

Daniel Boothe

A happy November morning to you and welcome to a very special edition of J-Talk Muskegon Community College's new official podcast. I am your host, Daniel Booth, as always. Rocking the mic next to me and co-hosting the operation is Miss Sue Samaniego as we welcome you to episode #5. Coming up on the program today, we are broadcasting today from Expo 2024 here in Muskegon Community College's beautiful health and wellness center. We will talk to faculty. We will talk to staff. We will talk to prospective students, award winners, you name it, Sue. That is all coming up in just a few moments. But first, Sue, welcome to JTalk and welcome to Expo. You know, Sue, this is one of the very, very special things that we do here at Muskegon Community College because so often we are in our offices. We're all spread out. in different corners of the campus. And this is really a time for students and faculty and staff to kind of all come together once a year. And I really love Expo.

Sue Samaniego

Absolutely. I mean, you can feel the energy. I'm sure you can hear the energy in here. The room is packed with lots of different people, lots of staff and faculty, and just everyone coming in to learn more about what we have available.

Daniel Boothe

Yeah, we have so much to offer here at Muskegee Community College. It's just one of the premier schools here in Michigan, the number one school for transfer students to go on and get their four-year degree. So a lot of people who have a lot of success got their start right here in Muskegon Community College. Well, Sue, the big question of the day is, if you're listening to this and you think, what is Expo? What is Expo? Well, here to tell us all about it, sitting down at the table is the chief marketing and communications officer here at Muskegon Community College. She runs the communications department, the marketing department, and she happens to be my boss, Sue. And my best friend. So, that's great. So be under your best behavior. Welcome to the show, Kristen Tank, everyone. Kristen Tank.

Kristin Tank

Thanks, Daniel. Well, I have to tell you, as soon as we opened the doors this morning, people just flooded in. And it was really interesting to see what they were doing. They looked at the map on the way in, and the 1st place they went was to the robotics area.

Daniel Boothe

Oh, no kidding.

Kristin Tank

The people are so interested in the robotics demo that we have here today. And we have advanced robotics technology at our Steros. Technology Center, and that does seem to be the star of the show right now.

Daniel Boothe

Okay, so Ms. Tank, unfortunately, this is radio, so we don't have the visual element. This is an audio medium. So if you could, to listeners, describe what we're looking at here. Look around the room and tell us what you see.

Kristin Tank

Daniel, I just see a sea of people. There are so many people here, and we knew it was blowing up on social media. When we put We put this out on Instagram, Facebook. We just got so much interest from everyone. People want to be here. They know we're giving away amazing prizes today, including a scholarship and bookstore, \$500 from our bookstore, a \$10,800 package with the scholarship and bookstore.

Daniel Boothe

That's serious money. \$10,000 is serious money.

Kristin Tank

Absolutely.

Daniel Boothe

What are some of the other prizes that they're going to get?

Kristin Tank

Well, we have a MacBook Air. We have AirPods. We have lots of fun. We have fun MCC swag as well, but we have some really great prizes. Beats headphones.

Daniel Boothe

Beats headphones.

Kristin Tank

We've got it going on here today.

Daniel Boothe

Yeah, me and Sue talked about it. This is not your two-for-one Subway coupon prizes. These are serious prizes. I'm sure it's going to be. Absolutely.

Kristin Tank

The college has invested heavily in rewarding the people that come out and hang out with us today. We do this every year and we want them to come back every year.

Daniel Boothe

Tell us what the point of Expo is in a nutshell. What are students here to do?

Kristin Tank

In A nutshell, we have three things we want people here to do. One, we want them to explore our programs and every program that we offer, we have over 80 programs. They are all represented here and we have faculty members that they can meet face to face. And finally, we want them to win prizes.

Sue Samaniego

I really love the way it's set up. This was one of the things that really impressed me last year here. We're set up by color. It's color-coded in terms of what degree path or interest area a prospective student might have. So if they know that they want to do something within healthcare, all of the healthcare programs are together. You can find out about all of them. If you are interested in STEM science type careers, all of those are together. And I just think that's really a great way to do it because it allows people to, pick an area that's really interesting to them, but learn about other areas that maybe they hadn't looked at before.

Daniel Boothe

Tell me a little bit about what it takes to put this on. You've been working on this thing for months, it seems like.

