

# REVIVING OUR ECONOMY: THE ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN JOB GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

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## FIELD HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION  
AND WORKFORCE TRAINING

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
AND THE WORKFORCE

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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**REVIVING OUR ECONOMY:  
THE ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN  
JOB GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

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**Tuesday, April 9, 2013**

**U.S. House of Representatives**

**Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training**

**Committee on Education and the Workforce**

**Washington, DC**

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The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 9:04 a.m., in Administration Building, Monroe County Community College, 1555 S. Raisinville Rd., Monroe, MI, Hon. Virginia Foxx, [chairwoman of the subcommittee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Foxx and Walberg.

Staff Present: Casey Buboltz, Coalitions and Member Services Coordinator; Amy Jones, Education Policy Counsel and Senior Advisor; Emily Slack, Legislative Assistant; Alex Sollberger, Communications Director; and John D'Elia, Minority Labor Policy Associate.

Chairwoman FOXX. A quorum being present, the subcommittee will come to order.

Good morning and welcome to the first field hearing of the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training in the 113th Congress. It is good to be here in Michigan's 7th District with my esteemed colleague, Representative Walberg. Thank you all for joining us.

I am a former community college president, and I am particularly glad to be on a community college campus and, I think, to see a group of students with us this morning. So I am glad that whoever your teachers were had good advice to send you over to the hearing, and we are delighted to have you with us.

I also want to give a special thanks to our witnesses. I know you all have busy schedules, and we are grateful you are taking time to share your valuable insights with us today.

Despite recent employment gains, these are still tough times for far too many Americans. Here in Michigan, the unemployment rate stands at 8.8 percent, higher than the national rate. Meanwhile, local job creators report they are unable to find workers with the skills necessary to compete for available jobs. This issue, called the "skills gap," was the subject of a recent two-day conference Governor Rick Snyder hosted with many of Michigan's business, education, and government leaders.

Our nation's economy is only as strong as its workforce. And right now, the federal system intended to help workers access the education and skills they need to succeed is broken. To support our workforce and tackle the skills gap problem, the U.S. House of Representatives approved legislation last month that will ensure workers have access to a more efficient and effective workforce development system. The legislation, known as the SKILLS Act, will eliminate waste and better align available education and workforce development programs with the needs of local employers and workers.

However, more must be done. In the coming months, the committee will begin its work to reform the Nation's higher education system. As part of that effort, my colleagues and I will discuss responsible reforms that will help provide institutions with additional flexibility so they can be more responsive to the needs of students, the community, and the local workforce. We must also work to eliminate federal mandates and red tape that raise costs for schools and prevent innovation.

As I said earlier, I am a former community college president and university administrator, and as such I understand the importance of forging partnerships among businesses, communities, and institutions of higher education. When I was at Mayland Community College, I worked with business owners and community leaders to collaborate on ways we could better meet the needs of the local economy and workforce. Investing in those relationships helps ensure businesses have a skilled workforce while also providing opportunities for students to advance their education.

In addition to learning about the challenges and opportunities facing Michigan's schools and workplaces, the committee is very interested to hear your take on federal policies that may be standing in the way of job creation. As we work to foster a growing economy, we must make sure Washington does not block the road to growth and prosperity. I hope we can have a productive discussion today on ways we can work together at the local, state, and federal level to help rebuild our economy and help support a more prosperous future for families here in Michigan and across the United States.

Again, we appreciate the panelists' participation in today's hearing, and I'm looking forward to getting this discussion underway. Let me also thank Mr. Walberg for his gracious invitation to hold a field hearing here in his district, and without objection, I now yield to him for his opening remarks.

[The statement of Chairwoman Foxx follows:]

**Prepared Statement of Hon. Virginia Foxx, Chairwoman,  
Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training**

Good morning, and welcome to the first field hearing of the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training in the 113th Congress. It is good to be here in Michigan's 7th District with my esteemed colleague Representative Walberg. Thank you all for joining us. I'd like to extend a special thanks to our witnesses. I know you all have busy schedules, and we are grateful that you are taking the time to share your valuable insight with us today.

Despite recent employment gains, these are still tough times for far too many Americans. Here in Michigan, the unemployment rate stands at 8.8 percent—higher than the national rate. Meanwhile, local job creators report they are unable to find workers with the skills necessary to compete for available jobs. This issue, called the "skills gap," was the subject of a recent two day conference Governor Rick Snyder hosted with many of Michigan's business, education, and government leaders.

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As a former community college president and university administrator, I understand the importance of forging partnerships between businesses, communities, and institutions of higher education. When I was at Mayland Community College, I worked with business owners and community leaders to collaborate on ways we could better meet the needs of the local economy and workforce. Investing in those relationships helps ensure businesses have a skilled workforce while also providing opportunities for students to advance their education.

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Mr. WALBERG. I thank the Chairwoman for this opportunity. I have attended a number of field hearings a long ways from my district, so it is nice to have one in my district and have the opportunity for my district, as well as others, to speak on a crucial issue.

Chairwoman Foxx, I appreciate the time that you have given this morning to travel from beautiful North Carolina—North Carolina; is that how you say it?—all the way up to extremely beautiful and productive Michigan, Southeast Michigan specifically here. I would like to thank all of the staff here at Monroe County Community College and its president, David Nixon, for the time it took to prepare for this hearing and allowing us to use their facilities. To our witnesses, I would also like to thank you for making time to participate today.

This is a unique opportunity to shine a national spotlight on how higher education, community leaders and businesses in Michigan are effectively bridging what has now come to be known as the skills gap.

Well before the financial crisis of 2008, our communities here in Michigan wrestled with the challenge of ensuring the skills processed or possessed by our workforce meet the skills demanded by our ever-evolving work needs. Bridging this gap ensures our ability to grow businesses and compete domestically and internationally.

In Michigan, the unemployment rate is near 9 percent, and yet we hear from entrepreneurs every day that Michigan is open for business. The predicament many businesses face is that they simply cannot find enough employees with the skills and training to

fill their demands for jobs. In fact, MITalent.org, one of the premier sites that Michigan employers use to recruit talent, shows the demand for jobs. A search within 50 miles of where we are sitting today shows there are more than 16,000 jobs currently available. Remarkably, that number would be substantially higher if it were not for some of the institutions of higher education, businesses, and workforce development agencies across the region that are represented in this room this morning.

Despite the tough economic circumstances we face, employers like DTE and many others that call our region home continue to renew and expand their operations and demand educated employees. They see the value in working with schools like Siena Heights University and community colleges like those in Jackson and Monroe and others to teach future employees the skills needed to fill these good-paying jobs which can support their families.

One of our tasks on the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training requires us to examine actions we can be taking on the federal level in using hard-working taxpayer dollars effectively—let me say that again, effectively using hard-working taxpayer dollars—to encourage our institutions of higher education and job creators to work in collaboration in getting job seekers prepared for the careers currently available in the market today.

