



HISTORY OF MONROE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The time was right for Monroe Community College. It was 1960. Nationwide, a scattering of community colleges was beginning to take root. For thousands of individuals previously excluded from higher education, a publicly funded two-year institution in their own community offered exciting new opportunities. The seed was planted in Rochester with a single phone call to County Manager Gordon Howe.

“Listen, Gordon,” said Carl Hallauer, president and chairman of Bausch & Lomb. “I’ve just seen the community college down at Corning. Monroe County’s got to have one of those.”

Hallauer soon had the ear of Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller and, within a year, Monroe Community College was born.

MCC opened for business in September of 1962 and was eagerly embraced by hundreds of families whose sons, daughters, husbands and wives had dreamt of pursuing a convenient and affordable college education. It was likewise championed by the Rochester business community, whose success depended on a steady supply of well-trained employees, and by the Monroe County Legislature.

With the can-do spirit that came to define MCC, the College opened its doors at 410 Alexander Street, the site of the former East High School. In June 1968, MCC moved to 1000 East Henrietta Road where a former pig farm had been transformed into brand new campus.

It was a roll-up-your-sleeves attitude that would build MCC into the largest community college in Upstate New York. MCC became the fastest growing of the 30 community colleges in the state, increasing its enrollment during the '80s by more than 41 percent. In 1991, MCC announced plans for a second campus to handle the college's growth. Named in honor of long-time and highly respected Trustee E. Kent Damon, the Damon City Campus opened in 1992.

New facilities continued to be added through the late '90s and into the 21st century. In 1997, MCC opened its Applied Technologies Center, a state-of-the-art training facility for students in precision tooling and machining, automotive technology, and heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration. Five years later, MCC moved its training programs for the region's public safety professionals and volunteers to the new Monroe County Public Safety Training Facility. In 2003, MCC dedicated the Alice Holloway Young Commons—putting it in the forefront of the nation's community college residence hall movement. In 2008, the Louis S. and Molly B. Wolk Center for Excellence in Nursing replaced classrooms, labs and faculty offices that were built in the 1960s and the PAC Center greatly expanded the college's athletic and recreation facilities.

Through the years, MCC has continually grown in degree programs, educational initiatives and facilities to meet the community's diverse needs. The College offers classes in extension sites at area high schools, serves seventh through 12th graders in pre-collegiate programs, and incorporates community activism—service-learning—into its courses.

A number of innovative programs have been launched at MCC in recent years. MCC's Homeland Security Management Institute and Agriculture and Life Sciences Institute have become valuable sources of education, training and resource development. In addition, the College has recently established a new partnership with the Rochester City School District on an Early College High School, renewed and re-energized its Gateway to College high school dropout reintegration program and has started an intensive collaboration with a local underperforming high school to promote college enrollment.

Today, MCC continues to build on its tradition of innovation with the kind of can-do spirit that has become an integral part of the college's culture. While serving an increasingly diverse student population, Monroe Community College continues to evolve—expanding our partnerships and enhancing our collaborations to fulfill the College's historical mission—to provide access to high-quality education and respond to the changing needs of our local community.