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Economic opportunity begins with access to high-quality education. Monroe Community College forges robust and innovative community partnerships that help students move through high school purposefully, graduate prepared for college-level coursework, and realize their dreams of going to — and completing — college. Here are some of the many ways MCC helps improve student achievement and strengthen the educational pipeline.

# P-TECH Rochester Combines High School, College and Working World



*Isaiah Frazier*

Isaiah Frazier is looking forward to his first year at the new Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH) in Rochester.

P-TECH Rochester — a collaboration between the Rochester City School District and MCC — prepares students for careers in computer information technology based on an innovative educational model.

While in high school, students will be matched with a business mentor, take college classes and gain practical experience. After six years, graduates will earn an associate degree from MCC at no cost along with their high school diploma. They will also be first

in line for hiring by corporate partners.

As one of 125 entering freshmen, Isaiah attended a month-long camp this summer aimed at giving incoming P-TECH students a glimpse of what they can expect to experience in school.

At camp, he investigated a mock crime scene and studied DNA testing as well as developed and programmed robotic devices. He also came up with an idea for an experiment using a weather balloon that he and his team later launched in a field.

“The camp has increased my love of science exponentially. Coming to P-TECH is going to show my potential



*Rochester city ninth-graders Geradine Nelson, from left, Jeremy Kennedy and Burnardo Reynolds build a circuit board to program robotic devices at the new Rochester P-TECH Summer Bridge Program and STEM Institute in Rochester in July.*

and bring it out more,” Isaiah said. “I want to be that type of person to create something that will benefit a lot of people.”

# New Course Bridges Gap to College

About 75 Rochester City School District World of Inquiry School juniors and seniors are participating in a yearlong program aimed at ensuring that they achieve academic success in high school and college.

The World of Inquiry College Readiness Project — a collaboration among MCC, World of Inquiry School and First Niagara Foundation — focuses on academic achievement, financial

literacy, and college awareness and expectations.

Students spend part of their time in a class at their school working on their English and math skills, receiving individualized tutoring, learning about personal finances such as budgets and loans, understanding the rigors of college and developing good habits for personal success.

In September, they take a computerized placement exam that assesses their English and math skills. In June, they will retake the placement exam to measure their progress, with the goal of having them place at college level.

The 12th-graders also are enrolled in an English course each semester that allows them to earn high school and college credits from MCC, moving them even closer to a college degree.

## Navigator Helps New MCC Students Adjust



*Ashley Jackson discusses financial aid with MCC student Ashton Chung.*

The Navigator Program pairs students from the Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection program with a navigator when they arrive at MCC. The navigator assists students with transitioning into college as well as making best use of campus resources.

Launched in 2010, the program provides a continuum of support for students so they are prepared to overcome obstacles that may stand in the way of earning a college credential. Nearly 150 students have participated in the program since its inception.

## Matching Student Savings 8 to 1 Opens Doors to College

MCC, ESL Federal Credit Union and PathStone Corporation are making a college education more affordable. The recently launched Save for Success program provides low-income students with an 8-to-1 matching education grant, as well as ongoing financial and life skills counseling.

Participating students will receive an ESL Federal Credit Union College Fund Savings Account to save for tuition, books and education-related

In August, students attended a one-day Pre-College Academy at MCC to become oriented with campus resources, support services, financial aid and college expectations so that they can hit the ground running on the first day of class.

Through the academy and an Introduction to College Studies course they are taking in fall 2014, students learn how to achieve their academic goals.

“I know how big a difference this program makes in youths’ lives,” said Ashley Jackson, who graduated from the Hillside Work-Scholarship program in 2004, later returned to serve as a youth advocate and now works as a navigator at MCC. “I tell them about my experiences and how I was able to succeed. These students in some cases don’t have anyone to look up to, so that’s what inspires me to work with them and help them move forward and succeed.”

expenses. After students save \$375 and are accepted at MCC, the program will match the student savings with \$3,000 to help pay for college.

Save for Success is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, by local donors to the MCC Foundation and PathStone, and by the ESL Charitable Foundation. Save for Success will provide a total of \$400,000 in matching financial support to students over the next five years.

## Grant Helps Underprepared Students Succeed

With the support of a five-year, \$2 million U.S. Department of Education grant, MCC is redesigning coursework systems to accelerate learning, better define educational pathways and increase student success.

An innovative, integrated reading/writing curriculum has been developed to reduce student time in developmental coursework by one semester. Studies show that students who move into credit-bearing classes quickly are more likely to continue their college studies.

Additionally, a modularized, self-paced math curriculum, aimed at helping students move through developmental programming more quickly and effectively, is showing early success.

In fall 2013, a higher percentage of students earned C or better in the redesigned math courses than in the traditional math courses, a difference of 13 percentage points.

Together with a redesigned college success course, and in partnership with college orientation and a First-Year Experience program, this comprehensive approach is helping to build student engagement—and data shows that engaged students are more likely to be successful and, ultimately, to graduate.

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