LIFE IN MOTION
stories of successful students as they move through life
success stories
WAYNE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT LEADERSHIP

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DR. CURTIS L. IVERY

The success of our students is what the Wayne County Community College District is all about. From the early days of our founding to the exciting growth we have experienced during the past decade, we have never forgotten that the value of this District is seen in those we have touched and the lives that have been transformed.

That is why the Success Stories we are sharing with you in this edition of the publication are so important. The persons you will read about in the edition are representative of what the WCCCD experience has meant and continues to mean for our community. Their work, demonstrated leadership, and service to others reflect the value and significance of education in building and strengthening a dynamic and vibrant community.

While we can only profile a limited number of persons in a publication such as this, we know that there are many others who could be lifted up in the same manner. If you are an alumnus or know of someone who should be profiled in the next edition of Success Stories, please share that information with us.

We take pride in our students, graduates, and members of the WCCCD community who are making their mark across the state, nation, and the world. We hope—after reading these success stories—that you will too.

Sincerely,

Dr. Curtis L. Ivery
Chancellor
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> "Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire."  
> - William Butler Yeats

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Financial support is available to Wayne County Community College District students through the WCCCD Scholarship Committee, a 501(c)(3) organization. Students may apply for scholarship support beginning March first of each year. Students must submit an application for the individual scholarship awards, which will vary in accordance with eligibility requirements. A list of the various scholarships and eligibility guidelines is available in the Student Services Office at each WCCCD Campus and at the District Student Services Office located at 801 W. Fort Street, Detroit, MI 48226. Students may also access and download this information from the District's web site at www.wcccd.edu.
Dr. Nancy Quarles

quick & inquisitive

President of Advantage Consulting Group, Inc. (ACGI) a management consulting firm, Dr. Nancy Quarles leads a significant and demanding lifestyle making her one of Michigan’s foremost leaders. ACGI offers small and medium corporations comprehensive government relations, grant development, research, and public policy development services. A former member of the Michigan House of Representatives, she understands the legislative system and is able to assist companies with comprehensive government relations.

Dr. Nancy Quarles served as the Chief Whip for the Democratic Caucus, Democratic Vice Chair of the House Tax Policy and Regulatory Affairs and Local Government Committees, and was a member of the Finance and Insurance Committee. At the time when community colleges came under attack by state legislators, Dr. Quarles was able to effectively defend WCCCD and the community college system in Michigan.

While some legislators were criticizing community colleges for the lack of degrees awarded, Nancy defended them for the opportunities they provide, not necessarily for degree programs, but for the professional development courses for those who already hold a degree or wish to change jobs. The community colleges also offer specific programs for people who have been displaced. She said, “I can certainly attest to the foundation in project management I gained by going to WCCCD.” Dr. Quarles said, “I owe my success to WCCCD.” When she was employed by International Business Machines (IBM), she realized that she did not have a strong technical background and enrolled in computer programming, technical management, and other professional development courses at the college.

She said, “The WCCCD experience helped me to grow within IBM.” After initially working as a marketing representative, she advanced into a consultant’s job leading a 25-member team in the government industry. She worked successfully to market solutions to various industries from the automotive to the government sector.

Dr. Quarles achieved several awards for resolving technical challenges the client was facing. When she decided to change career paths, she became more involved in government. Prior to being elected to the House of Representatives, Dr. Quarles served actively on many committees as an Oakland County Commissioner, the first public office to which she was elected in 1994. She hosted the cable access public affairs shows, The Oakland County Commissioner Report, and Stateside.

“The path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”

- Muriel Strede

Dr. Quarles has received numerous awards and commendations, including the Omega Psi Phi Public Citizen of the Year Award, Distinguished Legislator of the Year from the Independent Colleges and Universities Association, Susan B. Anthony Award from the National Organization of Women, Oakland County Community Service Award, and Chapter Women of the Year from American Business Women’s Association. She has served as president of the Michigan Legislative Black Caucus, the Democratic Caucus, Democratic Vice Chair of the House Tax Policy and Regulatory Affairs and Local Government Committees, and was a member of the Finance and Insurance Committee. At the time when community colleges came under attack by state legislators, Dr. Quarles was able to effectively defend WCCCD and the community college system in Michigan.

WCCCD: Nancy graduated from WCCCD and continued her education at University of Detroit Mercy, Central Michigan University and Western Michigan University.

STATS:
Name: Nancy Quarles
Career: President, Advantage Consulting Group, Inc.

FAMILY:
Dr. Quarles is married to Larry, her best friend. Their dog, Jack Joe, a cocker spaniel is a constant companion.

WCCCD: Nancy graduated from WCCCD and continued her education at University of Detroit Mercy, Central Michigan University and Western Michigan University.
While some legislators were citing community colleges for the lack of degrees awarded, Nancy defended them for the opportunities they provide, not necessarily for degree programs, but for the professional development courses for those who already hold a degree or wish to change jobs.

National Foundation for Women Legislators. She was the founding chair of the Michigan House Women’s Leadership Caucus. Her commitment to the community includes serving on several boards, including the Michigan Municipal Bond Authority and Elizabeth Copeland Glass Education Foundation. She has been on the staff of Central Michigan University and Oakland University and is an alumnus of Leadership Oakland.

A Detroit native, Dr. Quarles graduated from the Detroit Public Schools and continued her education at WCCCD and the University of Detroit Mercy majoring in business administration and industrial relations. Her first position was as a buyer for Montgomery Ward and later moved to IBM. While working at IBM she completed a master’s degree in public administration at Central Michigan University and received a Ph.D. in public affairs and public administration from Western Michigan University where she was a Thurgood Marshall fellow. The Thurgood Marshall Fellowship is a highly competitive award with only a limited number of awards available. A student must maintain good academic standing in their course work and must also perform satisfactorily as a graduate assistant or doctoral associate.

While some legislators were citing community colleges for the lack of degrees awarded, Nancy defended them for the opportunities they provide, not necessarily for degree programs, but for the professional development courses for those who already hold a degree or wish to change jobs.

