



November 2013

The biggest flood of military veterans since World War II is rolling onto campuses across the country. MCC's student veteran population has doubled in the last four years. These students often tackle their studies with military precision. They don't take their seat in a classroom for granted. They're respectful. They've seen a bit of the world. And MCC is grateful they are contributing their life experience and broad expertise to enhance the educational experience of all MCC students.

Veterans who are transitioning back to civilian life have complex concerns. MCC is committed to helping these extraordinary individuals succeed by offering in-house support services as well as access to additional assistance through other veteran-specific services outside MCC.

## MCC Veterans Memorial to be Dedicated on Veterans Day

A new Veterans Memorial, a lasting tribute to the thousands of veterans who have studied, graduated, taught or worked at MCC, will be dedicated on Monday, November 11.

From a concept initiated by MCC's Veterans Club, the MCC Grounds Department built a two-tier patio in the south courtyard of the Brighton Campus. The college community will now have a place dedicated to our veterans – their struggle, their sacrifice and their profound impact on our community.



## MCC Takes College Orientation Course to Vets

Taking a college orientation course – becoming familiar with the policies, procedures and expectations of a college – can give students a solid foundation that can accelerate their academic success.

This semester, Eric Wheeler, coordinator of MCC's Veterans Success program, faculty member and a veteran who served more than 20 years in uniform, is taking the orientation course off campus to the Nucor House. The Nucor House is a residential facility for veterans coping with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or traumatic brain injury (TBI). As Eric explained, "The loud, crowded atmosphere of a college campus can understandably be overwhelming for some transitioning veterans. Taking this course where the atmosphere is calm and comfortable is a confidence booster. They can start to see themselves moving forward; it's a positive first step."

## MCC Named Military Friendly School for 2014

Monroe Community College has been named to the Military Friendly Schools list for the fourth year in a row. The 2014 Military Friendly Schools list honors the top 20 percent of colleges, universities and trade schools in the

country that are doing the most to embrace America's military service members, veterans, and spouses as students and ensure their success on campus.



**Monroe Community College**

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

## “Serve, Honor, Support.” Symposium Held at MCC

In early October, the “Serve. Honor. Support.” Symposium was held at Monroe Community College. This day-long event coupled the experiences of veterans and their families with the expertise of clinical staff specializing in veteran treatment. Retired U.S. Army veteran and author of “Once a Warrior, Always a Warrior” Charles Hoge gave the keynote address. This initiative was made possible through the collaborative efforts of CDS Monarch, the Max and Marian Farash Charitable Foundation and the Office of Veterans’ Affairs at Nazareth College.

**MCC provides a wealth of services designed specifically to meet the unique needs of our student-veterans. These include:**

- Special assistance with Admissions and Financial Aid applications
- Federal jobs workshop and VA benefits fairs and workshops
- Veteran specific orientation and courses
- VA Benefits — general information, application assistance and help in optimizing usage
- MCC Veterans Club
- PTSD awareness training for Counseling and Public Safety staff members
- Direct access to Monroe County Veterans Services
- Partnership with Veterans Outreach Center
- Partnership with Rochester Vet Center and Outpatient Clinic for immediate mental and physical health care
- Partnership with Canandaigua VA Medical Center – on-campus representative with extensive access/knowledge of VA health care
- Military Mentoring Program — provides student veterans with a faculty mentor

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## Christopher Johnson: From Good Soldier to Great Citizen



On September 11, 2001, Christopher Johnson was a member of the U.S. Army training for an overseas humanitarian mission. That morning, America’s peace was shattered.

Less than 24 hours later, Chris was on a military flight to Afghanistan.

Chris was wounded three times during his service to our country. The last incident, which involved severe shrapnel wounds and a traumatic brain injury, ended his military career.

The transition wasn’t easy.

“I wasn’t a soldier anymore,” said Chris. “My type A personality, my leadership ability, my hypervigilance — those made me a good soldier. But you can’t stay up all night guarding your family and get up for work the next morning.” Once he was walking again — and his memory issues started to improve — Chris needed to figure out how to move forward. “I knew how to be a good soldier. Now, I needed to figure out how to be a good citizen,” he said.

Chris is now a full-time student in the business administration program, a member of MCC’s honor society, Phi Theta Kappa, and an active volunteer in the Warrior Salute™ program which helps veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder regain their lives. He is also an officer of MCC’s Veterans Club.

After graduating from MCC, Chris plans to transfer and earn his bachelor’s degree. “I want to be a person who makes a difference,” he said.

## Complimentary Dental Services for Veterans

MCC’s Dental Clinic is now providing cleanings/xrays for veterans at no charge. In order to receive services, eligible individuals are required to show their veteran ID card. According to David Lawrence, DDS, program

director, dental studies, “Our veterans have done so much for all of us. It’s simply the least we can do.”

The Dental Clinic can be reached at (585) 292-2045.

**Anne M. Kress, Ph.D.**  
President  
(585) 292-2100

**Michael J. McDonough, Ph.D.**  
Provost and Vice President  
of Academic Services  
(585) 292-2170

**G. Christopher Belle-Isle**  
Interim Vice President  
of Student Services  
(585) 292-2121