

Monroe County Community College Board of Trustees

Three six-year seats are up for election on the Monroe County Community College Board of Trustees. Each candidate was asked answer two questions with word limits for each one.

Question 1 (100 words): What role should the Community College play in Monroe County?

Question 2 (75 words): What would be your top priority if elected?

WILLIAM H. BRAUNLICH

Age, date, place of birth: 60; Feb. 3, 1954; Monroe

Address: 12192 N. Lakeshore Dr., LaSalle

Occupation, employer: Attorney, Braunlich, Russow and Braunlich PC

Education: University of Michigan, bachelor of arts; Washington and Lee University, doctorate of jurisprudence

Memberships: Director, The Foundation at Monroe County Community College; chairman, River Raisin National Battlefield Park Foundation; life member and past president, Monroe County Historical Society; Monroe County Bar Association

Length of residency: Lifelong

Public offices held or sought: MCCC board, 12 years, current vice chairman, chairman of 2013 presidential search committee in 2013

1. The continuing core mission of MCCC as a comprehensive community college is to provide excellent, highly affordable, accessible higher education opportunities for students seeking transfer to a four-year institution and students pursuing a two-year career program at MCCC (for example, nursing, respiratory therapy, culinary arts, welding).

MCCC also has been a leader in creative educational partnerships, community cultural enrichment and economic development.

Due to the decline in operational revenues from local property taxes and the State of Michigan, these important roles

can only be continued with additional financial support from the citizens of Monroe County.

2. Achieving financial stability, predictability and sustainability that allows MCCC to maintain tuition affordability for students, minimize student debt, maintain the level of excellence in current programs, develop and launch new programs that are responsive to student needs and current employment opportunities, expand student success services (internships and mentoring), purchase state-of-the-art technology and equipment for students, and address a significant backlog of needed improvements and maintenance issues in MCCC's physical facilities.

IGNAZIO CUCCIA

Age, date, place of birth: 42; Aug. 18, 1972; Monroe

Address: 216 Eagle Ct.

Spouse: Barb Cuccia

Children: Maria, Rosa and Ana

Occupation, employer: Insurance agent and owner, Nationwide Insurance; Cuccia Insurance Agency

Education: Monroe County Community College, associate's degree; Siena Heights University, bachelor of arts

Memberships: President-elect, Kiwanis Club of Monroe; building chairman, Monroe County Chapter, American Red Cross; vice chairman finance, St. Michael Catholic Church; Foundation at Monroe County Community College director

Length of residency: Lifelong

Public offices held or sought: Frenchtown Township Planning

Commission chairman; Frenchtown Township Zoning Board of Appeals

1. The community college role in Monroe is to educate the community to a higher degree. Whether that be to receive an associate degree and move on to a bachelor's or to get a welding certificate to advance within one's community.

Also through their Lifelong Learning program, an adult could learn a skill or an art just to mark it off their "bucket list." A higher education leaders to a better community.

2. My top priority when elected would be to continue the path of financial responsibility of the college. And to make a higher education affordable for everyone.

LYNETTE M. DOWLER

Age, date, place of birth: 51; Dec. 14, 1962; Monroe

Address: 7227 Mentel Rd., Newport

Spouse: Jeff Dowler

Children: Camden, Chelsea, Chase

Occupation, employer: Director, DTE Energy

Education: Monroe County Community College, associate's degree; University of Toledo bachelor of science and master of science

Memberships: Monroe County Community College, Foundation Board, 2010-present; DTE Energy Women's Advisory Committee, 2009-present; Elevate Church Mission Team to Republic of Honduras, 2013, and Republic of Moldova 2012

Length of residency: Lifelong

1. Monroe County Community College should provide quality education to a broad range of students.

It should support and encourage our local residents' attendance and learning throughout their life span.

In addition, through technology and outreach, the college should create flexibility that invites non-traditional students into a productive learning environment.

Ultimately, MCCC should strengthen the fabric of our residents and create and enhance the work force of the future. MCCC should be the cornerstone of growth and advancement for our community.

2. My top priority if elected as a Monroe County Community College trustee would be to enhance enrollment through excellence in program offerings, affordability and embracing a "student first" philosophy.

MCCC has an outstanding faculty, state-of-the-art facilities and is located in proximity to several major communities.

My priority is for students to consider MCCC as their No. 1 choice.