Hers and her best friend and buddy both have mentored young people in academics and sports. Their dog, Jack Joe, a 16 year-old cocker spaniel, is a constant companion. For vacations, they like to travel to warm climates. She credits her good life to her family and five siblings who were always encouraged by their parents’ high expectations. Their values encompassed education, social and civic activities, and religion.

She admires Dr. Curtis L. Ivery for his leadership at WCCCD and continues to support the District in many ways. Golf is one of her passions and she participated in the District’s golf outings.

“I owe my success to WCCCD.”

-Nancy Quarles
The legend of Motown is known throughout the world and a small group of dedicated partners and investors are working very hard hoping to bring the magic back by celebrating Motown’s 50th anniversary. Strather said, “We will give the world what they want and they will give us what we need.” An anniversary. Strather said, “We will give the world what they want and they will give us what we need.”

The museum was founded in 1985 by the Michigan Historical Museum, which brands itself a “historical experience.” Strather is dedicated to the Optimist International Youth Foundation and has established over 130 Optimists Clubs. He served in the Michigan State House of Representatives, won the Spirit of Detroit award, and has recognitions and awards from the University of Michigan, WCCCD, Oakland County Sheriff, Ronald McNair School of Technology – The Herbert J. Strather Media Center, Filipino American Community, St. Louis Post, Heroes and Legends and Optimists of the Year. In 2006 he established the Herbert J. Strather Foundation and represents, Oakland County Sheriff, Ronald McNair School of Technology – The Herbert J. Strather Media Center, Filipino American Community, St. Louis Post, Heroes and Legends and Optimists of the Year. In 2006 he established the Herbert J. Strather Foundation and represents, Oakland County Sheriff, Ronald McNair School of Technology – The Herbert J. 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Marie Conner

inspirational advisor

Marie Conner is the type of unmistakable leader who inspires others through example. While shopping in a local market, a young man who was working there noticed her book bag and began asking questions about education and college. Marie, an employee working in admissions at the University of Michigan, Dearborn (UMD), immediately took this young man under advisement to help him plan for his future. She also mentors many students on a volunteer basis while performing her duties in admissions at UMD.

“Real success is finding your lifework in the work that you love.”

- David McCullough

Marie started college classes at WCCCD in 1995 and graduated in 2004 with an associate’s degree in applied science and business administration. She recalls that the graduation ceremony in Cobo Hall was a thrilling event and the primary reason for her attendance at the commencement ceremony was so her children could observe and feel the joy of achievement.

Both children were inspired by the experience and Aaron and Meea have been students at the WCCCD’s Northwest Campus. Aaron hopes to complete his associate’s degree and continue to pursue hotel management. Meea is interested in the culinary arts. Marie continues to be a student at UMD and will complete requirements for a bachelor’s degree with a major in communications with a focus in public relations.

Marie aspires to work with a non-profit organization in a mentoring or advising capacity. Throughout her college years, she participated in activities on the Student Activity Board that does volunteer work with the Golden Key International Honor Society (an academic honor society which recognizes and encourages scholastic achievement and excellence among college students). As one of the most dynamic, forward-thinking organizations in higher education, the society is committed to an effort of recognizing academic achievement and encouraging altruistic service. The local chapter often works at Vista Maria which serves children from Southeast Michigan, helping them overcome past hardships and recover from histories of abuse, neglect, and other traumas. Today Vista Maria is Michigan’s largest private not-for-profit child welfare agency for girls and their families. The agency also offers therapeutic foster care and other community based programs to area boys and girls. Marie speaks proudly about her workshops with the girls at Vista Maria where they are encouraged to focus on higher education. Marie is also knowledgeable about scholarship opportunities that she shares in her mentoring of the girls.

For recreation, roller skating is Marie’s favorite physical activity and she usually skates on Friday mornings, her only day off, with friends. She also listens to books on tape, including President Obama’s book, Dreams from My Father and Pulitzer prize-winning author, August Wilson’s play, Fences. Set in the 1950s, the play tells the story of an illetrate garbage collector who becomes embittered by a white-controlled system that denied him the baseball stardom he felt he deserved.

Religion plays a large part in Marie Conner’s life and daily activity. She is active in the Great Faith Ministries International and volunteers as an office assistant in the church office.

Marie loves to cook for her family and is known for her peach cobbler. The recipes were learned at her mother’s side along with cogent family advice from her mother and father urging her and her siblings to do something productive every day so that they would look back with pride. Her mother had a favorite saying, part of the “doo wop” song, Life Can Be a Dream. She said to Marie, “Nothing comes to a sleeper but a dream.”

Marie likes to spend time with friends watching old movies and her favorites include Mr. Skeffington, movies that star Bette Davis. Marie can recall many of the lines from the movies.

In her role as an admissions advisor, Marie reminds others that they can achieve their dreams. She leads by example and demonstrates a life full of riches gently bestowed upon her by the success of the many lives she has touched.

STATS:
Name: Marie Conner
Goal: To work for a non-profit organization.

WCCCD:
Marie earned an associate’s degree from WCCCD in 2004 in applied science and business administration.

FAMILY:
Marie’s two children, Aaron and Meea, have followed Marie’s example and are enrolled at WCCCD.

“Nothing comes to a sleeper but a dream.”
Walter Davis
conquering disease

By targeting the most vulnerable, Dr. Walter Davis has taken on the H1N1 virus with an aggressive logistics plan. By the end of the flu season, his strategies provided vaccinations to make sure that the health of 900,000 individuals living in Detroit was protected against the virus.

Dr. Davis is the Pandemic Flu Coordinator for the Detroit Department of Health and Wellness and developed a plan by dividing the city into quadrants so the vaccines could be distributed systematically.

Dr. Davis is one of WCCCD’s greatest success stories. Moving with his mother and father from Seattle, Washington, at the age of 10, he was enrolled in a private school, Detroit De La Salle. It was during the 70s when an “A” in your class; can you tell me how to do it?” Amazingly, all the parents and pay college tuition. Tuition was a big issue and he often worked two jobs to support his parents and pay college tuition.