Kristin Tank

Oh, yeah. And it's not just me. We have a huge team of folks. We have a physical plant people who come in and prep the space and make everything look beautiful and even make our campus look beautiful, ready for this big day. We have our folks that are getting the pizzas together. We got Domino's to donate.

Daniel Boothe

As they just walked by, I could not I can't believe the timing of them. And Miss Tank, I'm going to have to pause you. The pizza is here.

Kristin Tank

Absolutely.

Daniel Boothe

Continue. I'm so sorry.

Kristin Tank

Yeah, well, Domino's is a friend to us. They actually donated all 40 pizzas that are going to be consumed here today by our adults and students and families. And we're just super thankful to them for that opportunity.

Sue Samaniego

We have such great community partners and really appreciate Domino's. stepping up and being one of our partners for this.

Kristin Tank

Yes, for sure.

Daniel Boothe

So, Ms. Tank, we're going to let you get back to it, but this is not your last time on the microphone today. Tell us a little bit about, we're going to be hearing your voice in the background. What are you doing today?

Kristin Tank

Yeah, today I will be walking around and interviewing some of our faculty members because we have our professors here to meet with us face to face and we want to hear from them. I'll give them an opportunity to share a little bit about their program.

Daniel Boothe

Well, we promise you that we will pause our program when you're doing your interviews, so we will not steal your thunder at all. Kristen Tank, thank you so much for your time. We so appreciate it and best of luck today.

Kristin Tank

Thanks. Go Jayhawks.

Daniel Boothe

Go Jayhawks. Go Jayhawks. Here sitting down at the table is the director of admissions, Miss Sarah Luger. Sarah, welcome to Jayhawk. This is your first time on the show.

Sarah Luker

Yeah, I'm excited.

Daniel Boothe

Awesome. Sarah, so obviously when someone enrolls at Muskegon Community College, the very first thing they have to do is apply and that's where admissions comes in. Can you tell our prospective students about the admission process?

Sarah Luker

Absolutely. So yeah, step one is to apply for admissions. It's free to do so. It's always free. And you would go to [www.muskegoncc.edu](http://www.muskegoncc.edu). In the upper right-hand corner, there's a button to click apply. And then that will essentially start the process. From there, students would want to request their official high school transcripts or GED transcripts to be sent to us. And if they've previously been in college, they'd want to request those official transcripts to be sent to us as well.

Sue Samaniego

That'll get us started. Yeah. So after that, what's the next step?

Sarah Luker

Great question. So from there, once a student has applied, it takes about 3:00 to 5:00 business days for them to receive an acceptance e-mail. I do recommend students check their junk and spam. Sometimes it can go there. But then they would be eligible to meet with a counselor to make an appointment to get assistance with choosing their classes. planning for their upcoming semester and they would also need to complete their online orientation and then finally registration.

Daniel Boothe

Some really good news after the pandemic. Muskegon Community College, as I understand, has returned to pre-pandemic numbers when it comes to enrollment. How is enrollment looking this year?

Sarah Luker

Enrollment is looking fantastic. It is wonderful to see the parking lots full again. The hallways are full. They're enjoying their face-to-face hands-on classes and enrollment is stronger than ever.

Sue Samaniego

Wonderful. there's so many programs right now that are helping out with tuition and that sort of thing. A really important piece of that is applying for financial aid and making sure that you're eligible and that you get those things that you're eligible. Tell us a little bit about that.

Sarah Luker

Yeah, absolutely. So we recommend students apply for financial aid as soon as possible. That will help them apply for grants, which are free money you don't have to pay back. There's work-study jobs. We're hiring plenty of students on campus. So if anyone listening knows an MCC student and they're looking for a job, please apply for work-study. And financial aid also is linked to many, many scholarships, including Michigan Reconnect. And so Michigan Reconnect can help adults over 25 who are Michigan residents without a degree come back to school and it assists them with paying for their tuition. So we also have the Michigan Community College Guarantee, which is for the class of 2024 and 2025. If you're a Michigan resident graduating from a Michigan high school and graduate class of 2024, 2025, and fill out the FAFSA, that can help you pay for the in-district costs at Miskin Community College. What I love about this new scholarship is it is not tied to your high school GPA, and it is not tied to your parents' income. So there has never been more free money in the pot for whether you're coming right out of high school or an adult coming back to school, now is the time to get started. Very affordable.

