MONROE COUNTY
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
enriching lives

Main Campus
1555 South Raisinville Road
Monroe, MI 48161-9746

Whitman Center
7777 Lewis Avenue
Temperance, MI 48182

www.monroeccc.edu

Press Release

Contact:
Joe Verkennes,
Director of Marketing,
(734) 384-4207

July 9, 2014

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MCCC TO SEEK ADDITIONAL TAX LEVY FOR FIRST TIME IN 34 YEARS

Would Cost Owner of $100,000 Home About $4 per Month

MONROE, Mich. – At a special meeting tonight, the Monroe County Community College Board of Trustees unanimously voted to authorize the college's administration to pursue placing an additional property tax levy of 1 mill before Monroe County voters in November.

The college has not asked for an additional tax levy in 34 years. If passed, the levy would cost the owner of a $100,000 home about $4 per month.

According to Board Chair William J. Bacarella Jr., aggressive cost containment efforts have been underway at MCCC since 2008 to offset critical decreases to its funding streams.

These efforts continue today due to lower enrollment coupled with basically flat revenues from property taxes and state appropriations following years of declines.

"We have been treading water financially for 7-8 years to continue to meet the changing needs of our constituents," Bacarella said. "Even though our cost containment efforts have produced substantial savings and efficiencies, MCCC still faces numerous challenges to our ability to continue to offer high-quality higher education at an affordable price."

(more)

MCCC President Dr. Kojo A. Quartey outlined a detailed list of all the areas in which the increased tax revenue would be put to immediate use:

- **Expanding and maintaining academic programs.** The college will implement new academic programs that prepare students for employment in fast-growing fields like health care, computer information technology, and career and technical education, as well as maintain all of its current programs, which it cannot do without additional funding.
- **Expanding student success services.** Student services like tutoring, mentoring and internship programs – all key to student success – will be expanded.
- **Keeping MCCC affordable and student debt low.** MCCC will continue to be the most affordable college option for our residents. With more than 30 percent of all high school graduates in Monroe County starting their college education at MCCC, the college plays a large role in helping local families and keeping money in Monroe County. Many students served by the college likely could not afford to attend another college or university. Tuition rates, however, have been rising steadily as revenues have decreased, and this will continue without additional funding.
- **Updating computer technology and equipment.** MCCC will update information technology infrastructure to be in line with the requirements of today's jobs.

(more)

- **Addressing critical facility needs.** In order to enhance academic programs and student services, the college will renovate facilities to support growth and new initiatives. In addition, general updates will be made to existing facilities – many of MCCC's facilities are nearly as old as the college itself and date back to the late 1960s and early 1970s and are simply in need of renovation.

According to Quartey, the college conducted a survey over the summer and learned that 7 in 10 Monroe County residents or their immediate family members have taken classes at MCCC.

"That is a testament to what this college means to this community," he said, adding that two-thirds of MCCC graduates stay in Monroe County and contribute to the local economy.

"We offer students the opportunity to attend college locally at an institution recently recognized by CNNMoney as No. 2 in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana for student success," said Quartey. "The college also plays a key role in attracting new businesses to Monroe County and retaining current businesses.

"With that kind of a track record, it is difficult to imagine the last 50 years in Monroe County without Monroe County Community College. We do not want to see any of that put in jeopardy due to funding issues."

"MCCC contributes substantially to the success of students, businesses and the community-at-large," Bacarella said. "We have not asked for an additional tax levy since 1980 and have proven to be an excellent financial steward of the county's tax dollars. The efforts of the administration, faculty and staff to mitigate difficult budget situations year after year are to be commended. But the college must immediately address the many challenges that remain."

###