One such action we recently took, as the Chairwoman expressed, was to pass the SKILLS Act that was authored by my colleague sitting next to me, the Chairwoman of this subcommittee. The SKILLS Act would consolidate and streamline our workforce development processes to make them more efficient and ensure that hard-working taxpayers see their money spent wisely. The legislation places an emphasis on workforce development at the local level by requiring local workforce boards to set aside a portion of their funding for training programs. This will enable community colleges, such as Monroe and Jackson, to contract with their local boards to more adequately address the needs of their community and their students. I believe the SKILLS Act was a significant step to help Michigan's job seekers.

As we go about our work in the U.S. House of Representatives and the Education and Workforce Committee, we need to continue on the path of working to reform our federal policies that enable job creation for a healthy economy. It is my goal to highlight what many schools and businesses in our great state are already doing by collaborating with job creators to ensure students learn the skills necessary for what is currently in demand, as well as what we will need for the future.

And so again, I thank the chairman of this subcommittee for hosting and carrying on this field hearing, and I am expecting great opportunities to flow from it. Thank you.

[The statement of Mr. Walberg follows:]

**Prepared Statement of Hon. Tim Walberg, a Representative in  
Congress From the State of Michigan**

Chairwoman Foxx, I appreciate your time this morning to travel from North Carolina to be here with us. I would like to thank all of the staff here at Monroe County Community College for the time it took them to prepare for this hearing and allowing us to use their facilities. To our witnesses, I would also like to thank you for making time to participate today. This is a unique opportunity to shine a national

spotlight on how higher education, community leaders and businesses in Michigan are effectively bridging what is now come to be known as the Skills Gap.

Well before the financial crisis of 2008, our communities here in Michigan wrestled with the challenge of ensuring the skills possessed by our workforce meet the skills demanded by our ever-evolving job market. Bridging this gap ensures our ability to grow business and compete domestically and internationally.

In Michigan the unemployment rate is near 9 percent and yet we hear from entrepreneurs every day that Michigan is “open for business.” The predicament many businesses face is that they simply cannot find enough employees with the skills and training to fill their demand for jobs. In fact, M-I-Talent.org—one of the premier sites that Michigan employers use to recruit talent—shows that demand for jobs. A search within 50 miles of where we are sitting shows there are more than 16 thousand jobs currently available today. Remarkably, that number would be substantially higher if it were not for some of the institutions of higher education, businesses, and workforce development agencies across the region that are represented in this room.

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Chairwoman FOXX. Thank you, Congressman Walberg.

I also want to say thank you to the staff and the administration here at the community college for their work in setting up the hearing, and our staff. Most people have no idea how much work goes into having a hearing, even in Washington, and then to have one remotely takes a lot of effort. So I want to thank Amy and Casey and Emily and all the folks who worked to put this hearing together today.

Pursuant to committee Rule 7(c), all committee members will be permitted to submit written statements to be included in the permanent hearing record. And without objection, the hearing record will remain open for 14 days to allow statements, questions for the record, and other extraneous material referenced during the hearing to be submitted in the official hearing record.

We have two distinguished panels of witnesses today, and I would like to begin by introducing the first panel.

Mr. Henry Lievens is currently serving his eighth year as a Monroe County Commissioner. As a member of the County Board of

Commissioners, Mr. Lievens chairs the Personnel Services and Human Resources Committee that deals with all Monroe County employment issues.

Ms. Lynette Dowler serves as Plant Director within the Fossil Generation organization at DTE Energy and is currently a Foundation member for Monroe Community College Board of Directors.

Ms. Susan Smith has served as the Executive Director of the Economic Development Partnership of Hillsdale County since 2009. Prior to serving in this role, she worked with the Lenawee Economic Development Corporation, as well as the Lenawee Training and Education Consortium.

Mr. Dan Fairbanks serves as the UAW International Representative for the UAW-GM Skilled Development and Training Department.

Before I recognize each of you to provide your testimony, let me briefly explain our lighting system. You will each have 5 minutes to present your testimony. When you begin, the light in front of you will turn green. When 1 minute is left, the light will turn yellow; and when your time has expired, the light will turn red, at which point I ask that you wrap up your remarks as best as you are able. After everyone has testified, members will each have 5 minutes to ask questions of the panel.

I now recognize Commissioner Henry Lievens for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF HENRY LIEVENS, COMMISSIONER,  
MONROE COUNTY**

Mr. LIEVENS. Thank you. I'm not sure that I'll need the entire 5 minutes. I always like to think that brevity is the soul of wit, so I will keep it to a minimum.

I am both a county commissioner and a practicing attorney, so my thoughts and observations are on two points. And if I could begin with a mile-high perspective of Monroe County.

Monroe County has an approximate labor force of 68,500 folks, of which about 5,600 or 8.2 percent are currently unemployed. I understand that that is less than the state average, but it is still unacceptable. While unemployment numbers are improving, the devastating effects of the peak 2009 14 percent unemployment rates are still being felt.

I took office in 2005, graduating from law school in 2003, and my entire professional and political career has been marked by war and recession. These have been challenging times for the Nation, and particularly for the State of Michigan, being the home of manufacturing.

Of the changes in the specific industries, the largest job losses were in manufacturing here locally, approximately 2,818 jobs being lost in manufacturing and construction of 1,346. I would never argue that government should be the main employer. I am a big proponent of the private sector. In the County of Monroe, when I took office, there were approximately 725 employees. With the loss of jobs, how that has corresponded in housing and our general tax revenue streams, we have downsized to now 400, almost half of the employees we once had.

What that means is the increased need for technology. The days of the typist pools, the filing clerks are now giving way to more

tech savvy type jobs, going paperless. The prosecutor's office now is currently or has been working on a paperless system whereby the police report to the prosecution to the court is done via computer systems electronically and the rest. This is translating into higher technology jobs for the county.

In addition to that, in my private practice, a lot of the folks that I see that come before me are having problems with jobs. A big assistance to them is the skilled trades. There aren't the jobs anymore for the unskilled trades. These are folks that need to be trained in welding, in other types of things that the community college is providing. So that is one of the things that we see in gains in the skilled trades, especially health care. Those jobs in the county are up 1,850.

So the lasting consequences I am seeing the change in the county is the need for more skilled trades and professional service-sector jobs, and that is one of the things that the community college is helping provide, and I would like to see the resources provided to them to help encourage the reinvigoration of our local county economy.

Thank you.

[The statement of Mr. Lievens follows:]

**Prepared Statement of J. Henry Lievens,  
Monroe County Commissioner**

Good morning, Congresswoman Virginia Foxx, Congressman Tim Walberg, Mayor Robert Clark, Monroe County Community College President Dr. David Nixon, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. My name is J. Henry Lievens. I have been a Monroe County Commissioner for 8 years and a practicing attorney for 9 years. For the past 6 years I have served the Board of Commissioners as Chairman for the Personnel Services and Human Resources Committee.

I am also a member of the local Exchange Club, Monroe Center for Health Aging and Land Bank. I would like to thank you for this opportunity to discuss my observations with you today.

The uncertain state of the economy remains a primary concern for many in Michigan and especially so for the residents of Monroe County.

Monroe County has an approximate labor force of 68,500 of which 5,600 or 8.2% are unemployed.