Daniel Boothe

Definitely. The last question I want to ask you about a little bit is what makes Muskegon Community College so special is it's not just for 18 to 22 year olds. There are a number of people that make the decision to go back to school and to come back and to get their degree later in life. Can you speak a word of encouragement to those who might be listening, who might be considering going back to school and getting their degree?

Sarah Luker

Absolutely. We are here to help support you. And that would be my word of encouragement is reach out to admissions. We can help you in person with your application, with your financial aid. You don't have to go at it alone.

Daniel Boothe

Sarah Luker crushed it. You're one of the heroes here. She crushes it every single day. It was Kate Community College. Everybody knows it. Yeah, absolute leader here. Thanks so much for the time.

Sarah Luker

Thank you. Have a great day.

Daniel Boothe

You too. Thanks, Sarah. All right, JTUG, rolling right along here at Expo 2024, the Dean of Academic Affairs sitting down at the table right now, Mr. Dan Rintsema-Saibinga. Dan, this is not the first time I've interviewed you.

Dan Rinsema Sybenga

It is not. It's good to be here. I'm back in front of the mic.

Daniel Boothe

Yeah, thanks so much. Full disclosure, Dan was a city commissioner here in the city of Muskegon for a number of years, and I used to be a reporter, and I would have to call him up and ask him all these questions. Much, much better to talk to you today. It is.

Dan Rinsema Sybenga

It's fun to be here at the gym with all this lively activity going around.

Daniel Boothe

100%, man. So listen, your office is located in the Steris Technology Center in downtown Muskegon. It's the old Muskegon Chronicle Building, an absolute beautiful building. And can you tell us first and foremost a little bit about the Steris Technology Center? And then the follow-up question to that is what makes it so special? Because it is absolutely a gem here in West Michigan.

Dan Rinsema Sybenga

It is awesome, yes. We're so proud of the Steris Technology Center and It's so fun being downtown Muskegon. We're basically on the town square surrounding Hackley Park with the Hackley Library, the Hackley Board of Education, and the old Muskegon Chronicle facility, which has a beautiful corner edifice that was designed by Alfred Kahn, one of Michigan's foremost architects. And yeah, the Chronicle over the years built quite the

facility that we took over in 2015 when it was vacant. And we did a massive renovation to it, basically took it down to the studs and then put in all of our manufacturing labs.

Daniel Boothe

What was the cost of that? I heard it was the tune of over \$15 million.

Dan Rinsema Sybenga

It was 18.95. The number is emblazoned in my brain.

Daniel Boothe

18. That's a lot of money. It is. I don't think I'll make that much money in my lifetime. That is a lot of money.

Dan Rinsema Sybenga

Doubtful, yes. We had so many people that came in supportive. We had federal grants. We had obviously the Peter and Carolyn Steris were the lead donors for the Steris Technology Center. We had a large grant from the state of Michigan that contributed \$4 million of new manufacturing equipment, so that is obviously still all in use. So, yeah, if you come in the front door, you'll see just a lot of... welding, robotic, machining, engineering equipment that is available to our students.

Daniel Boothe

Obviously, here in West Michigan, manufacturing and the trades jobs is such a huge part of what we do. It's the fabric of who we are as a community and a society. What makes the Steris Technology Center so special in the sense of students can come and get a certificate and a degree, and they can enter the workforce debt-free, right? Making \$60,000. Can you speak a little bit to that, the opportunities that the Steris Technology Center offers?

Dan Rinsema Sybenga

I think the biggest thing about it is the partnership we have with employers. They drove the original construction of the Applied Technology Center on main campus. So there's been companies, you know, their names are on the board. Some of their names have changed. Like we all know, Helmet has been Arconic and Alcoa, and now it's Helmet again. But while things change, they still stay the same, and Helmet now is embarking on a huge expansion project that they have a lot of need for future training, and that's why they've partnered with us over the years and why they continue to, and they're just kind of the flagship of Muskegon County manufacturing, but there's hundreds of operations that likewise partner

with the college and depend on the skills that our instructors teach their employees and our students to help us be prosperous here.

Daniel Boothe

Last question, Dan. I know you've got a lot to do today. If I'm a prospective student, let's say I don't know if I want to go into manufacturing, because to me it seems like, oh, it's a little bit of a scary thing to go into. You have to know that you want to go into it. What if a student is on the fence or they want to think about going into technology. What would be your advice to them?

