



MONROE COUNTY
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

enriching lives

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Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MCCC PRESIDENT DR. DAVID NIXON TO RETIRE



MONROE, Mich. – At its regular meeting last night, the Monroe County Community College Board of Trustees accepted the resignation of President Dr. David E. Nixon, who plans to retire at the end of his current employment contract that expires July 31.

Nixon is in his tenth year as president of MCCC. He began his tenure on August 1, 2003.

Prior to coming to MCCC, he served as executive dean of Iowa Lakes Community College in Estherville, Iowa, where he served as the chief administrative officer of the Emmertsburg (Iowa) Campus.

Nixon led MCCC through one of the most dynamic periods in the college's history – a period that included new facility construction, record enrollment, increasing endowments, new scholarships, and start-ups of new programs and business partnerships. This period also included many challenges caused by dwindling resources and Michigan's longest recession.

Last year, the college introduced a new structure of governance, a council model Nixon said is more inclusive, more transparent and more participatory. A pilot of that governance structure is now under way for the 2011-12 academic year.

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“The MCCC board of trustees accepted President Nixon’s letter announcing his retirement at the end of his current contract with deep regret combined with profound appreciation for his decade of outstanding leadership and numerous accomplishments at MCCC,” said MCCC Board Chair William J. Bacarella, Jr.

“Dr. Nixon joined MCCC in 2003 while we were in the middle of a capital campaign for the facility we know proudly call the La-Z-Boy Center and Meyer Theater. He embraced this opportunity to meet the community and expand the level of understanding and support for the college. In fact, under Dave’s leadership, the college has reached new levels of visibility and embraced many new partnerships expanding educational opportunities for MCCC students.”

“Dave Nixon has been the living, breathing, walking, talking omnipresent logo of MCCC for a decade,” said Vice Chair William H. Braunlich. “Dave has simply been everywhere. The community has been his classroom and his subject matter of expertise is Monroe County Community College. And while teaching that ‘class,’ he has expanded, exponentially, the level of support and awareness of MCCC’s mission and educational opportunities for students and citizens.”

The board unanimously moved to begin the process of reviewing potential consultants to take it through a goal-setting strategic planning workshop that will lead to the formation of the search criteria for the hiring of a new president.

In his resignation letter to the Board, Nixon expressed his gratitude for the contributions of MCCC’s employees and appreciation for the opportunity given to him by the board to serve as MCCC’s fourth president.

“MCCC’s faculty and staff persisted in academic excellence, developing new jobs and

career programs [and] expanding community partnerships that reach beyond geographic boundaries,” Nixon said.

“I am especially grateful for the extra effort made by the many MCCC staffers who persevered while seeing their wages frozen as a result of the Michigan recession. All the while, those same MCCC colleagues expanded college-wide strategic planning initiatives that resulted in the creation of a new contemporary mission for the college.

“This letter is submitted with a profound appreciation for giving me the opportunity to lead, learn and grow – in a community of hard working people and generous donors who helped build campus landmarks like the La-Z-Boy Center/Meyer Theater and the new state-of-the-art Career Technology Center for the job seekers of the 21st Century.”

“The string of descriptors for Dave Nixon is long and impressive: energetic, tireless, passionate, informed, entrepreneurial, student-centered, open to new ideas, responsive, fair, thoughtful and dedicated to the college mission,” said Bacarella. “MCCC and the greater community of Monroe have been a richer place with the presence of Dave and Judy Nixon. The Board of Trustees will have a challenging task to find a new president who can match Dr. Nixon’s energy, connectedness and responsiveness to the needs of students and the community we serve.”

Nixon often shared the talents he gleaned as a professional broadcaster and communicator – his chosen career field prior to higher education. He served as official master of ceremonies at many significant community milestones in Monroe during the past decade, such as the dedication of River Raisin National Battlefield Park, the dedication of the River Raisin Heritage Trail and the 100th anniversary ceremonies of the General George Armstrong Custer Statue, to name but a few.

“More than a polished public communicator, Dave has served in a leadership capacity on all of those major community projects,” Braunlich said. “Our National Park Service superintendent Scott Bentley has publically remarked, on numerous occasions, that MCCC has been the dream partner in the start-up of a new national park.”

Some of the signature MCCC accomplishments under Dr. Nixon’s leadership include:

- The opening in 2004 of the La-Z-Boy Center, an instructional facility for business training and the performing arts that hosts thousands of visitors each year.
- Strategic initiatives that resulted in a new brand identity in 2005 and updated mission, vision, core values and educational objectives in 2008.
- The installation of wireless Internet capabilities across the entire campus in 2006.
- The establishment of an Upward Bound Program to support at-risk students at Monroe High School in 2007 via a five-year, \$1 million federal grant. The program was expanded this year to include Airport High School via new grants totaling \$2.5 million over five years.
- The addition of numerous credit programs from 2007 to 2012, including practical nursing, nurse aide, nuclear engineering technology, heavy and industrial technology, renewable energy, nondestructive testing, and information assurance and security, as well as new non-credit programs like ophthalmic assisting.
- Expansion of the registered nursing program from 40 to 60 students in 2009.
- Record enrollments that peaked in the late 2000s. MCCC consistently experienced more than 8,500 combined credit- and non-credit enrollments throughout Nixon’s tenure.

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- The establishment of a grants office in the mid 2000s that has since secured more than \$8.3 million in awards.
- The opening of the Learning Bank Network of Monroe County in 2009, which increased opportunities for county residents to achieve basic skills needed for success in postsecondary education.
- The development in 2010 by DTE Energy of a 500-kilowatt solar array on three acres on the eastern side of campus.
- The opening of the MCCC Welding Center of expertise in Frenchtown Township at the former site of Pump Engineering, Inc. In 2010, the company donated the facility to MCCC, which used part of a \$1.7 million Department of Labor grant to convert the building into a cross-categorical welding skills lab. The remaining grant funds are being used to offer accelerated welding courses.
- The construction of the \$17 million Career Technology Center, a 60-000 square-foot facility that will open in August and provide infrastructure required to deliver instruction and skills necessary to secure high-demand, high-paying jobs. The college secured half of the financing from the State of Michigan and is financing the other half through existing funds and a capital campaign in support of the facility.