While unemployment numbers are improving, the devastating effects of the peak 2009 14% unemployment rate are still being felt.

Of the changes within specific industries, the largest job losses were in manufacturing (-2,818) and construction (-1,346) while gains were made in service sector jobs, especially health care and social assistance (+1,850).

Thus, the lasting consequence is the necessity for education for skilled trades and professional sector jobs.

In Monroe County, an individual without a high school diploma earns less than \$18,000 a year while their counterpart with an associate degree can expect almost \$37,000.

This reflects the reality that the jobs for the unskilled trades/labor are no longer the reality for Monroe County and demonstrate the need to develop the resources necessary to train for the future needs for skilled trades and professions.

Chairwoman FOXX. Thank you very much.

I now recognize Ms. Lynette Dowler for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF LYNETTE DOWLER, PLANT DIRECTOR,  
FOSSIL GENERATION, DTE ENERGY**

Ms. DOWLER. Good morning and thank you for the opportunity to speak with you this morning. My name is Lynette Dowler, and I have been with DTE Energy for 30 years. DTE Energy is an elec-

tric provider to 2.1 million customers here in Michigan, and a natural gas provider to 1.2 million customers here in the State of Michigan. That process is really, for our customers, supposed to be a very easy process, so that they can just flip on a light, right? So our job is really just to provide electricity and power.

In order to do that, we have 10,000 employees, and those employees need to be well educated, well skilled, and well trained. Part of the job of DTE Energy is really to have a robust workforce plan. We work very diligently to manage our workforce plan, and we review that on a regular basis, and we identify the critical jobs within our company. In that process, we look out over the next five years to see where our attrition rates are, and in our company, at DTE Energy, we are projecting about 25 to 33 percent attrition rate.

As we look at the skills and the talents that we need in our company over the next five years—and we have had a tremendous partnership with many colleges across the state, one of them being here at Monroe Community College—to assure that as we attrit through our corporation we have skills and talents that can come through our community colleges to help support the talent gaps that we have in our corporation. Some of those talents are splicers, electrical journeymen, maintenance journeymen, nuclear power plant operators, I&C technicians. It is not easy to get a nuclear power plant operator just off the street. You need specialized training.

And in order to have a great partnership, we have to have a community college that is open to listen and talk to you, and we have countless examples of partnerships that we have worked with this specific college to provide certification programs, and I will speak to a few of them.

With Monroe County Community College, we have created a construction management and technical certification here. We have created a nuclear engineering technology program and e-testing information assurance technology, boiler and power plant technology, alternative energy certificate. Who was talking about alternative energy 15 years ago, right? The colleges are moving with us and with industry. It is imperative to have that partnership for heavy industrial certificates.

The message that I would say is that the longstanding partnership that we have had with Monroe County Community College is not a relationship that is built upon two and three and four and five years but it has been in place for decades.

Monroe specifically, DTE Energy is the largest taxpayer in Monroe County. We also happen to generate the most power, power generation, in this county. We have a Monroe power plant which generates 3,000 megawatts, and our nuclear power plant which generates 1,200 megawatts. So when you think about major partnerships and major connections, this is a key connection for DTE Energy from an employment base, from a tax base, from an economic development base, a great employment connection. So there are just so many things that we have connections with.

The other thing I wanted to speak to today was partnerships and consortiums. One of the things that we are challenged by as a corporation is how do you talk to community colleges, right? It is one

conversation with Monroe, it is another conversation with Macomb, it is another conversation with Oakland, right? One thing that is important, and one of my colleagues that is here today, Raymond Kelly, the director of our training division, we have to pull together on colleges and pull together industry and have joint conversations with industry and colleges, and if there is something that we can do in a triad fashion with government, industry and education to bring all of us together so it is not many, many one-off conversations, we believe that would be a big step forward to help us all move forward to understand what the skill gaps are, what the talent gaps are, what the attrition is moving forward.

So, thank you for our time today.

[The statement of Ms. Dowler follows:]

**Prepared Statement of Lynette Dowler, Plant Director,  
Fossil Generation, DTE Energy**

Good morning, Congresswoman Virginia Foxx, Congressman Tim Walberg, Mayor Robert Clark, Monroe County Community College President Dr. David Nixon, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Lynette Dowler. I have been employed at DTE Energy for 30 years. I am currently the plant director for our Trenton Channel and River Rouge Power Plants, two of our base-load coal-fired power plants, delivering 730 and 540 MW respectively. Prior to this position I was plant director at our Fermi 2 Nuclear Power Plant, which produces 1,139 MW of electricity.

I am also a board member of the Foundation at Monroe Community College, and one of many DTE Energy employees who continue to enjoy a long and fruitful relationship with the college. I would like to thank you for this opportunity to discuss those relationships and interconnections with you today.

As you know, energy is vital to modern society; at DTE Energy we call the electricity and natural gas we provide “the lifeblood of our communities.” DTE Energy is a Detroit-based diversified energy company involved in the development and management of energy-related businesses and services nationwide. Our operating units include an electric utility serving 2.1 million customers in Southeastern Michigan and a natural gas utility serving 1.2 million customers throughout Michigan. We are committed to providing safe, affordable, reliable and environmentally responsible energy to our customers now and into the future. There are many things that we need to ensure that we are able to fulfill our commitment, but above all else, we need a well-educated, well-trained local workforce.

Energy is a “just in time” product—it has to be available to the customer precisely when they need it, with no effort on their part other than flipping a switch or turning on their stove or furnace. All the work “behind the scenes” is invisible to the customer, but (except for the mining operations), that work is all done locally by skilled DTE Energy employees.

Like many Michigan companies, DTE Energy has an aging workforce. We realized years ago that we would need to replace our retiring workers with new people who can step into those positions and hit the ground running, without years of on-the-job training. That is a luxury that employers can no longer afford.

Our Human Resources Department began building a workforce planning program in 2008, beginning with our Nuclear Generation Department. Implementation has continued across the enterprise, including Fossil Generation, Electrical Distribution Operations, DTE Gas Operations, Corporate Services, Controllers Organization and Information Technology.

A first step was to identify “enterprise critical positions” or “pipelines” that require greater than 18 months of initial training time, are hard to fill, contain more than ten individuals, and have an attrition rate of 33 percent or greater over the next five years. Fourteen critical job pipelines, in addition to our entry level professional positions, were identified as areas where we need to place our focus given the potential for skill set shortages.

The pipelines include: Apprentice Splicer, Apprentice Lineman, Assistant Substation Operator, System Supervisor, Apprentice Electrical Maintenance Journeyman, Power Plant Operator, Fuel Supply Operator, Maintenance Journeyman, Instrument and Control Technician, Nuclear Maintenance Journeyman, Nuclear Operator, Radiation Protection Technician, Sr. Gas Technician Controls, and Gas Distribution General Fitter.

Despite the high unemployment rate in Michigan and the nation, talent is becoming more difficult to find in these highly technical positions. For example, in 2010 and 2011, it took some 18 months to fill six Instrument and Control positions in our Nuclear Generation Department.