James E. Blessman, who encouraged him throughout his struggles with school and family medical problems.

Dr. Davis attended WCCCD after high school graduation and concentrated on the core science classes. He continued his education at Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where he earned a bachelor’s degree in Biology. He graduated from Wayne State University Medical School. Dave’s medical education was interrupted several times due to his parents’ worsening health and, at one time, was forced to take leave from his medical residency.

Tuition was a big issue and he often worked two jobs to support his parents and pay college tuition. He credits his mentor, Dr. James E. Blessman, who encouraged him throughout his struggles with school and family medical problems.

James E. Blessman, M.D., Medical Director for the City of Detroit in the Public Health Department and Assistant Professor, Division of the Occupational and Environmental Health Department at Wayne State University, said, “I don’t know how long I have known Dr. Davis, but it has been for some time. I have memories of him in medical school, residency, and now in the position at the health department as the H1N1 coordinator. Though his path to his current position has not been without challenges, he certainly has gotten to a position that allows him to thrive. He is a good listener, critical thinker, and very good educator with the ability to connect with people from all walks of life. He is dedicated, hard working, and willing to put in the hours to get the job done. One word that I could use to describe him would be maven. These are people who love information for information’s sake, and more importantly likes to share that information with a selfless goal of helping others. I’m glad to know him, and even happier that he is on our team.”

Dr. Davis and his wife, Donna, have two boys. Walter II and Mateo.

Dr. Davis is the Pandemic Flu Coordinator for the Detroit Department of Health and Wellness.

“Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed is more important than any one thing.”

- Abraham Lincoln
Kathy D’Angelo

hopes &
dreams

Entering the driveway at Kathy D’Angelo’s office, located at the corner of Hall and West roads in Woodhaven, one’s attention is immediately captured by a tiny log cabin. The treasured landmark sits quietly along the busiest street in town representing the community’s past. The one-room hand- Hewn (Hewn and shingle building) is typical of homes built by early settlers in the 1870s. The structure was dismantled and presented to village leaders as a gift from the Lions Club in 1950. It truly represents a pioneering spirit reflected in the life of Kathy D’Angelo.

Kathy D’Angelo enrolled at WCCCD in 1993 and completed requirements for the associate’s degree in business administration. One of the main reasons she chose WCCCD is because there was a Montessori School on campus and she could go to classes and have an ideal situation for her son, Steve. During her third year of school, she packed Steve’s lunch, dropped him off at Montessori and went to her classes. “If it hadn’t been for that, I would have been unable to finish because I had no one to look after him.”

After graduation from WCCCD, she was awarded a scholarship to continue studies at Wayne State University (WSU) that required full-time attendance. Putting her role as a mother first and foremost, she declined the scholarship and did not pursue her education at that time. Instead, she eagerly became involved in her life’s work - community service.

She started working as the human resource director at the Rivergate Nursing Home and also as a part-time manager for a chiropractic clinic. Then, based on community leaders’ observations of her volunteer work, she became the enrichment coordinator for the recreation department in Grosse Isle where she worked for three years. An associate’s degree was one of the requirements and her WCCCD background gave her an advantage. She served in three capacities until being offered the senior coordinator and administrative assistant’s position in Woodhaven. After being promoted to assistant recreation director, she was shortly thereafter named the director based on her excellent performance.

Kathy said, “Even though I could not afford to go on to a four year college, having that associate’s degree got me where I am today because every position I have held has required at least an associate’s degree.” One professor, an attorney, who taught Business Law at the Downriver Campus, taught me how law applied to the business world. He expected high performance from his students. Kathy said, “I did very well in his class.”

Another class she enjoyed was an anthropology class. Kathy recalled that, “It was such an eye-opening class because it contained information about history and various cultures. We visited the Hari Krishna center, a Baptist Church, and explored the many different cultures in Detroit.”

Her husband of 34 years, John, has been an automotive designer for over 35 years and will be working for Pfister in the manufacturing of an electric car. They have a son, Steve, who, like his father, is an automotive designer and still attends Monroe Community College. John and Kathy are avid sailors and they own a 30-foot $2 sailboat. John has sailed in many Port Huron-
Kathy is the driving force behind the explosive growth and success of the recreation department but is quick to speak highly of her dedicated staff. The quarterly booklet describing all the events is impressive with a variety of programs for all ages.

A small sign on her desk is revealing in its description of the conversation with Kathy D’Angelo. It says “Hopes and Dreams” which exemplifies her lifelong philosophy that provides opportunities and services for others. Her goal for the future is to establish a community foundation that would benefit the entire community and is in the process of selecting a board which will involve other service organizations within the community such as Kiwanis, the football organizations, and the animal shelter. When this foundation becomes a reality, Kathy D’Angelo will have pioneered another project for Woodhaven because of her hopes and dreams.
Juanita Gregory Harvey
the gift of a grand woman

As with Mary McLeod Bethune, another octogenarian with whom she shares a common bond, Juanita Gregory Harvey has lived a life filled with unexpected events that connect family through education, community, religious activities, musical and cultural happenings, and work. Juanita Gregory Harvey has excelled in a myriad of accomplishments.

Mrs. Harvey has dedicated her life to education. She is one of many senior students who have attended WCCCD from its beginning. While serving as president of her block club in Hamtramck, she encouraged many others to attend WCCCD. She completed her first associate’s degree in 1974. She entered the University of Detroit and was awarded a bachelor’s degree in business administration. In 1981, she graduated with a master’s of arts degree in human resources from Central Michigan University.

Upon retirement from AT&T after over forty years of employment, she returned to WCCCD to pursue her love of knowledge and education under the “free tuition for seniors” program. She has enjoyed taking classes in the College of Business Administration, in Flint, Michigan. Her only son, Homer, received a master’s degree in Business Administration from the University of Detroit and is a long-standing employee of Wayne County Community College District (WCCCD). She has five grandchildren in college:

Fordham University, Western Michigan University, Wayne State University, University of Michigan, Baker College and Wayne County Community College District.

