for a classes. I am a first generation college student. I never planned on going to school until a year or two ago.

Thiel’s winning concept is to create a marketing company that taps into an entire generation of hardworking young adults who are not being utilized. His team is composed of an unbeatable team of creatives and technical minds who are waiting to be given their chance. Their goal is to connect this resource with today’s small businesses and promising startups, who are “being crushed by the increasing costs of creative work.” They are moving at a fast pace and don’t have the time to do it themselves.

"Because I am part of this generation, I believe in us, and I know we can deliver,” continued Theil. “We are a generation of thinkers who will face each challenge with raw creativity and natural talent. It will be largely reimbursed in knowledge, experience, and portfolio work. While they will be paid, our costs per hour will be much lower than other firms.”
Respiratory Therapy Program

Respiratory Care Practitioners work in a fast-paced environment where technical and scientific responsibilities are matched by a real need for human relations skills. They are involved in a wide range of life-supporting and life-saving activities. RTPs provide assessment, diagnosis and treatment to patients suffering from heart and lung disorders. They administer life-supporting therapies such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation, oxygen and inhaled drug therapy, and mechanical ventilation to the adult, pediatric and newborn intensive care units.

This program offered at Muskegon Community College has grown significantly since its inception under the leadership of Dan Krueze in 1980 from an 8-month certificate program to now being a 28-month Associate in Applied Science Degree program. Under the direction of Debra Grube, the program continues to evolve.

In 2015, the Respiratory Therapy Department went through a complete renovation. Prior to 2015, this department consisted of a combination classroom and lab. After the renovation the department has now expanded and includes a state-of-the-art classroom with 82-inch TV monitors, a 4-Bed Lab, 2 Individual Testing Rooms, a Storage and Resource Room and a Medical Gas Room. The lab area and the 2 individual testing rooms are set up like a real life patient room complete with oxygen, air and vacuum.

Additionally, this program continues to expand offerings beyond Muskegon to Traverse City. Whenever there is an RT class or lab being held at MCC, there is a cohort of RT students that are participating in class in Traverse City. The MCC Respiratory Therapy Program has a group of students that meet in Munson Medical Center. The hospital has a designated classroom for the RT students participating in class in Traverse City. The MCC Respiratory Therapy Program has a group of students that meet in Munson Medical Center. The hospital has a designated classroom for the RT students participating in class in Traverse City.

The future of Respiratory Therapy is very strong. The US Department of Labor and Bureau of Labor Statistics from 2017 states the employment of Respiratory Therapists is projected to grow 23% from 2016-2026, which is much faster than the average for all occupations. The current minimum requirement is to obtain an Associate’s Degree. Then pass the national credential exam in order to apply for the state license so one can work as a Respiratory Therapist. Although the minimum requirement is an Associate’s Degree, the profession is pushing to encourage students to go beyond the AAS degree for a bachelor degree. MCC has an articulation agreement with Grand Valley State University where those students can do their prerequisite classes at GVSU then apply to the Master’s Program. MCC is accepting Respiratory Therapists that was grandfathered in before all Respiratory Therapists needed to be registered. Upon completing my 1st year in the program, which was December 2nd, 1998 I started working at the Mercy General Campus. After returning from maternity leave for my 2nd child in the Fall of 2001, I transferred to the Sleep Lab at the Mercy General Campus. As an office secretary, which allowed for full-time work during the day. Over the next year and half, I learned as much as possible about performing sleep studies and passed the International Boards to become a Registered Polysomnographic Technologist (RPSGT). From there, I worked 3rd shift as a sleep tech until 2009 when I was asked to transition to daytimes hours to focus on getting the Sleep Lab accredited with the American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM) until it was passed in late December 2009. A few years later, I was asked to lead the Mercy Clinic which had relocated onto the same floor as the Sleep Lab. I was a project lead for the construction of the new Mercy Neurosciences building located on the Mercy Campus at 1277 Mercy Drive which opened in July of this year. This building includes the Sleep Clinic, Sleep Lab, Memory Clinic/Neuropsychological Testing, as well as Mercy Health Healthcare Equipment DME, Outpatient EEG, and Outpatient PFT.