We realized early on that this unemployment imbalance affects more than just DTE Energy and we could not solve it on our own. One of the strategies we are employing to address these talent gaps includes collaborating with our local utility partners and industry organizations to build regional consortiums and a standard utility curriculum. Developing a standard curriculum model was first introduced by the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI); and this approach, or a similar variation of this approach, has become the direction within the overall utility industry.

This standard utility curriculum is being embedded into community colleges' curriculums and yields a 2-year associate degree as well as an industry certification. Variations of the training have been developed for specific targeted groups including low income adults, women, youth, military, and transitioning adults.

We started looking for partners—other utilities and companies outside of our industry, unions, higher educational institutions, and government entities—to help us tackle this societal problem. We have made significant progress but much more needs to be done. I am happy to be able to share with you some of our recent successes, and ask for your help as we move forward.

One of our first endeavors was to identify educational institutions that could serve as pipelines to supply us with the new workers we need now and in the future. Fortunately, Monroe County Community College is right in our backyard, close to our Fermi 2 Nuclear Power Plant, as well as the Monroe Power Plant, our flagship 3,000 MW coal-fired generating station.

DTE Energy employees started working with Monroe County Community College to develop educational programs to serve DTE Energy's needs and those of other Michigan companies. These programs include Construction Management Technology Certificate, Nuclear Engineering Technology, Non-destructive Testing, Information Assurance Technology, Boiler and Power Plant Fundamentals, Alternative Energy Certificate, Green Building, and others.

The Heavy Industrial Construction Certificate was launched in 2009, designed for more experienced construction personnel who wish to upgrade their skills and gain entry into management positions with large industrial employers, as well as new entrants into the field. This is an active and ongoing partnership that was started in cooperation with a now-retired DTE Energy employee, the former manager of environmental projects. Current DTE Energy employees continue to evaluate the viability and value of this certificate program through its advisory committee.

As you may be aware, DTE Energy is in the home stretch of a nearly \$2 billion state-of-the-art emissions control project at the Monroe Power Plant. This project involves the installation of flue gas desulfurization systems and selective catalytic reduction systems on all four generating units, and the removal of the two original 800-foot-tall stacks and their replacement with two 580-foot tall stacks specially designed to accommodate the new equipment.

The complexity and breadth of this and other DTE Energy construction projects, including the potential construction of the Fermi 3 Nuclear Power Plant, inspired the development of the Heavy Industrial Construction Certificate program, whose graduates are already working on-site at Monroe Power Plant and other locations.

Recently developed programs at the college include the MCCC Nuclear Engineering Technology Program which was created through a partnership with DTE Energy and a \$200,000 Congressionally directed grant award. Through this program, MCCC offers—in conjunction with DTE Energy—an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Nuclear Engineering Technology that enables graduates to seek employment as nuclear engineering technicians in various sectors of the nuclear industry. The partnership aligned MCCC's new nuclear energy technology program with the initial training programs offered by DTE Energy and accredited by the National Nuclear Accrediting Board. It facilitates the transitioning of graduates into the nuclear energy industry utility training programs in accordance with the requirements of the Uniform Curriculum Guide for Nuclear Power Plant Technician, Maintenance and Non-licensed Operations Personnel Associate Degree Programs, as developed by the Nuclear Energy Institute. MCCC also supports broader state and national interests through the distribution of developed curriculum to other community colleges through educational consortiums.

The U.S. Department of Energy estimates the U.S. will need 44 percent more electricity by 2020. To help meet this demand, the nuclear energy industry has calculated that 60,000 megawatts of new nuclear power plant capacity will be required by 2020. However, many of today's nuclear experts are part of the generation that pioneered nuclear energy's peacetime use in the 1960s. These professionals are now

retiring, and qualified applicants are needed to take their place. According to the Nuclear Energy Institute, about 30 percent of the nuclear energy workforce will retire within five years. DTE Energy is looking to Monroe County Community College to supply its new employees.

Last month, the DTE Energy Foundation announced a \$1 million contribution to support the capital campaign for the new Career Technology Center at Monroe County Community College. The \$17-million, 60,000-square foot Career Technology Center is scheduled to open this fall. The State of Michigan is providing half of the funding (\$8.5 million) in a demonstration of support for this public/private partnership that will provide untold benefits for the region. The Career Technology Center will provide infrastructure to support state-of-the-art classrooms and lab space required to deliver instruction and skills necessary to secure high-growth, high-demand and high-paying jobs.

In addition to the Nuclear Engineering Technology and Heavy Industrial Construction classes, the program areas to be taught in the Career Technology Center include welding, computer-aided drafting and manufacturing, electronics, mechanical engineering and automation, quality assurance, and automotive engineering and service with an emphasis on hybrid and battery technology. In addition, the Career Technology Center will provide facilities and equipment necessary for the development of programs in the emerging areas of advanced manufacturing; renewable energies such as wind, solar and fuel cell technology, and sustainable and green technologies.

MCCC received a \$1.7 million U.S. Department of Labor Community Based Job Training Grant to establish a Welding Center of Expertise that will be housed in the new Career Technology Center. The Welding Center will deliver accelerated training in two ten-week modules resulting in industry-recognized American Welding Society certifications to help fill the void in skilled welders across the energy, advanced manufacturing, and heavy construction industries. Many of these graduates will find employment at DTE Energy.

The college has recently launched a new program with specialization in product and process technology—designed to prepare students for careers in the high-performance manufacturing of consumer goods. The college has also added a program track in non-destructive testing which involves the inspection, testing or evaluation of materials, components and assemblies for materials' discontinuities, properties and machine problems without further impairing or destroying the parts' serviceability. Included among the variety of non-credit courses, certificates and customized training offered through MCCC's Corporate and Community Services Division is the Boiler and Power Plant Fundamentals class and an ongoing partnership with Pearson VUE Testing to offer advanced, computer-based CompTIA testing for certification in 14 information technology specializations.

Monroe County Community College and DTE Energy enjoy a long-standing and close relationship in Monroe County. The college serves DTE Energy as a highly visible and respected community partner. The MCCC campus serves as the Joint Information Center for DTE Energy's Fermi 2 Nuclear Power Plant, and hosted the Nuclear Regulatory Commission during the public comment period for the Fermi 3 Combined Operating License Application (COLA).

In return, DTE Energy has been a generous supporter of the college. In addition to the \$1 million contribution to the Career Technology Center, other support from the DTE Energy Foundation, DTE Energy and DTE Energy Corporate Services includes funding for Campus/Community Events cultural arts programming, scholarships, Volunteer Leadership Grants, employee matching gift support, and the donation of solar panels for use by MCCC students.

Within the past two years, MCCC became the first educational institution to participate in the DTE Energy's SolarCurrents Program, leading to a \$3 million—500mw solar installation on its main campus. While this installation does not power the MCCC campus, it does provide learning opportunities for MCCC students and the community as well to become educated about the opportunity and impacts of renewable energy.

