



The Michigan
Center for
Adult College
Success

Building Bridges to Success: Empowering Adult Learners at Monroe County Community College



MONROE COUNTY
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

At Monroe County Community College (MCCC), a transformative approach led by Amanda Althouse, Director of Student Success, is helping adult learners by providing innovative partnerships and personalized guidance. With the backing of an Innovation Investment Award (IIA), the college is setting new standards in providing flexible, resource-rich education tailored to adult students' needs. These needs are being met by the MCCC Momentum staff. The Momentum staff works collaboratively to service students, organize and implement community events, host student success workshops and partner with campus staff and community agencies for resources and referrals.

One particularly inspiring story from the college highlights the profound impact the Innovation Investment Award is having. A student, who initially felt uncertain about their future, received essential support that transformed their outlook. By connecting with community resources,

technology, and supplies, the student left the meeting empowered and ready to embrace their educational journey. This experience, shared by the Momentum staff, underscores MCCC's commitment to fostering hope and ambition among adult learners.

Drawing on her early work with Upward Bound serving high-risk students and her subsequent role in Student Success, Amanda brings a deep understanding of what learners need to thrive. Her experience at Orchard Center High School, an alternative education program for students ages 14 – 20 who require different pathways to reach their education goals, sharpened her focus on

personalized guidance, flexible options, and timely access to resources. Today, she and her team channel that drive to support students who are not as well supported as they should be, keeping their work rooted in the community she knows well: "It is really rewarding to keep working

*"It is really rewarding
to keep working in the
same neighborhood I
was working in before."
— Amanda Althouse*

in the same neighborhood I was working in before.” These lessons continue to shape the Momentum approach, ensuring students meet challenges with the right support at the right time.

MCCC is also expanding its support network through strategic local partnerships. Collaborating with agencies like the Monroe County Opportunity Program (MCOP), the college provides critical services such as childcare, transportation, and community engagement activities. The Momentum staff stationed both at the college and the Opportunity Center at the Arthur Lesow Community Center (ALCC), ensures seamless integration and accessibility for students.

Another key partner, the Learning Bank in Monroe, plays a crucial role in assisting adult learners who need to complete their GEDs. After adults achieve this milestone, the college guides them in pursuing their next steps, ensuring a continuum of support and encouragement every step of the way.

Despite significant successes, the college faces challenges, particularly when it comes to procuring technology and supplies. However, these challenges are offset by the triumphs experienced by both MCCC and its adult learners, thanks to a robust array of unwavering support and guidance. Amanda Althouse and her dedicated team are always on hand to navigate adults through their pathways, offering encouragement and reminding them of their potential every step of the way.

About the Innovation Investment Awards

The Michigan Center for Adult College Success is supporting nine institutions through the Innovation Investment Awards to help postsecondary institutions implement best practices or pilot new ideas to better serve adult students in a way that increases completion rates.

The Center awarded \$6.4 million in Innovation Investment Awards through a competitive award process to postsecondary institutions seeking to implement innovative solutions for improving persistence and completion rates among adult learners over the age of 25. Grants of up to \$1 million were awarded to Michigan colleges and universities that show they are ready to launch effective, lasting improvements to systems that help students 25 and older obtain postsecondary credentials.

MCCC continues to redefine the landscape of adult education, harnessing the power of community partnerships and personalized support.

The Innovation Investment Award has empowered MCCC to strengthen community connections, creating an educational ecosystem where adult learners can thrive. These efforts highlight the college’s commitment to cultivating a nurturing, supportive environment that is customized to learner needs.

MCCC continues to redefine the landscape of adult education, harnessing the power of community partnerships and personalized support. MCCC remains steadfast in its commitment to adult learners, and the Innovation Investment Award funds are essential to turning that vision into reality. With this support, they are refining strategies and expanding offerings to help adult learners pursue their educational and professional goals.