Dan Rinsema Sybenga

So one piece of advice was we have so many connections with high schools that are doing tours. We're doing tours all the time. So if you hear of your school doing it, pop on to it. Just come down and see what it's like. Also, we're very welcoming down there. We have kind of a front door community center called the Fab Lab, which is just kind of like an entree into the world of manufacturing. It's open to the public, so you can come any time. And then right behind that is we have instructors and staff down there that are willing to do tours pretty much any time. Just come in, even just walk around. But yeah, don't be shy. We're located right by Hackley Park, downtown Muskegon. So stop by and get a better picture of what it's like.

Daniel Boothe

All right, that is Daniel Rinsevasaibinga, the Dean of Academic Affairs. Love the name, Daniel.

Dan Rinsema Sybenga

Yes, perfect double-Dutch, long, difficult to pronounce name.

Daniel Boothe

Right. There you go. Thanks, man. Have a good one. JTOC 2024, rolling right along here on this beautiful Saturday morning and sitting down at the table, a current student here at Muskegon Community College. Miss Jillian Allen sitting down. Jillian, good to see you. How are you today?

Jillian Allen

Good. How are you?

Daniel Boothe

Good. I am so curious. Lot to unpack here because you are not a traditional student. You are a little older than some of our new students who are coming here out of fresh out of high school. So take me back to your decision. What compelled you to say, you know what, I'm going to go back, I'm going to get my degree and I'm going to continue my education after probably your 20th year of life?

Jillian Allen

Well, I was here back in the 90s.

Daniel Boothe

I remember those.

Jillian Allen

Fun times. Yes, so I was here back in the 90s. Life happened, so I had to walk away from MCC. So during that time, you know, as you grow older, you know, you have more responsibility. And during those times, college was just, couldn't afford it. Could not afford it, so Reconnect rode around. Wow, Reconnect, yep, and that was a start.

Daniel Boothe

Okay, so what is your field of study? What are you looking to go into?

Jillian Allen

At first, it was business management, but... I've since changed social work is now the pathway that I'm on.

Daniel Boothe

Good for you. Social work is meaningful work. I have a number of friends who do social work, and you have to have a heart for it.

Jillian Allen

You do.

Daniel Boothe

Tell me why social work? What was the decision behind your, was it a calling, a spiritual calling that you felt, or what was it that made you think that social work is what I want to do?

Jillian Allen

Well, so what happened was I was on pathway for business management. And as I was going along, I lost interest. And I found out that it was not going to fulfill me as a person. So I had to Google my interests. I love to advocate and help people, right? So I had to Google that, what kind of career is that? And social work popped up. So I did my due diligence and researched social work, and it perfectly aligns with what I'd like to do.

Daniel Boothe

That's fantastic. Tell me a little bit about your experience here at Muskegon Community College. The faculty and the professors you've had so far, good experience, bad experience.

Jillian Allen

It's been good for the most part. The only difficult thing has been access to resources after hours as an adult learner. So it's kind of hard to get in here at six o'clock in the evening to have an appointment, like for instance, with a counselor or someone in tutoring.

Daniel Boothe

That's really good to hear. That's really good to hear because the people will be listening to this and they'll hear that. So that's good advice. All right, when are you going to graduate and what's your plan after you get that degree?

Jillian Allen

After I get my degree from MCC, I would like to go on. It's still a toss-up between U of M Flint or Wayne State.

Daniel Boothe

There you go. Jillian Anderson, thank you so much. Way to make MCC proud. Go Jayhawks.

Jillian Allen

Thank you.

Daniel Boothe

Awesome. That was great. You get a hat. Thank you. Thank you so much.

Sue Samaniego

Hi, I'm Greta Fritzmeyer, and I go to North Muskegon Public Schools.

Sarah Luker

I'm Karen Fritzmeier. I graduated from Kalamazoo Valley Community College.

Daniel Boothe

Well, welcome to the podcast. First question out of the gates, are you curious about going to Muskegon Community College?

Sue Samaniego

I am.

Daniel Boothe

Well, let me tell you, there is not a better, it's the best community college in the state of Michigan. It is the number one college for students. We're ranked number one when it comes to students who leave here who go on to get their four-year degree. And so there's a number of ways that you can get involved here. And for a lot of students, the Muskegon Promise, the Michigan Reconnect, the college guarantee, you can come here tuition-free. It's a really, really special place. What are you looking for in a college?

