

# In Spite of Challenges, MCC Educator Sees Opportunities

by Gerald Scott

Macomb Community College's future appears to be so bright, they might have to issue their students "shades," to paraphrase a pop song from awhile back.

MCC reported recently that it has an annual \$108 million dollar impact on the community, an impressive figure for a college with a budget of around \$45 million.

Macomb has always had a strong reputation in the community for offering its students a no-nonsense practical education that leads to both undergraduate degrees at the four-year schools and eventually real jobs beyond that.

MCC President Jim Jacobs talked the other day about how Macomb is doing in keeping up with the changing technologies of the 21st century, such that its original curriculum of welding education classes, back when it had the nickname of "12 Mile High" – something both charming and derisive, one supposes.

But back to Jacobs:

"We are recipient of a National Science Foundation grant to set up a center for advanced electric and hybrid engine technologies," Jacobs said.

"In that process, we are working directly with Wayne State University. So we have a relationship with WSU, where students who come into our courses will eventually transfer to Wayne State in electrical technology programs.

"We've identified this area where at this point, there are relatively few jobs, but we think there's going to be significant growth in this.

"We want to be a centerpiece in terms of providing talent in hybrid / electric technologies, we see that as very, very important. We've been able to utilize federal monies on a couple of grants to establish the center."

Perhaps what's different from a generation ago is that MCC is so much more collaborative with its educational peers, but particularly with the four-year universities and how MCC undergrads can access those resources.

"What's interesting now is that instead of seeing ourselves as rivals or separate from the four-year

schools, we're actually driving and working with them," he said. "I think that kind of partnership is going to be good for the future."

And one more thing about welding, Jacobs said.

"I'm also on the board for the Center for Automotive Research (CAR in Ann Arbor)," Jacobs said.

"The reason I'm on that board is because we really follow the auto industry, what's going on in the auto industry.

"More and more, the auto industry is thinking about moving away from steel to aluminum – but also away from aluminum to composites.

"Now, welding is a skill that takes pieces of metal and joins them together. You cannot use, in composites, welding.

"So our program is changing its name – it's Welding & Joining. We're moving into fasteners, not that we're giving up welding, but we have to make that transition.

"It isn't happening now, but in 20 years, if you wrote a story, not only would we have welding programs but fastening, too."

So, is MCC nimble enough to

keep up with these industrial changes?

"If we have the capital. We're nimble enough to see it, now the

question is can we implement it – and implement it in a way to get people jobs."

That's the \$64,000 question on

the MCC campus these days, but you get the feeling that Macomb College is indeed, keeping up with the automotive Joneses, so to say.



MCC students gather on the Warren campus as fall semester begins.

## GM Foundation Donates \$50,000 for Kidney Research

DETROIT – The GM Foundation has announced a \$50,000 grant to the National Kidney Foundation for its continued efforts to prevent kidney disease and educate the public about risk factors and early detection.

The check was presented at the Detroit stop of the NKF Cadillac Golf Classic. The annual tournament series of 40 events across the United States draws thousands of amateur golfers to compete for a chance to play at the celebrated Pebble Beach Resorts while raising funds and awareness.

More than \$80 million has been raised for the kidney foundation community since the tournament's inception in 1987.

"This grant from the GM Foundation will help provide vital services to the 26 million Americans affected by kidney disease," said Ed Peper, General Motors U.S. vice president of Fleet and Commercial Sales, who presented the grant on behalf of the GM Foundation.

"Cadillac is also proud to support NKF through this annual golf tournament."

The grant will support the foundation's Kidney Early Evaluation Program, which provides basic free tests to determine kidney function for those most at risk. More than 175,000 people have been screened since the program started.

"One in three Americans is at risk for kidney disease because of high blood pressure or diabetes – the two leading causes," said Bruce Skyer, National Kidney Foundation CEO.

"With the generous support of

the GM Foundation, the National Kidney Foundation is working to spread awareness for those at risk so they understand the importance of screening and the role early detection plays in improving health and saving lives."

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