Why did you choose the Respiratory Therapy Program at Muskegon Community College?

I completed my Associate Degree at MCC, then went on to take classes at Grand Valley State University to pursue Physical Therapy. Unfortunately, due to large class loads while commuting back and forth from Muskegon while working 3 jobs, my GPA fell below the required 4.0 to be accepted into the Master’s Program. I still wanted to work in the medical field and after reviewing my options, I found that I could jump into the Respiratory Therapy Program at MCC immediately.

Why did you enjoy most about the program?

I truly enjoyed the professors, Dan Kansas, Dan Fields, and Dale DeVries. They created a comfortable, fun, and engaging environment where students could learn and practice challenging skills. The professors enthusiastically engaged students in class discussions and always answered questions. It was clear that they were passionate about their work and the students they taught.

What kind of student would you encourage to pursue this career?

I would encourage anyone who is interested in joining the medical field. Respiratory Therapy is a great way to gain exposure to almost every area in a hospital or patient care setting from the ER, OR, and special procedures. It can be a stepping stone as it was for me, for a fulfilling lifelong commitment.

Fun Facts about MCC’s RT Program!

The RT Department just completed the Self Study and Site Visit for their 10 Year Re-Accreditation with the American Academy of Sleep Medicine which had been completed for the Medicine Service at the Mercy General Campus. The RT Department just completed the Self Study and Site Visit for their 10 Year Re-Accreditation with the American Academy of Sleep Medicine which had been completed for the Medicine Service at the Mercy General Campus. The RT Department just completed the Self Study and Site Visit for their 10 Year Re-Accreditation with the American Academy of Sleep Medicine which had been completed for the Medicine Service at the Mercy General Campus. The RT Department just completed the Self Study and Site Visit for their 10 Year Re-Accreditation with the American Academy of Sleep Medicine which had been completed for the Medicine Service at the Mercy General Campus.
Founder’s Day Celebration

Over 150 students, alumni, faculty and staff gathered to celebrate the 1926 founding of Muskegon Community College with a lively dueling piano show with proceeds benefiting the Jayhawk Pantry! Thanks to all for attending, sponsoring and celebrating—see you next year!
New Downtown Live Concert Series to Showcase MCC and Community Musicians

The new Downtown Live Concert Series at the Frauenthal Center, 426 W. Western Ave., launched in October and will feature every Muskegon Community College music ensemble, as well as the Shoreline Symphony and West Michigan Concert Winds which are affiliated with MCC.

The 14-concert series, which includes two groups that have performed at Carnegie Hall in recent years, continues through May 2019.

“Having a steady stream of great music, performing in downtown Muskegon to enjoy all the community has to offer are goals for us at MCC,” said Howard Meade, past president of the West Michigan WINDS, which are affiliated with MCC.

MCC Wind Ensemble – Conducted by Daniel M. Meyers and entering its ninth year, the Wind Ensemble is comprised of MCC students, both music majors and non-music majors, interested in preparing and performing advanced wind band literature.

MCC Jazz Ensemble – Comprised of MCC students, the Jazz Ensemble performs traditional and contemporary big-band jazz repertoire.

MCC Honors Orchestra – Conducted by Philip Dev'Young, the Honors Orchestra is a symphony orchestra for MCC students and well as advanced high school students, performing standard orchestral works of the symphony orchestra.

Shoreline Symphony – An adult community symphony orchestra, the Shoreline Symphony brings together volunteer amateur musicians and students from area colleges. The symphony was established in 2012 by founding music director, Anneke Jurcevic, and by MCC. In 2017, Jurcevic won the American Prize in Orchestral Programming’s Wurts-Mansfield Memorial Award in the community division.

West Michigan Winds – An adult community concert band celebrating its 40th anniversary this concert season, the Winds has been affiliated with MCC since 1993. Music Director and Conductor Gail Brechting is in her 23rd year leading the Winds. The band has performed at Carnegie Hall in 2016 and in England, Ireland, Wales, Austria, and Germany.