Sue Samaniego

I don't know if that's something they offer, but Christian community and Christian opportunities.

Daniel Boothe

Yeah, well, this is a Christian tank. Kristen, can you come and tell her a little bit about your student organization? Because she's interested in Christian opportunities.

Kristin Tank

Sure, we have a Christian Fellowship Club that meets twice a week. Right now we have about 50 students involved. And actually just last weekend we had 18 students who went to the InterVarsity State Conference in Flint at the University of Michigan Flint campus. And they had an amazing time there. So we have a lot of support. We read the Bible together and pray together. That's sweet.

Daniel Boothe

Thank you, Kristen, for that. So that, yeah, that's one of our student organizations. So it's really, really cool. What are you looking for your daughter when it comes to her higher education?

Sarah Luker

Oh, I just want her to find her passion and do whatever it is she wants to do.

Daniel Boothe

Yeah, there you go.

Sarah Luker

Find something that... suits her personality and her interests.

Daniel Boothe

Well, we have this kind of thing here at Muskegon Community College where we think this is the best place to come and play to find out what your passion is because you have a lot of different opportunities. You're not supposed to know at a young age what your passion is. Very few do. And so this is a great place to come and think about painting or think about manufacturing or think about electronics or think about business or think about social work or think about nursing. And then you find that and then you go for it. You know what I mean? And then you do it debt free. Hey, best of luck to you. Thank you so much for stopping by and being on the show. Thank you for having me. For you, get a hat. Awesome. Thank you so much. All right, this is Jay Talk. Rolling along here at Expo 2024, sitting down at the table is Matt Burnham. It is great to see you and finally meet you in person. Matt works at the Institute of Agriculture Technology at Michigan State University. They have a partnership here at Muskegon Community College. Here to talk all about it is Matt. Matt, let's start at the very beginning. Why agriculture? What inspired you to go into agriculture in the first place?

Matt Burnham

Oh, man. Well, I grew up on my family's cash crop farm up in the Thumb of Michigan, raising 5,000 acres of various crops. So that kind of was...

Daniel Boothe

That's a serious farm.

Matt Burnham

Oh, yeah. Yes. You know, corn, wheat, soybeans, sugar beets, and dry beans just kind of developed my work ethic. And then, you know, as I grew, I learned that we were helping feed the world and helping fight world hunger. And that was something that I really cared about. So then as I got to college age, I actually was an Institute of Agricultural Technology student myself. And through that- In Lansing? In Lansing, yeah. I wanted the Big Ten experience. And so I got that. But then once I got there, I found a passion for learning and

education. And so I pursued that and got my bachelor's and master's in education. So that way I could help promote agriculture careers. to people who are interested in working in the industry.

Daniel Boothe

Gotta be great to work at your alma mater.

Matt Burnham

It is pretty great to work for my alma mater, but it doesn't beat the days I'm here in Muskegon.

Daniel Boothe

Yeah. Thank you very much. All right, tell us a little bit about the Institute of Agriculture Technology and the partnership they have with MCC. How does it all work?

Matt Burnham

Yeah, so since 2016, Michigan State and MCC have been partnering to provide innovative educational programming in agriculture, food, and natural resources. It's realistically a dual enrollment program, very similar to what a student would do in a high school situation. They're attending the high school, but they're also attending a community college. just works out a little bit like they're attending a community college, but also attending a university at the same time. Our programs are 62 credits, so they combine together to get an associate's at MCC. And then we also use those credits for their MSU certificate. So it's two degrees wrapped in one. We're really fortunate to have the great partnerships that we do have because our financial aid department here at MCC actually leads the charge on processing the financial aid and helping students through. So they have all of the support systems here at Muskegon, and they don't really have to be just one of 55,000 at MSU. they're one of our Muskegon students, and they have that opportunity to work with people who know them.

Daniel Boothe

Awesome. Awesome. If I'm a prospective student here at Expo 2024, and I'm thinking about agriculture, can you give me your one-minute elevator pitch as to why a career in agriculture is a rewarding one?

Matt Burnham

So my pitch on this is 1, you're helping feed the world. Awesome. Whether you're working in agriculture, food processing, or even in natural resources, all of those systems come

together to support life on this planet. If you're someone who likes to work outdoors and not typically have the traditional office and desk job, That's awesome. It's an industry that's never going to go away. And there's a ton of jobs and careers right now that can be really rewarding and fulfilling, especially as a young person who's looking and maybe not thinking about what they can do in agriculture, food, and natural resources.