In addition to our successful partnerships with Monroe County Community College, DTE Energy has created other promising collaborations, including one in Distribution Operations to improve the quality and diversity of the applicant pool for DTE Electric lineman positions. In 2004, DTE Energy developed an electrical lines worker training program that is considered the best in the Midwest. Working with the National Utilities Training Fund, a partnership between the International Brotherhood of Electric Workers and three other utilities, we brought retired DTE Energy linemen to our technical training center to assist with apprentice training. The lineman program, including a 5 week pole climbing course, is used to support candidacy for both Underground and Overhead Apprentice jobs. To-date we have

hired 39 individuals who have successfully completed this course over the past 18 months.

Another promising program, and one which has great potential to become a state-wide and national model, is the "Natural Gas Boot Camp" program which DTE Energy has piloted in partnership with the Michigan National Guard. The idea for the Boot Camp emerged in early 2012 in meetings between DTE Energy and Brigadier General Michael Stone of the Michigan National Guard. While DTE has been trying to boost its veteran recruitment, the Michigan National Guard, with support from Governor Rick Snyder, has been looking for solutions to the state's veteran unemployment that could be applied nationwide.

DTE Energy was instrumental in developing the Boot Camp curriculum and bringing in key partners to build the project, including Local 223 of the Utility Workers Union of America, Consumers Energy, Alpena Community College, Schoolcraft Community College, the Center for Energy Workforce Development and the Michigan Workforce Intelligence Network.

Graduation day was December 7 for 20 veterans who successfully passed DTE Energy's Natural Gas Boot Camp at Camp Grayling, a Michigan National Guard training facility. They completed four weeks of classes taught by Alpena Community College instructors in Grayling, followed by three weeks of hands-on instruction at Camp Grayling. A second Boot Camp, sponsored by Consumers Energy, ran concurrently in the metro Detroit area.

The last step of the process was to conduct several After Action Reviews (AAR), gathering feedback from "the partnership", instructors, and students to determine what changes need to occur to make the next session even more successful. Union leadership from all four DTE Gas Company unions was informed of the program's progress and participated in those AARs. Improvements are being made to the Natural Gas Fundamentals program and will enable us to repeat our pilot success and increase the opportunity for union engagement.

In addition, since DTE Energy provided the majority of private funding (\$60,000) needed to make this first boot camp a reality, we are focused on reducing costs for future programs. Through the partnership approach and the work with General Stone, we hope to increase access to federal and/or state grants to support development and delivery of other boot camp programs.

Beyond these two programs, several areas of opportunity exist to support other hard-to-fill jobs identified in our workforce planning. Specifically, power plant operator and instrument and controls technician are on the "boot camp design board" for implementation in 2013. Additionally, an experiment will be conducted to create a "supervisor" boot camp for veterans with existing leadership and applicable technical experience. This boot camp would provide students with utility industry insight coupled with operational fundamentals to support placement in DTE Electric positions, including Power Plant Supervising Operator and Supervisor Reliability.

Congresswoman Foxx and Congressman Walberg, thank you for this opportunity to discuss how we have been working with our partners to address our employment needs and the higher education needs of our customers in this region. We find that public/private partnerships achieve the greatest results in all aspects of our business, including workforce training. We hope this field hearing has been beneficial and that your future travels provide you with additional useful information. We appreciate your time and attention, and hope that you will agree that government can assist in these efforts by providing grants and scholarships that will enable more people to be trained in these critical skills.

DTE Energy is one of the largest employers and tax payers in the State of Michigan. We and our communities are inseparable. We regard our workforce planning program as both a challenge and an opportunity, for it allows us to fulfill our company's aspiration to be "a force for growth and prosperity in the communities where we live and serve."

Thank you.

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Chairwoman FOXX. Thank you very much.  
I now recognize Ms. Susan Smith for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF SUSAN SMITH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP OF HILLSDALE COUNTY**

Ms. SMITH. Thank you very much, and I really appreciate the opportunity to be here today. I think this is a vital conversation for

the State of Michigan as we try and come back as a highly skilled workforce and a manufacturing state in the United States.

I have been working in workforce development and economic development since 1993, and I have seen a lot of economies come and go. I have always focused more on meeting employer needs, and that is where my focus has been to try and foster their success, and frequently that need that they have is for a trained workforce. A lot of this work that I have done has been in concert with South Central Michigan Works. They have a demand driven system that works very well with our employers, and it tends to work well to serve them as well as to help our economy grow in Hillsdale County.

I work with a lot of different employer sectors, but primarily it is manufacturing and industrial businesses. This is a group that—these employers tend to pay well above minimum wage, usually double minimum wage or more, and this provides their employees with discretionary income to purchase the goods and services, and that stimulates the other sectors in our economy. So that is where my focus is, to try and grow that particular sector.

A skilled workforce has become the primary concern in regards to retaining employers and expanding their operations, as well as attracting new business. This is not new information, but the reaction speed to meet the skilled worker demand is ever increasing. The shortage of available workers is a result of a lot of factors that I have observed over time.

In Hillsdale County, we are very small. We are about 46,000 people, a little over that, and it seems that we are just a smaller group that kind of represents in a small way what is going on in a bigger part of the economy. The recession, depression, whatever you want to call it, that hit us in 2008 through 2010, it really affected our working-class people in Hillsdale County. A lot of our highly skilled workers left to go to a region where they could have employment, gainful employment. Many of our workers who were offered attractive company buyouts took those. Anybody who was close to retirement and was offered a buyout left the workforce. So the skill gap is a factor of a lot of different things that have gone on.

The educational system has become very college forward thinking in terms of getting curriculum in the high schools, the 2- to 4-year college and university and beyond that, and as that has gone on, slowly we have lost our skilled trade programs in the high schools. That is another part of why we are not having that gap filling at this point in time. That is just a missing component that we have had for some time.

A lot of the companies that I work with regularly are turning down contract work because they do not have the workers they need to get product out the door to meet the deadlines and to have the quality standards that their customers demand.

State workforce training dollars are no longer a part of the incentive packages offered to companies. So when I attract a business or someone is expanding, there is no longer a portion of those dollars that they can go to a community college and get training or go to a skilled trades organization and get training. So that opportunity has been lost. Typically, dollars from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation were part of the overall package.

While there are other incentives that are offered, unfortunately the training dollars no longer are there, and that was very helpful for a lot of our employers.

There are on-the-job training dollars that are available through South Central Michigan Works, and if we want to talk about bureaucratic and things that kind of stymie, those dollars are very hard to use. On-the-job training dollars, the person who is getting those dollars has to qualify at a level that is almost—it is just very difficult, it is very difficult. When we were rebuilding our workforce, it was a lot easier because we had people that had lost jobs that were pretty highly skilled, but they could transition into a new job. On-the-job training dollars helped them to make that transition. So there was a time those dollars were very, very useful and helpful for what we needed in our manufacturing arena. But right now, however, we need dollars to get people skilled up to even get them through the door at an employment situation.