College Singers – The College’s full soprano, alto, tenor, and bass (SATB) choirs features MCC students and community members performing a wide variety of the choral repertoire. The Singers are under the Direction of Nicholas Palmer.

Collegiates – An audition-based select SATB vocal group, the Collegiates perform a wide range of musical genres from the 17th century to modern contemporary works for small vocal ensemble. The Collegiates are under the direction of Nicholas Palmer.

MCC Wind Ensemble – Conducted by Daniel M. Meyers and entering its ninth year, the Wind Ensemble is comprised of MCC students, both music majors and non- music majors, interested in preparing and performing advanced wind band literature.

MCC Jazz Ensemble – Comprised of MCC students, the Jazz Ensemble performs traditional and contemporary big-band jazz repertoire.

MCC Honors Orchestra – Conducted by Philip Dev’Young, the Honors Orchestra is a symphony orchestra for MCC students and well as advanced high school students, performing standard orchestral works of the symphony orchestra.

Shoreline Symphony – An adult community symphony orchestra, the Shoreline Symphony brings together volunteer amateur musicians and students from area colleges. The symphony was established in 2012 by founding music director, Anneke Jurcevic, and by MCC. In 2017, Jurcevic won the American Prize in Orchestral Programming’s Wurts-Mansfield Memorial Award in the community division.

West Michigan Winds – An adult community concert band celebrating its 40th anniversary this concert season, the Winds has been affiliated with MCC since 1993. Music Director and Conductor Gail Brechting is in her 23rd year leading the Winds. The band has performed at Carnegie Hall in 2016 and in England, Ireland, Wales, Austria, and Germany.

Downtown Live Concert Series 2018-19 Season Schedule

2018

Dec. 7 – West Michigan Concert Winds present “A Cartoon Christmas” @ 7:30 p.m.

Dec. 10 – “All MCC Holiday Celebration” features instrumental and vocal ensembles and small group performances by students and faculty @ 7:30 p.m.

2019

Feb. 24 – West Michigan Concert Winds present “Winners and WINDS” @ 4 p.m.

Feb. 27 – “MCC Music Spectacular” features MCC winds, percussion, vocals and strings – from soloists to large ensembles @ 7:30 p.m.

March 9 – Shoreline Symphony presents “Remix: old tunes, new grooves” @ 7:30 p.m.

April 13 – MCC Wind Ensemble and Jazz Ensemble with local rock band Whoopee Kat in a concert devoted to closing any gaps between traditional music and the rock music world @ 7:30 p.m.

April 14 – MCC Collegiates, College Singers and Honors Orchestra present “Out of This World” featuring music by composers Mozart, Haydn, and John Williams @ 3 p.m.

May 11 – West Michigan Concert Winds present “The Winds Celebrate Gospel Music” @ 7:30 p.m.

May 19 – Shoreline Symphony presents “Symphonicomedy” @ 3 p.m.

Tickets

Tickets are available on the Star Tickets website: http://www.startickets.com/

Dr. Rucks Sculpture Created by MCC Alumnus Ari Norris

Art Norris, a 2016 MCC alumnus, was admittedly honored to have been awarded the contract in 2017 for creating the Dr. Doris Rucks sculpture, which was unveiled during ceremonies on Sept. 26 at its permanent location near the Stevensvold Center entrance on campus.

For his model, he used a 1995 portrait of Rucks, who taught at MCC for 25 years and devoted more than a half century as a community activist and human rights champion in Muskegon County.

“I felt that a pose from an existing photograph would be a strong way to memorialize her, as it would have been an already familiar image to the audience that knew her,” explained the 23-year-old artist who recalled meeting Rucks, who passed away in 2016 at age 92, as a youngster at community events.

For Norris, whose own grandmother had passed away around the time he began the sculpture, the project was cathartic. “A little of my Grandma Norris, as a grandmotheral figure, went into Dr. Rucks’ sculpture,” he admitted.