Daniel Boothe

Couple more questions. Is the family farm still up there in the thumb?

Matt Burnham

It sure is.

Daniel Boothe

I'm sure you're looking forward to going home there for the holidays. Do you get homesick?

Matt Burnham

I do get homesick, but my dad does call me just about every day because he messed something up on the auto steer or on the new combine.

Daniel Boothe

Work, man.

Matt Burnham

Yeah, it's just like, it's like, dad, I told you don't push buttons. I've set it all up. It can just be ran, but the computers are getting a little too advanced for him to understand now, so.

Daniel Boothe

Yeah, where exactly is your family located? Is it the Alpena area or?

Matt Burnham

We're in Akron, Michigan. Okay. So over in the thumb, about 30 miles northeast of Bay City.

Daniel Boothe

Yeah, Akron, okay. Take that, Ohio. In Akron, Michigan.

Matt Burnham

Yeah, we got Akron, Michigan, way better than Akron, Ohio. But way smaller.

Daniel Boothe

Awesome, awesome. Matt, if people want to get in touch with you, how can they do it?

Matt Burnham

So they can stop by my office here at the community college in 1313C. They can call me at the MCC line. I have an MCC line. That's 231-777-0756. Or they can e-mail me at BERNIAMA at msu.edu.

Daniel Boothe

All right, on behalf of everyone here at MCC, go Jayhawks, go green. Go white. Awesome, man. Thank you. Thank you. That was great. All right, rolling along here at Expo 2024, sitting down at the table, the man, the mystery. This is the head of our graphic design department, Mr. Kevin Kyser, sitting down at the table now. Kevin, what's going on, man?

Kevin Kyser

Hey, how you doing? I like the mystery parts.

Daniel Boothe

Yeah, there you go. There you go. Tell us a little bit about the graphic design department and how did you find your way here at Muskegon Community College?

Kevin Kyser

Sure, we are a two-year program. We offer a couple different degree options. We have our graphic design degree and our entrepreneur degree, so if you're interested in going that route and maybe starting a freelance business, you might do that. Our 100-level classes all take place here on the main campus, and our 200-level classes take place at our downtown campus, so that's kind of a nice mix. We're a portfolio-based program, though, and the whole point of that is students work really hard for two years to come up with a professional-level portfolio. They're ready to either transfer on to another institution, but the majority of my students actually go right into getting a job. So that's a pretty cool function there.

Daniel Boothe

So if I'm a student here at the Expo 2024 and I'm sitting here and I'm looking at graphic design and I say to myself, you know, I've always wanted to go into graphic design. The problem is, I can't draw. So what would be your answer to a student who said that to you?

Kevin Kyser

I have different students, they might have some drawing abilities, but I have many that do not. That's not really a requirement. You will take a few drawing classes, and that is helpful. What I often will tell students, though, we'll generate a lot of our ideas in notebooks. And the point there is I want you to at least be able to doodle and come up with your own visual language, because really those genius ideas happen in the notebook. Right, and there's the drawing that happens right there, and then to transfer that into the digital world, like I said before, we'll work in Illustrator and InDesign and Photoshop, which probably most of the audience has heard of that one, right? So, the drawing thing is helpful, but not a necessity. That being said, however, I do have a lot of fine illustrators as well. So it is an interesting mix, but not a necessity.

Daniel Boothe

When you look at the graphic design field as a career path, I would imagine that there is a lot of opportunity for employment once people graduate out of here. Because if you look around the world, graphic design is literally everywhere. It's all around us at all times. Are there a lot of opportunities for students who graduate from the program?

Kevin Kyser

Yeah, there really are. I think, as I've told a number of students today, one of the dangers is you might just get a Google graphic design job. And the simple truth of it, there can be literally a dozen different titles that you might. In my own experience before I came here, I worked in the field for 30 years. So I was a graphic designer, an art director, and a creative director. If you just start searching those, for example, on Indeed or some of the job boards, you'll quickly see how many opportunities are out there. So you might work for an in-house Company or corporate type environment, you could work for a design firm, you could work in a print shop. The possibilities are endless, and like you said before, graphic design is everywhere. We see it on signage, flyers, certainly our digital, our apps, so there's a lot there, a lot of opportunity.