Juanita Gregory Harvey has a reputation as one who is always willing to help with community and educational events. She has worked tirelessly in her community where she was president of the Hamtramck Association of Bock Clubs for many years. She was active in the Hamtramck NAACP, receiving numerous awards and, in the past several years, she has been a volunteer at the Detroit Institute of Art. After touring the Avedon exhibit of fashion photography at the museum she recalled how she constructed her own hats in the 50s and 60s. She continues to celebrate hats with the Rosebud Chapter Red Hat Society of Michigan. She also volunteers at the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History.

Other community and cultural organizations in which she participates are the St. Joseph Nursing Home in Hamtramck where she assists with the religious services, the Calvinitian Baptist Church where she participates in religious services and the exercise programs, the Women’s Fellowship Club at the Plymouth United Church of Christ, and The Susan G. Komen Detroit “Race for the Cure,” participating in the race yearly. Life memberships include the Phi Gamma Nu Sorority, Zeta Chapter, Fred Hart Williams Genealogical Society, and the Michigan Association of DECA, Eastern University.

Her musical training since the age of four includes studying at the conservatories of music in Detroit and Chicago. Because of her talent, she has played for church and with jazz contemporary, James Taylor, with whom she has entertained on countless occasions. Mrs. Harvey continues to play almost daily and displays her nimble fingers with pride.

A new Ford Focus enables Mrs. Harvey to drive effortlessly to appointments and meetings and since she loves to walk, she plays golf shooting in the 100 plus range and laugtherly recalls making a “hole in one” last summer. She claims a fairly healthy lifestyle contributes to her longevity but confesses to a bad habit of fried chicken wings and Italian beef and sausage from Chicago.

“Faith is the first factor in a life devoted to service. Without it, nothing is possible. With it nothing is impossible.”

- Mary McLeod Bethune

In the next few years, Mrs. Harvey aspires to write a family documentary so that subsequent family generations can learn from the impressive family history. Being a member of the Fred Hart Williams Genealogical Society, she has completed much of the genealogy. She wishes to impress upon all young people the value of family support. She recalled a 60 Minute episode that showed an in-depth story about an outstand-
Dr. Trent Forbes & Shawna Forbes

forthright
Forbes

The Forbes have an interesting wedding story. Shawna, in speaking about her husband, Trent, said, “I wasn’t so sure about him on our first date.” When he asked her to marry him, she tried to put off setting a wedding date. Supposedly he agreed. Three months after they met, he informed her that a limo would arrive in thirty minutes “You need to get dressed up,” he said. She asked, “Where are we going?” He said, “We are going to get married!” The rest, as they say, is history.

“If your success is not on your own terms, if it looks good to the world but does not feel good in your heart, it is not success at all.”
- Anna Quindlen
Dr. Trent Forbes

Many people are concerned about health, but that's not the case for Dr. Trent Forbes. As a child growing up in a house full of doctors, he learned从小学医。As a student at Wayne County Community College District (WCCCD), he and his family had a different approach to healthcare. His family developed a strong bond with WCCCD while he was a lab aid at Northwest Campus.

WCCCD provides a strong educational foundation that prepares students for a variety of careers. Dr. Forbes is a direct beneficiary of this. His degree in Paralegal Technology set him on the path to becoming a doctor. He credited his family with teaching him the value of education and the importance of working hard.

While growing up in a house full of doctors, Dr. Forbes was taught to value education. He credits his family with teaching him the value of education and the importance of working hard.

Shawna Forbes

Shawna is the wife of Dr. Trent Forbes. While growing up in a house full of doctors, she learned the value of education. She has eight siblings and a very busy family life. She attended McKinsey High School and received an Associate of Applied Science degree in Paralegal Technology. She completed the Paralegal Technology program with honors and is very sharp!

Shawna says, "There was a lot of love in our family. My grandmother said, "Take care of your family." Shawna recalls her grandmother saying, "Take care of your family." Shawna says, "There was a lot of love in our family. My grandmother said, "Take care of your family." Shawna's children are very blessed."
After 40 years of experience, Laura Huthwaite is a powerful force in the industry.

Laura Huthwaite


clean sweep

Giant Janitorial Services Inc., CEO, Laura P. Huthwaite puts on a happy face and tackles some of the dirtiest jobs in the Detroit area with a great attitude and a mop and broom. In 1968, while working as an account manager for Merrill Lynch, she started the janitorial services company as a part-time job to make extra money while her husband was going to school. Seeing the potential for growth, she focused all her attention on growing the company.

“Success usually comes to those who are too busy to be looking for it.”

-Henry David Thoreau

A rare female in a male bastion forty years ago, the competition in the janitorial industry was tough but Laura Huthwaite was eager to break new ground. She researched other service companies and discovered strategies to build the small start-up company. Before long, she realized that her part-time job was a demanding business with tremendous growth potential. The company currently employs over 100 people locally and consideration is being given to expansion in other states.

Located at 18485 Mack Avenue in Detroit, Giant Janitorial Services’ mission is to provide the highest degree of service to all its customers and is only able to achieve this through its exemplary managerial skills and training program. Giant’s diligence behind the scenes and away from the job site is what ensures the superior quality of service each customer receives. Whether workers are performing general maintenance, painting, construction cleanup, housekeeping, or maid services, Huthwaite is an active manager and can often be observed at the work site. She has a close working relationship with her employees, can call all of them by their first name, and mentors them so that they take pride in their work. She prides herself in being fair to her employees.

On the rare occasions when Laura takes time off, she works on her golf game in a women’s league at the 18-hole course at the Plum Brook Golf Club in Sterling Heights, Michigan.

Huthwaite credits her father, an Italian immigrant, for her strong work ethic and said, “Although I have met many admirable people in my business, my father instilled the qualities in me which have contributed to Giant’s success.” She implements those special qualities in the way she does business by paying attention to the customer’s requests, following through on commitments, and attention to detail. She treats each client as if they are her most important customer.

