



Meet Kelsey Hawkins-Rusch

Student Kelsey Hawkins-Rusch is on the path to becoming a registered nurse. Raised in Fairport, N.Y. she is the first of four children to attend college. Kelsey was accepted by other local colleges, but she chose MCC for its quality programs and affordability.

“Affordability definitely was an important factor in my choice to go to MCC. I didn't want to have any debt coming out of college. MCC gave me that opportunity. Now when I graduate, I won't have to worry about paying loans back and I can focus on my career.”

Kelsey plans to graduate from MCC's nursing program in May 2014. Her goal is to become a pediatric nurse. She is already exploring local bachelor's degree programs.

“All of my siblings are thinking about community college. After seeing what a great experience I have had ... they know that MCC is a good way to go.”

Students Save as Much as 80% on the Cost of a Bachelor's Degree

The majority of our students (70%) view MCC as their first stop towards earning a bachelor's degree. MCC's low tuition and financial aid opportunities make a high-quality education even more affordable—whether a student's goal is to earn an associate degree or, ultimately, a bachelor's degree and beyond. The average annual tuition for four-year colleges ranges from \$17,970 (public) to \$36,340+ (private). Completing the first two years of study at MCC can save students up to 80% of the total cost of a bachelor's degree and put them on the right path to complete their degrees on time with fewer loans.

	MCC for 2 Years + SUNY 4-Year College for 2 Years	MCC for 2 Years + Private 4-Year College for 2 Years
Estimated Cost* (over 4 years)	\$43,260	\$76,414
Estimated Savings (over 4 years)	\$28,620	\$63,214

*includes tuition, fees, room and board

Affordability: A Matter of Perspective

Monroe Community College's annual tuition of \$3,140 is described as “affordable,” yet nearly 67% of our students rely on financial aid (grants and loans) to cover the cost. For some, \$3,000 feels as out-of-reach as \$30,000.

Many middle-class students (traditional and adult) fall between the financial aid cracks because they do not qualify for federal (Pell) or state (TAP) financial aid due to earned income (individual or family). When students do not qualify for grant support, they put off their educational goals or rely on loans to pay for college. Students from families with more than one child in college sometimes have difficulty qualifying for Pell and TAP assistance. For them, taking out a loan means the difference between not attending and completing their degree.

Knowing the financial challenges the majority of our students face, MCC has significantly reduced its operating budget—while safeguarding instruction—to keep higher education accessible and affordable. MCC students continue to bear the financial brunt of attending. In 2011-2012, student tuition represented 49.1% (\$57,523,000) of the college's net revenue, far above the state-mandated formula of tuition contributing 33.3% of community college revenue.

Less Student Loan Debt and Fewer Defaults

According to credit bureau TransUnion, as reported by *Time* magazine in February 2013, student loan debt and the rate of delinquency continue to climb. At MCC, we are reversing that trend through better communication with students and families, increased outreach and support, and stricter financial aid application deadlines. Students are required to complete a student loan counseling course before applying for a loan. The result has been an increase of 54% in students using a payment plan and a decrease of 27% (totaling \$213,000) in the amount of unpaid tuition and fees sent to collections during the past year (spring 2012 versus spring 2011).

On-time Degree Completion Encouraged by New Laws

Nearly half of MCC students receive Pell grants and/or TAP awards. Under the Consolidated Appropriations Act 2012, students are now limited to 12 semesters of Pell grant eligibility during their lifetime. For most students, the new law reinforces the importance of completing goals on time, but for others, it makes achieving their goals more difficult. For example, students taking developmental courses and adults returning to college will be impacted by the new law because grant support may run out before they complete their degrees or certificates. Students are eligible for state grants (TAP) for up to eight semesters.

Scholarships Fill the Gaps

MCC is committed to providing scholarships to help offset the rising costs of education. Donors to the Monroe Community College Foundation play an important role in delivering on that promise. In 2011-2012, 641 students received MCC Foundation scholarships totaling \$811,718. Through its *Every Bright Future Needs a Strong Foundation* campaign, the foundation makes funding of student scholarships its primary focus. The college and foundation's shared vision is to ensure students have access to the scholarship support needed to complete their educational goals.

Estimated Cost of Education

Depending on a student's housing choice, the actual cost of an MCC education is \$11,000 to \$15,000 per year. The breakdown below reflects the estimated annual cost of attending MCC:

Tuition	\$3,140
Fees	\$300
Books/Supplies	\$1,200
Transportation	\$1,500
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$1,500
Housing & Food	\$3,500 - \$8,000

SUNY Smart Track Campaign

SUNY launched the *SUNY Smart Track Campaign* "to combat student debt throughout New York and set a national model." Along with its sister colleges, MCC is transitioning to the new SUNY Award Letter that offers a standard, reader-friendly format for presenting financial aid offerings while also displaying campus-specific graduation rates, loan default rates, and the median student loan debt of our students. MCC will begin to use the new letter format during the spring 2013 semester.



Alumni like John Thompson '64 (pictured above, third from right with family and scholarship recipients) know how financial challenges can get in the way of earning a college credential. In 1995, he and his family established an endowed scholarship with the MCC Foundation. To date, nearly 900 students, most of them single parents, have completed their educational goals with the help of a Thompson Family Scholarship.

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