Daniel Boothe

When I said the man, the myth, the legend, I was doing that a little bit tongue in cheek. But the reality is, you're about to be somewhat of a legend, a crowning achievement in your career, redesigning the Jayhawk logo and our Centennial logo. I know we're an audio medium, so people can't see the logo yet here. But can you tell us a little bit about the idea behind the logo and why the need for a change?

Kevin Kyser

So logo design is something I've always enjoyed doing in my career. And when the opportunity came about, I definitely lobbied hard. I said, you know what, I'd really like to be considered to do that. And I do look at it as an honor, but for sure, our very familiar MCC diamond logo has been around a long time. I believe we've figured out it's at least from the 80s. Nothing wrong with that, but definitely time for an update. So yeah, we are in an audio medium here, and I'm very used to showing the eye candy, so I can't do that, but paying homage to the diamond. We haven't gone away from it, but we've kind of cleaned it up. And then as you've alluded to before, Centennial logo is something coming up. That's pretty cool. I won't spill the beans on that, but you'll soon see that coming up. And then lastly, the Jayhawk logo is probably going to be the largest improvement that you're going to see. My goal was to elevate it to a level of certainly a Big Ten level college athletic logo or even perhaps a pro level. And I think it's definitely a big change. And you're soon going to be seeing that in a lot of different things. So pretty excited about that when we unveil that. But definitely an honor to have created those.

Daniel Boothe

Oh man, what a feather in your cap. What a career highlight, as they would say. Kevin Kyser thanks so much for the time. I know you're manning the table there solo, so I'll let you get back to it. But thanks so much for the time, man. Appreciate you.

Kevin Kyser

Awesome.

Daniel Boothe

Look who we have sitting down at our table. It is the president of Muskegon Community College, Dr. John Selman. Hey, guess what? He's also a host on JTalk.

John Selmon

Absolutely. I love it. I love it. Every minute of it.

Daniel Boothe

Dr. Selman, this is one of the truly special events that we do here at Muskegon Community College each year. It's so great to get everyone in one room because we're always working in different corners of the campus. And so to see all the special programs, all the things that we offer under one room, really, really special. What's your reaction when you come in and see this?

John Selmon

It's exciting because these are moments we live for right here. To get the community in, to see the programs, to talk to our faculty and our staff. We have some of the best, some of the brightest minds in higher education here in West Michigan. And so we're just pleased to entertain today. the positive things about the institution and the programs, the services, and our facilities.

Daniel Boothe

Dr. Sulman, you always say that student success must be the thing that drives all of our efforts. It must be the primary thing that we do that drives our efforts here at Muskegon Community College. I would imagine events like Expo, events like graduation, when you get to really meet the students and be around the students, does it ever get old?

John Selmon

No, Like I said, that's why we do this. And these are the moments that we live for right here. These are the moments that we work for right here. And that's nothing more exciting. Then watching people have fun, watching people continue their journey and educational journey or their work journey, whatever it is. It's just, I really like it. And a matter of fact, I love it because, like I said, these are the moments.

Daniel Boothe

Yeah. One of the great things that you get to do as the big man on campus, as they say, one of the great things that you get to do, and we're going to do it here in just about 30 minutes, is you're going to give somebody a full-ride scholarship to MCC. Tell me about that experience last year. What is that like for you to be able to hand over that check?

John Selmon

Well, it's awesome because this is about access, access to higher education. And we provide that opportunity through a scholarship. And so a lot of people in the community support our initiatives. They support scholarships. And it's nothing better than making somebody happy, knowing that you're changing their lives. You know, when you get a scholarship and when you get to go to college and Those are the types of things that change lives, change your trajectory, if you will, in terms of where you're going. And it's just significant.

Daniel Boothe

Sir, last question, and I know you got to go, but I just looked down and I saw your blazer that you got on. We were just talking to Kevin Kaiser, who designed the new MCC logo. What do you think about it?

John Selmon

It's amazing. It's kind of, it's the community part of this. that really just is highlighted. And that's what we're all about is this community. And so, and I think this logo, new logo tells that story, paints that picture, if you will.

Daniel Boothe

Yeah, absolutely. Dr. Summan, we will see you on Tuesday on JTalk with your interview with Ken Efting, the CEO of the Muskegon County Airport. Until that time, thank you so much.

