

KEEP MCC STRONG

Re-Elect ROY PORTENGA MCC Trustee (non-partisan)

Paid for by the Committee to Elect Roy J. Portenga Muskegon Community College Board of Trustees, 711 Center St., N. Muskegon, MI 49445

GRCC EOC guest column

by Teera Wilkins, project director, GRCC Educational Opportunities Center

Everyone should have access to a college education that can change their lives. A new Grand Rapids Community College program can help adult learners prepare for college, and to be successful once they get there.

GRCC's new TRIO Educational Opportunities Center is aimed at helping adult learners in 13 counties -- Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Kent, Lake, Mason, Mecosta, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, Osceola, and Ottawa -- connect with the resources they need to navigate the admissions process for colleges or universities. TRIO is a federal program to help low-income, first-generation students and those with disabilities succeed in higher education.

GRCC was awarded a five-year, \$1.16 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education to create the center, where unemployed or low-wage workers, prospective first-generation college students, and other adult learners can work with specialists to explore higher education options and connect with area resources and programs to support their educational goals.

The center, which is free to use, supports a range of adult learners, including those with limited proficiency in English; those with disabilities; those facing housing insecurity; people aging out of the foster care system; military service persons, veterans, and their dependents; and members of other groups traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education.

The idea of going to college might be intimidating, and many people might not know where to begin. I can help, along with my team at the Educational Opportunities Center.

I've spent my career in higher education helping students be successful. I know there are many resources in our greater community that can help students of all ages be successful.

The Educational Opportunities Center will connect people with programs and services that help with high school diploma or GED certificate completion, academic advising and personal counseling, tutoring and mentoring, career exploration, financial assistance, and completing college admission processes.

I know what it is like. I graduated from Grand Rapids Public Schools and participated in the GRCC Upward Bound program, learning about the types of opportunities that are available and the people who will walk with you on your educational journey.

I returned to GRCC after 10 years in healthcare, discovering a passion for working with underserved students and helping them reach their educational potential.

Now, with the Educational Opportunities Center, I can expand that work and help more people get the education they need to live the life they want to live.

For help getting started on the next steps of your educational journey, the center can be reached by email at eoc@grcc.edu, by text at (616) 236-5017 and by phone at (616) 234-3399. Additional information is at grcc.edu/trioeoc.

Candidate Bio: Jenny McNeill



Vote Jenny McNeill for 14th Circuit Court Judge! Jenny has the integrity, experience, and commitment to our community. Jenny has the support of many in the community including Judges, attorneys and community members who value her integrity and fair decision

making. Jenny McNeill has practiced law for over 25 years. She has represented thousands of individuals in Muskegon County. She currently serves as a Family Court Referee, presiding over thousands of hearings regarding juveniles and other family law matters each year with fairness and impartiality. Jenny raised her family in Muskegon County, as she has lived here for 24 years. She has been extensively involved in the community, serving on the boards of Every Woman's Place, Muskegon Family Care, and more. She spends countless hours volunteering in our community. Vote Jenny McNeill for Circuit Court Judge!



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