Working as a student in famed American sculptor Gary Casler’s Gettysburg, Pa. studios, Norris created the piece using Sculpture Modeling Clay, which is an oil-based, non-drying alternative to natural clay. “Never having to be dried or fired, molds are taken directly from the sculpted ‘original’ and the clay is recycled into the next project,” explained Norris, now in his final year in Northern Illinois University’s School of Art and Design Sculpture program.

Specifically, the clay that was used in the Doris Rucks sculpture became the arms, trumpet, and head of my sculpture of Clarence Zylman, Norris’ “Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy.”

That Norris work will be unveiled at a later date in downtown Muskegon.

The process produces a permanent sculpture, cast in bronze, which will last for centuries,” said Norris, noting that the casting was completed in Eric Blome’s private studio in Woodstock, Ill. The Rucks sculpting took Norris around two months, while the mold making, casting, and clean-up of the bronze required an additional six months.

The sculpture rests atop 1,322 pounds of cloud gray granite extracted from South Dakota. The design was done by Norris and the lettering by Muskegon-based Signet Monument Company, whose consultant Cristine Bouwkamp suggested the color to complement the palaia of the bronze.

“I think the most rewarding part of this process was seeing Doris’ son, David Rocks, and her sister, Gladys Hunter, both so overjoyed and emotional during the ceremony and afterward” concluded Norris. “Seeing the look in their faces, that’s how you know you’ve done it right.”

By Pete Konyo, MCC Communications Director

Ari Norris, a 2016 MCC alumnus, was admittedly honored to have been awarded the contract in 2017 for creating the Dr. Doris Rucks sculpture, which was unveiled during ceremonies on Sept. 26 at its permanent location near the Stevensvold Center entrance on campus. 

Dr. Rucks, sculptor, with his subjects. Photos April and Ari Norris, both MCC art faculty members, and his granddaughter, Lowell Norris.
Lakeshore Fab Lab

A state-of-the-art entrepreneurial hub located in the heart of downtown Muskegon at 388 W. Clay, the Lakeshore Fab Lab, supported and managed by Muskegon Community College

“...gives Lakeshore Fab Lab members the option to build bigger pieces with larger machines and more capabilities...”

Membership is open to anyone — students, entrepreneurs, local businesses, museums, clubs, etc.— from anywhere. Members aged 16 and over, who have completed the required Fab Lab safety class and specific machine-related training, can use the equipment by themselves. Members under 16 years of age must be accompanied by an adult at all times.

To schedule a tour or for more information about the Lakeshore Fab Lab, contact Chris Kaminsky at (231) 777-0212 or e-mail christopher.kaminsky@muskegoncc.edu.

The facility, which officially opened on June 1, 2018, houses more than a half-million dollars’ worth of equipment in a space where inventors can invent, businesses can prototype, and children can learn and gain hands on experience with STEM-based projects.

The facility, which officially opened on June 1, 2018, houses more than a half-million dollars’ worth of equipment in a space where inventors can invent, businesses can prototype, and children can learn and gain hands on experience with STEM-based projects.

What can members do at the Lakeshore Fab Lab?

3D Printing — Create three-dimensional object of all levels of complexity, from toy dinosaurs to high temp resistant engine prototypes

Laser Etching — Engrave wood, glass, and plastic. Make award plaques, unique family portraits on wood from regular photos

Robotics — Learn how to program machines that run today’s modern assembly plants

Metal Milling — Use a machine for metal working/manufacturing applications

Large Format Vinyl Printing — Make banners, decals, car wraps, window clings, and stickers

T-shirt Hot Press — Make custom t-shirts

Digital Scanning — Create 3D printed copies of objects

Plasma Water Table Cutting — Cut metal sheets

Routing — Shape plastic and wood

Situated inside MCC’s Rooks|Sarnicola Entrepreneur Institute at 388 Clay St, the Lakeshore Fab Lab is physically connected to MCC’s recently opened Sturrus Technology classrooms and laboratories to MCC’s recently opened Sturrus Technology classrooms and laboratories for automation, robotics, welding, electrical, foundry, alternative energy, engineering and CAD.