Incumbent Worker Training dollars are also available. The unfortunate part about that, again, is trying to utilize those dollars. To get those dollars, a company has to prove that the person is either going to get laid off or terminated unless they gain those skills. In 2008 and 2010, that would have been great. But right now, they need to keep their people and they need to just get their skill base a little higher. Nobody wants to get rid of anyone. They don't want to lay them off. There aren't enough people to go around as it is. So those dollars are also very difficult to use.

But as far as higher education in the county, we do have a countywide career awareness program and the College Access Network, and that assists students to plan their futures. So that is a good thing to start lower, back in the grade school, in a high school situation. South Central Michigan Works goes into what would be considered a vo-tech center. We call it our Workforce Development and Technology Center. They help the students in the younger—the 9th, 10th graders, 11th graders, to know how to write a resume and the basic things that you need to get a job, how do you interview, what kind of a work ethic do you have to have to get a job.

So those are the kinds of things that we are getting, soft skills training, because that is one of the major complaints employers have—you know, show up on time, do your job when you get here, the things that we would all probably take for granted, but it is a learned skill for a lot of our students coming up.

Currently, the Economic Development Partnership, which is at my office, we are partnered with the intermediate school district and the Workforce Development Center, and we are placing students four days out of five into a local manufacturing situation. So they are being rotated through the different cells in that organization, and they are learning the different skills that you need and all kinds of things. They have to walk in, they have to punch in just like any other employee there. It is giving the employers a chance to observe the students also, and they are learning what are their aptitudes, what is their attitude, do they have a work ethic, are they team members, are they good problem solvers and all the other skill sets that they need for a good employee.

The students—well, it has just really exceeded what we had hoped in the program. The students are immediately on payroll.

They are being paid for the time that they are there, even though it is during school. They are 18 years old. I went through the plant with them last week, and there is a mentorship going on that was not a planned situation. The guys on the floor are hollering out to them, waving, whatever. It is a very good feeling to see that growth in these young people that otherwise would have been in a classroom, not really having the opportunity to get that real-world experience, and we would like to grow that opportunity for these students. We are looking for funding. We are applying for a Honda grant from the Honda Foundation to help grow those skills, that program.

I am glad to say that all the guys that are involved in this program right now—it is just gentlemen—they are all going to be offered jobs at the end. This particular employer pays for your continuing education, so they will be able to get new apprenticeships. They will be able to have that paid for within three to five years. They will be making \$60,000, \$80,000, and they will have no student debt. So it is a very good win locally for our students, and we really need to keep as many of them as we possibly can.

Chairwoman FOXX. Thank you, Ms. Smith.

Ms. SMITH. Thank you.

Chairwoman FOXX. I appreciate it very much.

Ms. SMITH. My timer did not go off.

Chairwoman FOXX. I know.

Ms. SMITH. I am sorry.

[The statement of Ms. Smith follows:]

**Prepared Statement of Susan Smith, Executive Director,  
Economic Development Partnership, Hillsdale County**

My name is Susan Smith and I am the Executive Director of the Economic Development Partnership of Hillsdale County. I have been engaged with Economic Development and Workforce training since 1993.

My work has always focused on meeting employer needs to foster their success and frequently that need was for a trained workforce. Much of this work is done in partnership with South Central Michigan Works!

While I work with all employer sectors, my primary customers are our manufacturing/industrial businesses. This group of employers tends to pay well above minimum wage (usually double or more) which provides their employees with the discretionary income to purchase goods and services which stimulates other sectors and thus economic growth.

A skilled workforce has become the primary concern in regards to retaining employers and expanding their operations as well as attracting new business. This is not new information, but the reaction speed to meet the skilled worker demand is ever increasing. The shortage of these available workers is a result of several factors from what I observe in Hillsdale County. We are a comparatively small County with a population of just over 46,000 citizens and probably a small sample of what has happened on a larger scale in larger communities.

The recession/depression that sent our economy into a downward spiral 2008 through 2010 greatly affected our working class.

The highly skilled workers left to live in a region where work was available

Many of the workers who were offered an attractive company buy out or early retirement packages took them and left the workforce.

For an even longer period of time our educational system funding has increasingly focused solely on curriculum for students who are moving on to a 4 year+ college/university education. Those choosing this route are to be commended for their ambitious goal setting and academic achievement.

However, over a period of time this has greatly diminished or eliminated the educational tracks for students who want to pursue skilled trades which are what we are lacking today in our workforce. The programs that gave those students with mechanical or creative ability a path are gone. This too has created the skills gap that everyone is trying to fill today.

Many companies I work with on a regular basis are turning contract work down because they do not have the workers they need to get product out the door to meet deadlines and the quality standards their customers demand.

State workforce training dollars are no longer a part of the incentive package offered to companies who make multi-million dollar investments and need a trained workforce or to the company that just wants to take on new work and grow. The existing programs such as On-The-Job training grants are only available to new hires who meet stringent criteria one of which includes basically living in poverty. Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) dollars are only available to employees currently in the workforce. The criteria attached to using this funding is that an employee must be facing lay-off or termination to qualify for training. This would probably have been useful in 2008 through 2010, but today the need is to train our population of unemployed or those entering the workforce from high school in a hands-on career. As a community a part of the solution is growing our own workforce with the schools and working around the bureaucratic obstacles that have been created.

To help remedy the situation the EDP and our Workforce Development Technology Center, which is a part of our Intermediate school district, began investigating the viability of a pilot program last fall which began at the onset of the last semester of the 2012-2013 school year. The CAD/Design instructor is also a mechanical engineer by profession which makes her a huge asset for our community. The department of education mandates that these students be in the Cad/Design classroom a minimum of one session a week. She has identified students in their senior year who want to get into a work environment to better understand the expectations and to see if the field of study they are considering is what they believed it is. The employers ROI is to observe the students attitude, aptitude, work ethics, team work, problem solving and other skill sets to see if they would make a good employee.

The outcomes have far exceeded these initial goals of the program. Last week I had the opportunity to walk through the manufacturing facility with the students and Human Resource Manager.

Observations:

- The students are on payroll and must clock in like all other employees
- As we walked through the plant, employees acknowledged the students with a wave, thumbs up, a hearty hello \* \* \* Clearly there is a mentorship mentality that has grown naturally with the students as they have been rotating between all of the work cells and learning from the employees.
- Students closely observe the safety rules and were quick to politely point out that I should be walking within the allowed parameters of the work space. When stopping at a work station, the students allowed for the operator to finish a sequence before interrupting to speak with him.
- To the surprise and enthusiasm of the employer some students have requested additional work hours outside of the school day. There are even students who did not go on their SENIOR SPRING BREAK opting to stay home so they could work.
- The Human Resource Manager is beyond impressed with each student and sees no reason why they would not be tendered a full time position after graduation. This employer also pays tuition reimbursement and offers apprenticeship opportunities. Within 2-3 years these students could be well on their way to a journeyman status making in excess of \$60,000/yr.

We are applying for a grant to the Honda Foundation to further this work as one of their funding priorities is for economic development projects that integrate students and workforce learning.

We have a County-Wide Career Awareness Program and College Access Network in place to assist students plan their futures.

This is all good news, but not nearly enough to begin filling the need quickly enough.