A graduate of Dominican High School, she attended WCCCD at the former Austin Center and the Downriver Campus where she recalls learning a great deal from her favorite instructors, Eddie McCray-Mireku who taught psychology, and business instructors, Dr. Fulgum and Dr. Fairbanks. She received an associate’s degree from WCCCD in Business Administration. “Both instructors were interesting and inspired me to continue learning.” As a student, she excelled despite the fact that she was juggling multiple responsibilities – marriage, children, and a job.

Our economy and support our communities.”

Now, after 40 years of experience in professional management, Laura Huthwaite is a powerful force in the industry. In 2009, cited as a woman with a vision for growth, Laura was a finalist in the Ernst and Young Entrepreneur of the Year. Program Director, Frank Massetti writes, “Exemplary men and women have the ability to turn powerful ideas into distinctive new businesses. In good times and bad, they drive our economy and support our communities.”

Our economy and support our communities.”

Family continues to give her strength and she enjoys going to soccer, basketball games, and swim meets with her grandchildren. She and her husband, a professional athlete, spend time at a cottage in northern Michigan. She claims to have little time for reading but does look for motivational authors from which she draws inspiration.
**Kwame Kenyatta**

**commitment to community**

Taking pride in his name, Kwame, an African tribal name and the name of the first president of Ghana, Kwame Kenyatta has been passionate about justice and has confronted injustice throughout his life.

A longtime community activist, Kwame Kenyatta was initially elected to the Detroit City Council in November of 2005. He was appointed as chairperson of the Council’s Internal Operations Standing Committee in 2007 and as well as a member of the Detroit Board of Education for five years where he served as vice president. In addition to his other professional achievements he is the author of two books titled Burning Fire and Guide to Implementing African Centered Education. He hosted his own talk show, “Power Talk in the Morning.”

Mr. Kenyatta has a long history of commitment to the community. He has been involved with neighborhood activities for over twenty-five years in youth initiatives, anti-drug programs, rites of passage, and assistance to senior citizens. In recognition of his dedication, he has received awards from the city, county, and state and has been asked to appear on both local and national television and radio programs, including Cable News Network and ABC’s Nightline.

He attended Detroit Oakland Preparatory School receiving a General Education Diploma and, as a former student of both WCCCD and Eastern Michigan University (EMU), Kwame Kenyatta maintains the belief that education is a lifelong process. He continues to pursue studies in many interesting areas.

While attending EMU, he encountered a thorny event. He said, “I was deep into black political culture and got into a skirmish because I was upset about the showing of Birth of a Nation.” The controversial, explicitly racist, but landmark American film masterpiece was produced by D.W. Griffith. As a result, Kwame left EMU and returned to Detroit. He got involved in political activities and enrolled as a student at WCCCD.

While enrolled in courses at the Mooney center, one of the oldest WCCCD sites, located at Lindwood and Clairmont, Kenyatta recalls Acuur Budu, head of student services who introduced him to student government and the student newspaper “Open Door.” He was influenced by Dr. Carter, Reginal Lary, a history professor and Dave Rambau, who taught television and radio. He recalls having Bella Marshall as a political science teacher at the Greenfield Campus and Steve Walker who inspired his interest in politics. He said, “At WCCCD, I became more focused as a student.”

Since that time, he has served as coordinator of the Detroit chapter of the New African People’s Organization and the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement. At the Malcolm X Center for Self-Determination he directed activities that provided services such as a food co-op, after-school programs, summer youth activities, legal assistance, anti-drug programs, rites of passage, senior citizen services, and other cultural and community programs. As a political activist, he has been involved with The Shrine of the Black Madonna, The Pan African Congress, The Republic of New Afrika, The New African People’s Organization, Fhranka International, and the Detroit African Leadership Committee.

While campaigning for the city council election, Kwame talked about his vision for a theme park at Belle Isle. His plans include forming a task force to study the feasibility of developing the Detroit gem into a great tourist attraction. He envisons an aquarium, a horticulture center in the conservatory, jet skis, paddle boats, river taxis, and restaurants on the river where families can gather for recreation and generate new revenue for the city.

**STATS:**

- **Name:** Kwame Kenyatta
- **Career:** Detroit City Council Member
- **Resides:** Detroit, MI

**GOAL:**

To make Detroit great again by improving schools and getting people involved in the process.

**WCCCD:**

Kwame attended both WCCCD and Eastern Michigan University.

- **Resides:** Detroit, MI
- **Career:** Detroit City Council Member
- **STATS:**
  - Wayne County Community College District
  - **WCCCD:** Kwame attended both WCCCD and Eastern Michigan University.

- **GOAL:** To make Detroit great again by improving schools and getting people involved in the process.

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*“I don’t know the key to success, but the way to failure is trying to please everybody.”* - Dr. Bill Cosby
Climb every mountain, Search high and low, Follow every byway, Every path you know. 

Climb every mountain, Ford every stream, Follow every rainbow, ’Till you find your dream. 

A dream that will need All the love you can give, Every day of your life For as long as you live. 

Climb every mountain, Ford every stream, Follow every rainbow, ’Till you find your dream. 

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Dee Dee Odom-McKinney
climbing mountains

Kenyatta believes Education lays the foundation

Kwame’s son Kofi graduated from Hampton University and his step-daughter, Yanna, is currently attending WCCCD.

Dee Dee Odom-McKinney
climbing mountains

Kenyatta’s concerns range from interest in rebuilding the city to addressing the troubled conditions throughout the world. He takes issue with the way we treat our troops when they return from Iraq or Afghanistan. He said, “When they come back home, we throw them away. We don’t provide veterans with adequate health care, education, or jobs.”

He has visited many foreign countries and observed different societal conditions and has been impressed by certain customs. He says that many have criticized him for not taking off his hat when he enters a building but he cites other customs such as eastern countries where they remove their shoes before entering a building so they don’t bring in the dirt. He said, “You don’t take your hat off because your hat is your crown. We have gotten it backward, we take our hats off and keep the dirt on our shoes.”