JACK SCHWAB

Age, date, place of birth: 68; Nov. 10, 1945; Toledo

Address: 47 Linswood Dr., Monroe

Spouse: Anne Gensler Schwab

Children: Erica Ann (Schwab) Sottile

Occupation, employer: Planner, Flagstar Bank

Education: Divine Word College, Epworth, Iowa, bachelor of arts in

sociology; DePaul University, Chicago; master of arts in theology; master of urban planning, Wayne State University

Memberships: American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP retired), Monroe Family YMCA, Grace Lutheran Church Praise Band

Length of residency: 37 years

Public offices held or sought: Executive director, Monroe County Opportunity Program, 1976-87

1. The community college can serve various roles in Monroe County depending on the student's state in life.

For recent high school graduates it is a local, affordable source of advanced education. They can begin a degree here and/or gain a professional credential and then either transition to a four-year college or enter the work force with valuable skills.

For Monroe County residents who are working and raising a family, it is a convenient place to advance a career or learn a trade.

For retirees and those in later life, it offers an opportunity for lifelong learning that enriches life.

2. Continue the tradition of excellence and quality education by ensuring that the facility is maintained properly and that classrooms and laboratories have the most updated technology.

Ensure that sufficient revenue is available to attract and retain excellent faculty and support staff by offering competitive



► FROM PAGE 15

College (cont.)

salaries and benefits along with quality working conditions.

Become familiar with all regulations related to accreditation.

Study the needs of local businesses and respond with appropriate class offerings and programs.

MARY KAY THAYER

Age, date, place of birth: 68; Sept. 9, 1946; Pittsburgh, Pa.

Address: 4189 Little Streams Trail, Lambertville

Spouse: Jack Thayer

Children: Jackie Ball, Vicky Hovinen.

Occupation, employer: Chief executive officer, Thayer Consulting Inc. Engineering Services

Education: St. John High School, Jackson; Jackson Community College

Memberships: Whitman Center Advisory Committee chairman; Michigan Community College Association Board of Directors, past Chairman; American Community College Trustees Coordinator to Michigan; Bedford Township Lions Club, past president

Length of residency: 39 years

Public offices held or sought: MCCC Trustee 1990-present; Monroe County Commissioner District 8 1986-1990; Bedford Township trustee 1984-86; Bedford park commissioner 1980-84; Candidate for 55th District state representative 2010

1. MCCC plays numerous roles in the county, including, post-secondary education, career education plus business and industry assistance.

More high schools are using dual enrollment with MCCC to enhance student options.

The La-Z-Boy Center and Meyer Theatre provide the community with top quality programs and entertainment.

The opening of the Career and Technology Center has expanded our ability to offer new academic programs.

In 2014 dollars, the college accounted for more than \$830 million in economic impact in Monroe County. MCCC offers high-quality higher education at an affordable price and contributes greatly to the success of our students, businesses and community-at-large.

2. My priority has always been providing high-quality academic programs at affordable prices.

Twenty percent of incoming students need some remedial assistance. Expanding staffing in our



Learning Assistance Lab is critical. No student should fall between the cracks.

We must increase programs and student attendance at the Whitman Center.

Sadly, a drop in state revenue and local home values led to increased tuition. I am committed to delivering a superior education at affordable prices, close to home.

BARBARA J. VERRAN

Age, date, place of birth: 54; June 1, 1960; Monroe

Address: 5365 N. Dixie Hwy., Newport

Occupation, employer: Retired director of Michigan Works! Monroe County Employment and Training Department

Education: Monroe County Community College, associate of science; Eastern Michigan University, bachelor of business education, master of arts in guidance and counseling, college and personnel; Dale Carnegie Training, Monroe

Memberships: Chairman, Monroe County Human Services Collaborative Network; member, Monroe County Economic Development Corp. Board of Directors; treasurer, Monroe County Community Corrections Advisory Board; counselor/group facilitator, Gabby's Ladder

Length of Residency: Lifelong

1. Monroe County Community College must be the highway for students to obtain a degree, a certificate, or a transfer program that lends itself to obtaining employment in a demand occupation within Monroe County or Michigan.

Its role should encompass partnering with economic development entities to bring employers into Monroe County and with K-12 school districts to ensure that students are prepared to successfully complete coursework needed for that degree, certificate or transfer program.

Monroe County must continue to embrace and support MCCC as it is fundamental to local economic development and to building a marketable work force and healthy community.

2. To ensure that students receive a quality education while remaining affordable. It must be affordable for the unemployed and underemployed in order to upgrade their skills or prepare for a new career.

The value must go beyond low tuition fees. Quality and training in demand occupations that land our students in today's competitive work force is second to none and will lead to a strong local economy, healthy families and additional local and state income.