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Chairwoman FOXX. Mr. Fairbanks, I now recognize you for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF DAN FAIRBANKS, UAW INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE, UAW-GM SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING DEPARTMENT**

Mr. FAIRBANKS. Thank you. On behalf of International Union UAW President Bob King, and UAW Vice President in charge of the GM Department, Joe Ashton, we appreciate the opportunity to

be here and speak. We do believe this to be a very important subject. Therefore, I do not want to miss anything, and contrary to how I normally like to do things, I am going to read my statement.

The International Union, UAW Auto Workers welcomes the opportunity to submit comments to the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training. The UAW is one of the largest and most diverse unions in North America, with members in virtually every sector of the economy. The UAW has more than 1 million active and retired members in the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico. From our earliest days, the UAW has been a leader in the struggle to secure economic and social justice for all people. We are deeply committed to both higher education and job growth and development here in the United States.

This testimony addresses successful union-employer training programs, ways in which unions find and train employees, the role of unions in job training, the effects of attacks on unions, and finally, the importance of serving on Workforce Investment Act boards and is being submitted solely on behalf of the UAW and not the joint programs.

Successful union-employer training programs. At General Motors, the UAW joint partnership has developed many successful joint training programs. These were developed to ensure that our customers receive world-class products and services. Today's world customer demands quality. This not only pertains to industry, but it also pertains to the way citizens of this country view the quality of our government. They deserve the best that our government and GM products and services can produce.

A partnership formed by the UAW and GM has produced that quality. Many joint training programs such as Quality Network/General Motors Manufacturing System, GMS, ensure that all best practices from around the world are used to uniformly produce high-quality products. A GM vehicle produced in China uses the same system that a vehicle that is produced in Michigan uses. This was accomplished by a joint partnership between the UAW and GM and has spread worldwide. Such a uniform system is where we have to be in order to compete in a global economy.

Other examples of successful union-employer training programs are our UAW-GM Apprenticeship Program, Work/Family Program, Preventive Maintenance, Safety Training, and our Suggestion Training, which helps reduce costs while increasing quality throughout the system.

Ways in which unions find and train employees. Unions and the companies they represent also make apprenticeship programs available to both employees and people looking for employment. Trades have played an important part in all aspects of our labor history and continue to be vital to our workforce. We set the standard. Non-union trade programs are still far behind union programs in terms of quality and reliability. Joint training programs set up by the union and the employer offer the vast majority of training needed by employees and/or members in order to be effective in the workplace.

Unions do an excellent job of recognizing potential. If you show the intuition and strive forward in a particular area, you will be noticed. Unions are always on the lookout for members striving to

improve and are there to lend a helping hand and direction in achieving the skill sets needed to advance.

Role of unions in job training. Unions have long been part of our nation's history in numerous ways, fighting for better pay, safer working conditions, health care and retirement benefits, education and civic participation. Unions have brought diverse voices together, and their struggles have elevated the working conditions, the standard of living, and the recognition of not just their members, but of all those who labor.

Unions played a major role in ending sweatshops and the use of child labor, both of which were so common at the beginning of the 20th century. The International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union was one of the first unions to have a primarily female membership. And in the aftermath of the tragic Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire in 1911, in which more than 100 mostly young immigrant women were killed, that union was at the forefront of reforming working conditions and pushing for comprehensive safety and workers' compensation laws.

Unions are a vital part of our social fabric and economic future. Unions run the largest career training program in the United States outside of the military. Union apprenticeship programs generally partner with employers or industries to provide the kind of training that hard-wires excellence into workers and places them in good jobs that can support families. That is worth a lot when unemployment is stubbornly high and personal incomes are falling.

[The statement of Mr. Fairbanks follows:]

**Prepared Statement of Dan Fairbanks, UAW International Representative,  
UAW-GM Skill Development and Training Department**

The International Union, United Auto Workers (UAW) welcomes the opportunity to submit comments to the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training. The UAW is one of the largest and most diverse unions in North America, with members in virtually every sector of the economy. The UAW has more than one million active and retired members in the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico. From our earliest days, the UAW has been a leader in the struggle to secure economic and social justice for all people. We are deeply committed to both higher education and job growth and development here in the United States.

This testimony addresses successful union-employer training programs, ways in which unions find and train employees, the role of unions in job training, the effects of attacks on unions, and finally, the importance of serving on Workforce Investment Act (WIA) boards and is being submitted solely on behalf of the UAW and not the joint programs.

*Successful union-employer training programs*

At General Motors, the UAW-GM joint partnership has developed many successful joint training programs. These were developed to ensure that our customers receive world class products and services. Today's world customer demands quality. This not only pertains to industry, but also to view of citizens of this country towards the quality of our government. They deserve the best that our government and GM products and services can produce.

A partnership formed by the UAW and GM has produced that quality. Many joint training programs i.e. Quality Network/General Motors Manufacturing System (GMS) ensure that all best practices from around the world are used to uniformly produce high quality products. A GM vehicle produced in China uses the same system that a vehicle in Michigan uses. This was accomplished by a joint partnership between the UAW and GM and has spread worldwide. Such a uniform system is where we have to be in order to compete in a global economy. Other examples of successful union-employer training programs are our UAW-GM Apprenticeship Training, Work/Family Program, Preventive Maintenance, Safety Training and Suggestion Training, which help reduce costs while increasing quality throughout the system.

*Ways in Which Unions Find and Train Employees*

Unions and the companies they represent also make apprenticeship programs available to both employees and people looking for employment. Trades have played an important part in all aspects of labor history and continue to be vital to our workforce. We set the standard. Non-union trade programs are still far behind union programs in terms of quality and reliability. Joint training programs set up by the union and the employer offer the vast majority of training needed by employees and/or members in order to be effective in the workplace.

Unions do an excellent job of recognizing potential. If you show the intuition to strive forward in a particular area, you will be noticed. Unions are always on the lookout for members striving to improve and are there to lend a helping hand and direction in achieving the skill sets needed to advance.

*Role of Unions in Job Training*

Unions have long been part of our nation's history in numerous ways, fighting for better pay, safer working conditions, health care and retirement benefits, education and civic participation. Unions have brought diverse voices together, and their struggles have elevated the working conditions, the standard of living and the recognition of not just their members, but of all those who labor.

Unions played a major role in ending sweatshops and the use of child labor, both of which were so common at the beginning of the 20th century. The International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, or ILGWU, was one of the first unions to have a primarily female membership. And in the aftermath of the tragic Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire in 1911, in which more than 100 mostly young immigrant women were killed, the ILGWU was at the forefront of reforming working conditions and pushing for comprehensive safety and workers' compensation laws.

Unions are a vital part of our social fabric and economic future. Unions run the largest career training program in the United States outside of the military. Union apprenticeship programs generally partner with employers or industries to provide the kind of training that hard-wires excellence into workers and places them in good jobs that can support families. That's worth a lot when unemployment is stubbornly high and personal incomes are falling.