Being raised in Alabama, Kwame recalls how he learned about life and how to treat other people. He remembered that when his mother came home from work, she would start moving pots and pans around, singing all the while, and would prepare a dinner with very little resources. They shared with others the little they had. He said, “What that taught me was that despite how little you have, you may have more than others and you share that little with those who have nothing. That was the beginning of laying the principal foundation for my service to my community.”

Kwame speaks proudly of his son, Kofi – which means “born on Friday” – who was a football captain at Cass Tech and one of the first students at the Malcolm X Academy. Kofi went on to Tennessee State University and was graduated from Hampton University, a privately owned, progressive institution of higher education. The non-profit, non-sectarian, co-educational, historically black university is located in southeastern Virginia. Kwame also has a step-daughter, Yanna, who attended Martin Luther King, Jr. High School and is currently a student at WCCCD.

Since 2006, Councilman Kenyatta’s office has raised more than $49,000 to provide winter clothing necessities to over 900 deserving recipients. Having received various forms of contributions, his group has been able to supply low-income families and homeless shelter residents with items such as coats, hats, gloves, scarves, school uniforms, and grocery gift certificates. They have also given books to community centers and elementary school students.

He said, “Education must serve a purpose. It lays the foundation, not only for the accumulation of knowledge, but for the ability to use knowledge for the greater good.”

FAMILY:
Kwame’s son Kofi graduated from Hampton University and his step-daughter, Yanna, is currently attending WCCCD.
“To follow, without halt, one aim: There’s the secret of success.”
- Anna Pavlova

Director of Public Affairs at the MGM Grand Casino, Dee Dee Odom-McKinney, an accountant who began as an office clerk when she was in high school, is testament to both a successful home-town girl and strong family upbringing. Graduating from WCCCD in the early 80s, she continued her formal education at Walsh College and received a bachelor’s degree in 1986.

Two years later, was promoted to financial controller. Leaders within the organization quickly recognized that she was not the typical accountant. She attended a lot of events for which MGM was a corporate sponsor, enabling her to meet a lot of people. Dr. Juliette Oktolie-Eboh, senior vice president of public affairs, recruited her to work on numerous community projects. Together, they sit on more than 30 non-profit boards which are vital to the Detroit area. Dee Dee Odom-McKinney launched a new project called Camp New Look for Detroit youth, ages 12 through 17, with rhythm-and-blues entertainer Usher Raymond IV. The students were selected on the basis of their experience in service leadership positions within their schools, churches, or other organizations. They were also selected on the belief that they would be able to bring back certain skills to the Detroit area. The New Look Foundation offers youth a 360-degree view of the sports and entertainment world, with emphasis on the business and entrepreneurial aspects of these industries. Additionally, the program launches young people on a career exploration path which includes internships, mentoring, and shadowing opportunities designed to career track them into key positions in the sports and entertainment industries.

With help from California State Representative George Miller, chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee, Usher founded “New Look” in 1999. Usher believes that service is raw energy, and develops programs to put that energy in the hands of under-served youth. Following the camp experience, the students continue their mission with mentors to learn grants writing and other skills, including budget plans and marketing that can make projects materialize.

Dee Dee Odom-McKinney was selected to Michigan Chronicle Women of Excellence.

Dee Dee Odom-McKinney started at MGM in 1999 as a financial analyst. The following year, she advanced to the position of general accounting manager and, two years later, was promoted to financial controller. Leaders within the organization quickly recognized that she was not the typical accountant. She attended a lot of events for which MGM was a corporate sponsor, enabling her to meet a lot of people. Dr. Juliette Oktolie-Eboh, senior vice president of public affairs, recruited her to work on numerous community projects. Together, they sit on more than 30 non-profit boards which are vital to the Detroit area. Dee Dee Odom-McKinney launched a new project called Camp New Look for Detroit youth, ages 12 through 17, with rhythm-and-blues entertainer Usher Raymond IV. The students were selected on the basis of their experience in service leadership positions within their schools, churches, or other organizations. They were also selected on the belief that they would be able to bring back certain skills to the Detroit area. The New Look Foundation offers youth a 360-degree view of the sports and entertainment world, with emphasis on the business and entrepreneurial aspects of these industries. Additionally, the program launches young people on a career exploration path which includes internships, mentoring, and shadowing opportunities designed to career track them into key positions in the sports and entertainment industries.

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As an Educational Facility, its classrooms, stage facilities, exhibit space and world-class presenting season will allow the District to expand educational opportunities for students and the larger community in the District. The Educational and Performing Arts Center is the perfect learning environment for any type of academic instruction. Its fully equipped theatre makes it an excellent teaching facility for the performing arts.

The EPAC enriches and builds community through a diverse, world class presenting season bringing to the Downriver Community and to the District performers from around Michigan, the United States, and the World. Offerings will include marquee headliners, touring theatre pieces, children's programming and variety acts.

The EPAC is also a place for members of the community to explore, expand and share their own artistic talents. The District looks forward to engaging and supporting the community by working with a variety of non-profit and community groups.

- Conveniently located in Taylor, close to both I-94 and I-75 with ample parking
- 812 seat theatre
- 570 fixed seats and 8 barrier-free seats on the main floor
- 230 fixed seats and 4 barrier-free seats in the balcony
- 35 linerset counterweight fly system
- Full set of draperies including main curtain, legs, borders, travelers and scrim
- State-of-the-art theatrical lighting
- Exhibit space in the Gallery
- Fully equipped for sound reinforcement
- All stage-level loading
- Enclosable studio/rehearsal space in the auxiliary lobby
- (4) Dividable seminar/class rooms accommodating up to 130 visitors
- (3) additional 2nd floor classrooms
- Connected to the existing Downriver campus
Kenneth Hubble
out of this world

“At the last dim horizon, we search among ghostly errors of observations for landmarks that are scarcely more substantial. The search will continue. The urge is older than history. It is not satisfied and it will not be oppressed.” Edwin Powell Hubble (1889-1953)

Kenneth Hubble has lived in an expanding universe through his imaginative artwork. His interpretation of the galaxy speaks out from a distant past of stories recalled from relatives about his great uncle, Edwin Powell Hubble.