MCC Graduate Receives Gilman Scholarship to Study Art in Italy

Theo Randall, a 2017 MCC graduate who is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Art History at Grand Valley State University, has been awarded a prestigious Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship to study this summer in Florence, Italy.

The Spring Lake, MI, native, who has interned at the Muskegon Museum of Art (MMA) since January 2017, hopes to use the experiences of studying Italian art and visiting museums like the Uffizi Gallery and the Galleria dell’Accademia to create an art education presentation for Muskegon area students.

“It seems only fitting to complete my Follow-in-Service Project at the Museum after studying art history abroad because of my internship and history with the Muskegon community,” explained Randall, a 2017 graduate of the North Otawara Early College program at MCC. “Using what I learn in Florence next summer, I will create a presentation for students at Muskegon Community College and seniors at Muskegon High School.”

The presentation, which also taps into Randall’s experiences as an MMA intern, will cover the similarities and differences between art museums and art in modern America versus those in modern Italy using the example of Florence.

“I believe that the students in this area will benefit from hearing from one of their peers and gaining inspiration about pursuing higher education, studying abroad, and the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship, while also learning about how art communities function in different cultures,” added Randall. “As a graduate of MCC, I relate and understand the challenges these community college students face. Further, as a successful transfer to a four-year institution now preparing to study in Italy, I am bringing proof that further education and study abroad are possible.”

“In addition to focusing on my experience abroad, I will also talk about my time as an MCC student. One course I took at MCC, covering the art of Gettysburg, greatly influenced my decision to study abroad. This six-week, intensive course included an on-site visit to the Gettysburg battlefield, a National Park Service site. This changed the way I viewed learning being able to physically be in the presence of a piece is different than interacting with it only digitally or in textbooks. This method is especially effective in art history because nothing quite compares to actually being able to interact with artworks in real-time, a process that creates a lasting impression of how one views and thinks about art.”

After GVSU in 2019, Randall plans to pursue a Master’s in Museum Studies with a focus in Italian art and to seek a position as a collections manager specializing in Italian art.
Update your alumni information online at muskegoncc.edu/alumni-relations/

Class Notes

Barbara Ann Cooper, 1964
Barbara graduated with an Associate in Applied Science in 1964. She now works in the Office of Human Relations at Tulane University.

Michael A. Cavalier, Jr., 1976
Michael graduated with an Associate in Applied Science in Sociology. He is now retired from the County of Muskegon Health West.

Daniel Pennington, 1983
Daniel got his Associate in Applied Science in Business Administration and now works for Mortenson Construction.

Erin Kuhn, 1992
Erin is the Executive Director of the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission and was appointed by the Governor to the Michigan Infrastructure Council.

Sonya Marie Hernandez, 1997
Sonya graduated with an Associate in Applied Science and now works at Grand Rapids Community College.

Scott Steinhauser, 2003
Scott received his Associate in Applied Science with a Certificate of Practical Nursing in 2010, and now works for the City of Norton Shores.

Meagan Carr, 2006
Meagan graduated with an Associate in Science and Arts and now works for Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan.

Ryan Chalk, 2008
Ryan graduated with an Associate in Science and Arts and went on to study Physical Education at Grand Valley State University. Ryan was hired as an Assistant Coach for the Toledo Softball Program.

Jodi Kittle, 2010
Jodi received an Associate in Applied Science for Advertising and is now the Communications Manager at the Muskegon Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce.

Gary Steffes, 2011
Gary graduated an Automotive Technology Certificate and now works at Udell Tool & Die Inc.

Gregory Sischo, 2013
Greg completed his General Studies degree in 2013 and went on to transfer to Grand Valley State University. He currently works at AgeWell Services of West Michigan.

Seanna Mendez, 2014
Seanna graduated with an Associate in Applied Science in Biology in 2014. She now works for Hilti International.