John Selmon

Absolutely. Thank you.

Daniel Boothe

Thanks, man. Appreciate you, sir. That was great. Expo 2024, rolling right along here on JTalk. And here comes Dylan Honk. He is a new employee here at Muskegon Community College, works in the Writing Center, and here to tell us all about it. Mr. Dylan, how you doing, man?

Dylan

I'm doing great. How are you?

Daniel Boothe

Awesome. Tell me a little bit about, first and foremost, a long journey. I know you a little bit, and it's been a long journey to get to Muskegon Community College. What does it mean to be here at the school? And to do the job that you're doing now.

Dylan

It means everything to me. When they hired me in, I told my current boss, Holly Benson, you're saving my life right now. I've been an adjunct instructor for nearly 20 years.

Daniel Boothe

It's a grind, man.

Dylan

And to finally find full-time employment as an educator and work in a place that has such wonderful people and such supportive staff is really, it's been kind of my Cinderella story lately in the last year. So I'm thrilled to be here.

Daniel Boothe

Awesome, Dylan. That warms my heart to hear that. Dylan, tell us a little bit about the Writing Center. And first and foremost, just kind of give us a broad picture, 5,000-foot view of what you do and what the Writing Center is all about.

Dylan

Well, the Writing Center is here to support students and the community. We are open to the public to help with any stage of the writing process, whether it is the pre-writing, drafting, revision, proofreading, or just spitballing ideas or helping you through your blockages. We're here to support that and help you learn how to broaden and refine your writing. So we're here in any regard to help in any way we can.

Daniel Boothe

I feel like there's sometimes a reluctance from students to step forward and say, hey, I need help. And if so, what word of encouragement can you give students to say, hey, that's why we're here. We're here to help you succeed. We're here to get you across the finish line.

Dylan

Yeah, often we see students who come down a little bit late in the game. It's because they are reluctant. And I feel maybe have a touch of shame associated with it. And so I always tell students, the best writers in the world have a dedicated inner circle of people that they trust to look at their writing. We all need, it's just part of the process. It's not anything that we have to do because we're poor writers. It is a smart thing to do as a writer to seek support and to get feedback from a wide variety of potential audiences so that you know how the general public might receive your writing if you go professional.

Daniel Boothe

Fantastic. Have you found that being in the Writing Center has improved your own writing just by osmosis?

Dylan

That's funny you say that. Absolutely, because the more I find that I teach writing and help tutor writing the more it informs my own thoughts about writing, so that thereby helps my own writing.

Daniel Boothe

What writers influence you? What writers are you passionate about that you feel have kind of shaped your career and your style, if you will?

Dylan

Early on, I was really fixated on the beats. I really loved the kind of freedom and inner exploration, the existentialism of them. And from there, I would look into who their influences were, as well as which writers were influenced by them, and I would expand into the past and into the present in that way, so I always knew who I wanted to read next. So, them as a group, but also poets like Anne Sexton, Sylvia Plath, I just love the way they use language, and when I read great writers, Hemingway was a big person for me, too. Of course, he's a heavyweight for a lot of people, right? But just reading writers who use language inventively and really get the art of playful language use. rolling around in my own head inspired me to write. And so I really love writers, Anne Sexton especially. I just adore her poetry.

Daniel Boothe

Dylan, thanks so much for the time.

Dylan

Yeah, thank you. Have a great day.

Daniel Boothe

Here with Olivia Mitchell, you just won a two-year scholarship to Muskegon Community College. \$500 at the store. How are you feeling right now?

Olivia Mitchell

I don't even know right now. I'm just baffled and I'm just so happy right now. We are so happy. Thank you. Thank you. Oh my goodness.

Olivia Mitchell

This means everything. This is, I don't even know. I'm just ecstatic.

Daniel Boothe

When they said Olivia, did your heart immediately start to sink?

Sarah Luker

Dropped. Oh my God. Like I'm telling you, my jaw dropped because there's so many Olivias and I was just like, there's no words.

Olivia Mitchell

It's just the greatest feeling in the whole wide world.

Daniel Boothe

Well, we are so honored and happy for you. Welcome to Muskegon Community College.  
Can you say go Jayhawks for me?

Olivia Mitchell

Go Jayhawks.

Daniel Boothe

All right, there you go.