Kenneth Hubble graduated in 1910 from the University of Michigan concentrating on mathematics, astronomy, and philosophy. He was one of Oxford University’s first Rhodes Scholars and earned his Doctor of Philosophy at the Yerkes Observatory of the University of Chicago in 1917. He remained actively involved in the search of faint nebulae until his death. His discoveries fundamentally changed the view of the universe.

Kenneth Hubble, highly intelligent and creative, worked throughout his life in cutting edge technology at Hayes Lemmerz International, Inc. the world’s largest producer of automotive and commercial highway steel and aluminum wheels. Hubble occasionally spent his break periods carving four-by-four pieces of wood into large and intricate chains. One of the pieces incorporates a moving wooden ball inside the carving. Ken laughingly remarked, “You name it, I do it.”

Ken attended WCCCD at the Downriver Campus for many years. He maintained a high grade point average and earned an associate’s degree in 2006. The degree is displayed proudly in his home along with many pieces of art and sculpture. All the paintings he created were inspired by photographs he saw in National Geographic: Outside. In Ken’s barn, a whole other universe emerges that encompasses art pieces, sculptures, and furniture designs.

The substantial collection of art in Ken’s barn tells a story of a man who has explored art by experimentation and study. It reveals a life dedicated to creating by someone who is inquisitive; someone who put things on paper, clay, or board that have been stored in an imaginative mind. From sculpted nudes to carved bird houses, Ken has been prolific. He said, “Picasso was diversified and went in numerous directions; I did the same thing.”

Carl Kulmuski, art instructor at the WCCCD Downriver Campus, speaks in glowing terms about Ken as an art student. He said, “Ken Hubble is as hard working as any student I have ever had and is probably one of the most serious art students I have observed. If you have seen the sculpture of the 9-11 firefighters, you can see that everything Ken does relates to his beliefs.”

Ken’s two children, John and Anna Marie, live nearby and often call their father. Ken lives in a small house with a back porch which he built overtopping his vegetable garden. He has fond memories of a German Shepherd he had and still maintains the dog house in the side yard. He enjoys driving to nearby restaurants for carry-out meals, especially subs. He recalls many times in years past when he and his wife would take his motorcycle on trips up North and tells stories about sleeping under picnic tables.

Ken holds strong spiritual beliefs and followed Reverend Billy Graham for many years. He now listens to the Reverend Franklin Graham. Ken is a member of Fitness USA to maintain strength and good health. He has expressed himself in a myriad of ways through his art and by “searching through the universe.”

“Ken Hubble is as hard working as any student I have ever had.”
—Carl Kulmuski, art instructor at the WCCCD Downriver Campus
Nancy Pacitto

passion for learning

Currently, Nancy Pacitto is an administrative assistant at Wayne State University (WSU) where she completed studies for bachelor’s and master’s degrees. Graduating from WCCCD was her entree to a four-year college since she worked in the WSU English Department while she was a student. She established a system for the English proficiency exam program for all graduating students and was selected for the honors program during her fourth year which was the beginning of the master’s program. She was raising her two sons who attended WSU and the three commuted together. Graduating in 1990 and a member of the Phi Beta Kappa society, Pacitto continues to be active with Women of Wayne, and other WSU organizations.

Nancy has been involved with Preservation Wayne for many years and has served in a variety of capacities including the board of directors. Having been influenced by a WSU humanities professor who taught her the significance of the Fisher Building, Albert Kahn structures, Detroit Institute of Arts and other historical sites, Nancy became passionate about preserving the history and architecture of Detroit. She organized anniversary celebrations for the Penobscot and Guardian Buildings. In 1992, the Hecker Mansion on Ferry Street was the setting for a construction party, “Hard Hats High Heels,” and Nancy dressed to the nines in vintage wear.

The night the Fox Theatre celebrated its grand opening, Nancy Pacitto arrived dressed like 1930s movie siren, Jean Harlow – replete with feathers, a glittering gown and a long, sleek cigarette holder. It was one of the many interesting costumes she’s been spotted wearing over the years.

When the Gem Theater, built in 1928, was moved and restored by Chuck Forbes, Pacitto worked on an auction for the celebration. During the celebration, electrical power was lost due to ongoing construction at Comerica Park. Pacitto acted quickly, saving the party by contacting just the right person at DTE Energy and getting the power restored.

Times were rough in Detroit and she was fearful that her husband would be drafted to go to Vietnam. There were protests and riots throughout the country and the assassinations of John F. Kennedy, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and Robert Kennedy contributed to the anxiety she felt. However she had the strength to pull on.

At Dominican High School, Nancy was required to read Homer’s Odyssey and later, in college, she read Ulysses by James Joyce. She said, “I had no clue as to why or how these books could have any meaning for me.” She has re-read...

STATS:
Name: Nancy Pacitto
Career: Dedicated teacher and community activist.

WCCCD: Nancy graduated from WCCCD with an associate’s degree and continued her studies at Wayne State University.

“We can do anything we want if we stick to it long enough.”
- Helen Keller

“Knowledge is nothing unless it is shared.”
the books and claims to have gained insight into what it means to be, “always with a hungry heart,” and how “life piles on life.”

She had a strong academic background due to the nuns who believed in a quality education. She said, “The most important lesson I have learned is that education is a great leveller whether you are poor or rich. If you have an education you have something to hold on to. If you lose your job, which I have a number of times, you still have something to hold on to – no person can take away your education.”

Deciding to go to college at age 28, she was terrified. A bank manager where she worked at First Federal encouraged her. She enrolled at WCCCD located in the former Austin High School. She said, “It gave me comfort since it had been a Catholic school.” She worked at Bon Secours Hospital (currently Beaumont, Grosse Pointe) and was fortunate to get some tuition assistance through a hospital program. Continuing at WCCCD where she earned an associate’s degree enabled her to transfer to WSU.

Nancy has combined her love for vintage clothing with her love of history. As a volunteer member for Preservation Wayne and the Detroit Art Deco Society, she has given tours and coordinates her hairdo, costume jewelry and shoes to the period clothing. She has an extensive collection and was interviewed for a Grosse Pointe Cable channel television show about her hobby.