Adrienne Lewis, 2017
Adrienne was a featured act on the ABC Television re-boot of The Gong Show. Adrienne now attends Ball State University.

My first year as your Alumni Manager has been filled with meaningful engagement from MCC graduates, faculty and community partners to provide programs and benefits that offer value to YOU, our alumni!

Please be sure to keep your contact information up to date to receive the monthly Alumni E-Newsletter as well as follow the MCC Alumni and Friends Facebook Page!

As always, I am available if you have any questions, feedback or would like to discuss how you can be further involved with the MCC Alumni Association.

Go Jayhawks!!

Rachel Stewart
Rachel.stewart@muskegoncc.edu
231-777-0461

Special Message from the Alumni Manager:

Dear Retirees,
We are working hard to communicate and get the word out about what may interest you at Muskegon Community College. The two primary venues are the Email Newsletters sent from the Office of Alumni Relations, and the private “Muskegon Community College Retirees & Friends” Facebook Group.

Nearly 30 of you have already joined this Group on Facebook, but we would love to have all of you! It is a quick and easy way to read the current events, to read about retirees who are doing great things, and to learn of obituary details for those we have lost. Our goal is to engage more of you to offer messages or special memories about MCC—whatever inspires you—to be included in each newsletter.

Please feel encouraged to send Rachel a quick email to rachel.stewart@muskegoncc.edu with ideas you have for encouraging engagement and what you would like to see.

Finally, if you feel comfortable about using Facebook and finding our page, we will help you. Again, email Rachel and one of us will sit down with you!

Best,
Sue Meeuwenberg

New Health and Wellness Center Opens November 27

2017-2022 Strategic Plan Update: Goal #11

Opening of the new MCC Health and Wellness Center this month, a 52,400-square-foot classroom and academic facility on the main campus, is one of the major objectives of the Muskegon Community College Strategic Plan.

Following the grand opening ceremony at noon Tuesday, November 27, 2018, the public can tour the new facility, which will be the home to the Health, Physical Education and Recreation Department, the Medical Assistant Program, and the Nursing and Respiratory Therapy Simulation Center.

A Mercy Health Partners Primary Care Center is also incorporated into the facility. The collaboration between MCC, Mercy Health and Grand Valley State University, will provide MCC nursing students with opportunities for required clinical hours.

The need for a new health and wellness building was identified in a 2010 Facility Master Plan. "Facilities matter," explains MCC Provost, Dr. John Selmon. "Quality buildings and equipment support student success. Our students get to enjoy and experience learning in some of the best educational facilities in Michigan!"

MCC’s five-year strategic plan focuses on five priorities and aims to meet 25 goals by June 30, 2022. Priority #3 of the 2017-2022 strategic plan is focused on "Facilities and infrastructure" and includes six goals that intend to “Provide a state-of-the-art learning environment that meets academic needs while promoting access and sustainability.”

Opening the health facility is one of the final steps to meet goal #11 of the MCC Strategic Plan, "Complete 2010 Facility Master Plan, including construction of health and wellness center, arts facility, and downtown campus.” Campus signage and completion of the arts and humanities building are now the only two remaining projects from the 2010 Facility Master Plan.

Tina Dee, Director of Strategic Initiatives, explained that assessment of community needs and the facilities to meet those needs is an ongoing process. “Next year, we’ll start working on goal #16, which is related to conducting a new facility master plan that assesses future facility needs in Muskegon, Ottawa, and Newaygo Counties.”

In the meantime, she invites alumni and other community members to visit the new Health and Wellness Center and to provide feedback on the Muskegon Community College 2017-2022 Strategic Plan. “Community input on how well our goals meet student and community needs is a vital part of the process.” Strategic plan goals and measurable objectives are available for review at www.muskegoncc.edu/strategicplan.
See the newly installed statue on main campus honoring the late Dr. Doris Rucks. Created by MCC Alumnus Ari Norris, the piece is located in the courtyard outside the Stevenson Center entrance. For information about contributing to the Dr. Doris Rucks Memorial, visit muskegoncc.edu/foundation-for-mcc