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Curt Freed, Ph.D., President

## MCC State Board Report - December 2024

### Transform the student experience.

MCC STEM Coaches hosted a three-part Seminar Series for students, featuring a variety of presentations from experts on groundbreaking research. On September 26, MCC Computer Science faculty member, Kris Johnson, discussed the future of computer programming and AI integration, exploring how these technologies are transforming industries. On October 24, Dr. Marlon Escamilla took attendees on a captivating journey through Nahua-Pipil settlements in the Balsam Coast of El Salvador, highlighting the landscape and ritual spaces of these ancient communities. The series wrapped up on November 21 with Max Pisciotta, Ph.D., presenting on the critical topic of carbon capture and its role in combating global climate change. Each session sparked engaging discussions and offered valuable insights from MCC faculty, staff, and guest speakers.

MCC hosted a Reverse Career Fair October 23, offering students an opportunity to connect with local businesses in manufacturing, business, medical, agriculture, and education sectors. Participants explored career paths through a fun scavenger hunt, followed by hors d'oeuvres and meaningful networking. Participating employers included the Department of Human Services, Western Sugar Cooperative, Epic Travel Staffing, Barry Walter, Sr., Barry Walter, Jr., St. Elizabeth Hospital, Children's Center, Fort Morgan School District, Brush School District, and Lepirino.



The "Girls ONLY!" event on November 5, 2024, held at the MCC Burlington Center was an impactful celebration of women in industry, offering a variety of interactive sessions and hands-on activities. Female students from local high schools explored STEM fields through soldering, virtual reality experiences, and career scavenger hunts, while also gaining insights into health sciences with Nurse Practitioners from local business, Health Essentials.

The day ended with a steam car competition and a lunch session, where participants engaged in inspiring conversations. Lanie Ridder, Dealer Principal/Owner of Vince's GM Center in Burlington, was the keynote speaker and shared her journey as an MCC concurrent enrollment student, university student, and employee in various roles. She discussed how these experiences helped her grow into a leader in a male-dominated industry. Lanie has been a key figure in her family's business since 2003, and her story highlighted the value of education and perseverance in shaping her success.



MCC work-study students participated in training with the Director of Communications to familiarize themselves with the new Experience Portal, MCC Catalog, and Schedule. This training equipped them with the skills needed to support their peers in navigating these updated systems, helping to create a smoother experience as students explore academic offerings and organize their schedules.

### **Transform our own workforce experience.**

MCC staff and faculty participated in a Professional Development Day on September 24, featuring a second session with Ken Barr Jr., a Gallup Certified Strengths Coach. He led an interactive discussion on StrengthsFinder assessments, focusing on how to leverage personal strengths and collaborate effectively with the strengths of peers. In the afternoon, participants engaged in a team-based scavenger hunt, designed to help them learn about campus services and programs, meet new staff and faculty, and foster greater collaboration across the MCC community.

MCC staff and faculty took part in a Professional Development session September 27 led by Dr. Brenda Allen, focusing on enhancing campus culture through personal intention. Participants explored the definitions of community and culture, examined various cultural elements, and discussed strategies for fostering a more inclusive college environment.

MCC staff and faculty participated in a Lunch and Learn training session on October 17 with BetterMynd, focused on how to effectively support students who may be facing mental health challenges. The session provided valuable strategies for creating a supportive, disarming environment, enabling staff to approach sensitive topics with empathy and understanding. This training aimed to enhance the campus community's ability to assist students in need while fostering a safe, compassionate, and inclusive atmosphere.



Michael Swank joined MCC as the new Vice President of Administration at Morgan Community College on November 11. With a strong background in public administration and finance, Michael most recently served as Deputy Director and Chief Financial Officer for the Wyoming Community College Commission from 2022 to 2024. He also brings 19 years of experience as a Senior Budget Analyst at the Wyoming Legislative Service Office. Michael holds a Master of Public Administration (MPA) and a Bachelor of Science in Geography-GIS, both from the University of Wyoming.

His expertise in budgeting, finance, and administration will play a crucial role in supporting MCC's operations and strategic initiatives.

### **Create education without barriers through transformational partnerships.**



The MCC Foundation recently hosted a Student and Donor Luncheon, bringing together community donors and scholarship recipients for a special event of appreciation. The luncheon provided an opportunity for students to express their gratitude, share their achievements, and highlight the impact of donor support on their educational journeys. It also allowed donors to connect directly with the students they have helped, fostering a sense of community and shared commitment to student success.

**Redefine our value proposition through accessibility, affordability, quality, accountability, resource development, and operational excellence.**

Construction on the Dahms-Talton Center for Skill Trades and Technology building is progressing, with completion dependent on the installation of entry doors and the siding around the top of the building. Once the siding is installed, the building name and logo will be added. A ribbon-cutting ceremony has tentatively been scheduled for January 14, the first day faculty return, but will be dependent upon supply chain delays, which are expected to prevent the arrival of the doors and siding before the beginning of January.

MCC received approval from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) on October 11, 2024, to offer its second bachelor's degree program: a Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) in Business Administration and Management. Then, on November 8, 2024, MCC earned accreditation from the HLC to launch a third bachelor's degree program: a Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) in Education with an endorsement in Technology Education.