She also served as a board member for the Detroit Art Deco Society and organized many events in that capacity. The Deco Dance Party at the Scarab Club in 1988 was an exciting event and, at that time, Nancy was coordinator of special events and attended the gala in a vintage evening gown of that period. On another occasion, Deco-Movie Night at the Baldwin Theatre in Royal Oak, Nancy played a leading role as Ginger Rogers.

Nancy has also served as docent for the Provencal-Weir home. She initiated programs for school children and established the LaBelle General Store. She coordinated many programs during her tenure such as Murder Mystery Night, Scavenger Hunt, Holiday Walk, and Cemetery Walk and has designed Web exhibits on historic homes, Native Americans, and the Early French Ribbon Farmers.

She continues to be actively involved in many Detroit institutions and has served on the Detroit Symphony Volunteer Council, Michigan Opera Theater. She conducts tours for the Detroit Institute of Arts to show visitors outstanding collections within the museum and throughout the greater Detroit area.

Nancy Pacitto has written in her memoirs that, “I am constantly reminded that knowledge is nothing unless it is shared.”

“The most important lesson I have learned is that education is a great leveller whether you are poor or rich. If you have an education you have something to hold on to. If you lose your job, which I have a number of times, you still have something to hold on to – no person can take away your education.”

- Nancy Pacitto
Jeannie Jackson

strong advocate for change

Jeannie Jackson admires Maya Angelou, a remarkable Renaissance woman hailed as one of the great voices of contemporary literature. The wisdom and beauty of her words have been an inspiration to Ms. Jackson.

As the director of affirmative action for Central Michigan University (CMU), Jeannie Jackson dedicates her time fighting for the rights of women, minorities, and the disenfranchised. She has 30 years of experience in equal employment opportunity, affirmative action, and human resources. With extensive experience managing internal investigations, responding to formal charges of discrimination, and managing affirmative action compliance reviews, she has given presentations for the United States Commission and United Nations on civil rights and diversity. She served as a compliance officer with the United States Department of Labor Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs. Ms. Jackson also worked as consultant for the American Society of Employers and The Detroit Medical Center. She was recognized in the 1991 Dollars & Sense Magazine with an award presented to African American businesses and professional women.

Ms. Jackson is the state coordinator for the American Association for Affirmative Action. She serves as the Chair for the Southeastern Michigan Industry Liaison Group. Her consulting firm provides development and maintenance of affirmative action plans, training of management and human resource professionals, and representation of businesses in audits to comply with federal affirmative action laws. Ms. Jackson also worked as a consultant for the American Society of Employers and The Detroit Medical Center.

Being divorced and raising two children alone in the 1970s, Ms. Jackson realized that furthering her education was the only option. “I started school when WCCCD first opened,” she said, “I enrolled and found that it was everything I thought it would be. I got an associate’s degree and, for the first time in my life, developed a thirst for education.”

Ms. Jackson received a bachelor’s degree in business administration from the Detroit College of Business and a master’s degree in human resources from Central Michigan University. She serves as the Chair for the Southeastern Michigan Industry Liaison Group. Her consulting firm provides development and maintenance of affirmative action plans, training of management and human resource professionals, and representation of businesses in audits to comply with federal affirmative action laws. Ms. Jackson also worked as a consultant for the American Society of Employers and The Detroit Medical Center.

“A bird doesn’t sing because it has an answer; it sings because it has a song.”

- Maya Angelou

STATS:
Name: Jeannie Jackson
Career: Director for Central Michigan University

WCCCD: I enrolled and found that it was everything I thought it would be. The instructors were excellent and the experience gave me the confidence to go on.
University (CMU). It took many years to complete the degrees since she only enrolled when she had tuition money or the company she worked for reimbursed tuition. All the while, she was raising three children and was actively involved in their school activities.

She said, “I never took out a loan - I paid for my education myself!” When she was an adjunct professor in human resource management for Cornerstone University she took students to task if they made excuses for poor performance. She said, “I had no sympathy for excuses.” Ms. Jackson is currently working on an Ed.D at CMU where, as a senior citizen, she will pay no tuition.

Jeannie Jackson speaks proudly of her family. Her youngest son Lee Williams, a former Chrysler worker, is enrolled in the “No Worker Left Behind” program and her daughter, Shelley D. Govan, who also graduated from WCCCD, is finishing a Ph. D. in psychology. Another son, Dr. Avery Michael Jackson, III, is a neuro surgeon at University of Michigan Hospital in Grand Blanc.

Being inspired by her children and the way they conduct their lives, Jeannie says, “I am not going to attempt to retire. I cannot sit on the couch and watch television, so at age 62, I am continuing my education!”

Ms. Jackson has recently conducted classes about sexual, gender, and religious harassment cases to call attention to things that can happen.” Of the many civil liberties priorities, the most important include restoring respect for the rule of law and teaching my students and those with whom I work to recognize it.” She uses role playing in her classes to demonstrate the pertinent issues and restructures the class content based on student responses. A young Michigan State attorney has been hired to work with her in the class and she said, “As a team, with my extensive experience and his law background, we are doing some impressive work.”

Ms. Jackson likes traveling to visit family in London, England, where she watched Venus and Serena Williams in exciting tennis matches at Wimbledon in 2006. The Williams sisters inspire Jackson because they are in late middle-age by women’s tennis standards, and most of their former rivals have retired. She has also visited Israel, Spain, and Ghana.

The Jackson family pictures are so interesting because of the mixture; Jackson’s mother was born in Belize. Jackson said, “I have every racial group in my family so I was always around different groups. For me, the statement, ‘Those people act that way,’ was never a problem for me because all those people were my family.” At a family gathering near Traverse City for a wedding, the photograph illustrates the story of diversity. When she works with groups in a professional capacity she draws on her own experiences to promote understanding.

She said, “I have a strong spiritual commitment and if it wasn’t for God, I would not be where I am today. My faith has gotten me through everything.”