*Effect of Attacks on Unions*

Unions are just normal folks—people who come together to improve their lives and their workplaces, because they recognize there's strength in numbers. The one thing that some of public does know is that union members, thanks to collective bargaining, have higher wages and better benefits. But union membership actually raises living and working standards for all working men and women—both union and non-union.

The truth is that unions work side by side with companies to expand the scope of their technological advancements and profit margins. The public hears about attacks on unions and becomes wary about investing or buying products or services from companies with union representation. Unfortunately this serves to be a self-fulfilling prophecy, which in turn affects the profit margin of these companies. That produces a negative effect on our production and service industry in our state and country.

Pride in what one does or produces is important to everyone. The attacks on unions affect workers and manifest conflict within them. Union members know that they produce quality products and services in an economically efficient manner. But, if the public has a negative opinion of your work standards, it impacts the greater workforce in a non-positive way. Everyone takes pride in the fruits of their labor and human nature craves that others recognize the trueness and quality of that work, and it is detrimental when that is not recognized.

When union membership rates are high, so is the share of income that goes to the middle class. When those rates fall, income inequality grows—the middle class shrinks and the 1% gets richer. Collective bargaining affects more than wages and benefits. Union teachers bargain for smaller class sizes. Union nurses bargain for better patient care.

Working together, union members and their community allies also make up a powerful lobby for the common good. They've helped secure for us all the eight-hour day, job safety laws, overtime pay, Medicare and Social Security, civil rights protections, fair treatment for women and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender workers and much more.

These are some of the reasons even people who don't fit the typical stereotypes of union members have recognized the power and importance of forming unions. Examples include carwash workers in LA, professional athletes, writers and directors for TV shows, just to name a few. Go to a movie and you're enjoying the work of

one of America's most unionized industries, from the actors and camera crews to set designers.

Effect of Taking Unions off Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Boards Recently, H.R. 803, the Supporting Knowledge and Investing in Lifelong Skills (SKILLS) Act passed the U.S. House of Representatives and we raised significant concerns about this legislation and the detrimental impact it would have on several programs that are vital to working families. The bill failed to take into account labor's leading role in workforce training. As previously stated, the labor movement is the largest workforce trainer of adults outside the U.S. military. Regrettably, the SKILLS Act categorically excludes labor participation in state and local workforce investment boards. The bill failed to take into account labor's leading role in workforce training and the discounts the value that workers bring to workforce investment boards.

The purpose of the Workforce Investment Act, (WIA) is to provide workforce investment activities that increase the employment, retention and earnings of participants and increase occupational skill attainment by participants, which will improve the quality of the workplace, reduce welfare dependency and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the economy. We only grow and improve when we work together. We may not agree all of the time, but through collaboration comes a new and better way of doing things. The effects of the board becoming a one way only philosophy will lend itself to limiting the success of the objectives.

We also oppose giving governors the authority, without state legislative review, to consolidate the funding and administration of Workforce Investment Act and numerous other programs. Giving governors the discretion to decide who would receive services and what kind of services they receive does not encourage these decisions to be based on legitimate workforce needs but on political convenience and ideology. Handing such authority over to governors would likely create scenarios where workforce services would vary greatly from state to state as well as the funding levels of programs within that state, solely based on whoever holds political power.

The SKILLS act would eliminate the Wagner-Peyser program and we are greatly concerned with the impact this will have on undermining the existing Unemployment Insurance (UI) system. The Wagner-Peyser staff conducts the UI "work test," an eligibility requirement that requires UI claimants to be actively seeking work in order to receive UI benefits. H.R. 803 instead assigns responsibility for the work test and reemployment services for UI claimants to local workforce boards. The loss of accountability and state control resulting from this change would lead the unemployed to remain out of work longer, draw state and federal unemployment benefits for a longer period of time, and thereby undermine the state UI trust funds.

In short, we believe that labor brings a strong voice to jobs training programs and our ability to have our voices heard helps America's workers. We are deeply committed to ensuring that ALL workers have the opportunity to find good paying jobs.

In closing, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the Committee on Education and Workforce, of the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce.

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Chairwoman FOXX. Thank you, Mr. Fairbanks. I appreciate very much your remarks.

I now would like to recognize my colleague, since we are in his district, to begin the questioning of the panel members. Thank you all again very much.

Mr. Walberg?

Mr. WALBERG. I thank the chairwoman for that opportunity.

I shouldn't have looked at it. You could have left it going without timing. Sue, I don't know how you got away with that.

Mr. Fairbanks, let me just ask you a question. Being a subcommittee chair myself for the Workforce Protections Subcommittee on the Education and Workforce Committee, which deals with those areas that I think you addressed to some degree, and the safety factors that have been built in, job security opportunities for the employees specifically, I think unions have provided some significant incentives to make sure that our workplaces are safe.

But what I wanted to specifically ask you is what specific incentives are being used by the UAW to encourage ongoing worker de-

velopment, not only those that are outside of the workforce now but those that are in, the incentives that encourage them to constantly upgrade their skills?

Mr. FAIRBANKS. Well, quite frankly, our incentive is survival. With the auto industry coming out of, the Big Three coming out of what they just came out of, we have worked together with General Motors, Ford, Chrysler in instituting the programs that we already have in place, such as the ones I have mentioned, and also in doing research in new programs that we can jointly do together so the companies that we do work for can survive and prosper, because when they profit, everybody profits. So that is our incentive, to make sure that those companies do well. Therefore, when they do well, we do well.

Mr. WALBERG. Do the employees feel those incentives?

Mr. FAIRBANKS. Oh, very much so.

Mr. WALBERG. And then I guess what I am asking is, is there any additional incentive other than survival that you encourage employees with to continue upgrading their skills?

Mr. FAIRBANKS. Well, sure, definitely. We spoke briefly about our apprenticeship program. If you are a person that is coming in and working the assembly line, you are at one rate. One way to increase your pay is to get into the apprenticeship program and move up. There is also another way. If you are working the assembly line and you want to increase your pay and your level, you can become a team leader. To do that, there is training available to do that. It used to be just by seniority, but now it is a combination of seniority and skill levels.

So there are incentives as far as monetary incentives to increase your training. Plus, there is that desire that is out there in everybody to increase your education. I think that is out there with everybody. Just because you went into an auto factory doesn't mean that went away.

Mr. WALBERG. Good, good.

Ms. Dowler, I had the privilege of touring Fermi last week, in fact, and you are absolutely right. You just don't take a person off the street and have them attend to a nuclear power plant. It takes significant training. It's amazing the hours, the months of training the person has to go through.

If you had to pass along advice to other institutions of higher education—I know you worked with Monroe Community College significantly on that area. But if you had to pass along advice within this state for higher education institutions about how they should work with other employers, what would that advice be?

Ms. DOWLER. My advice to other institutions would be to bring together your major employers, and minor employers. Small businesses may have to niche markets that they need to hear about as well. But bring together your major employers and have real consortium type conversations around what their needs are now and what their skill gap and talent needs may be in the future, and keep an ongoing conversation going.

I think it is important for not only the institution to understand what the businesses and industries need, but it is important for the businesses and industries to understand what the universities are undergoing as well. It is really a partnership. It goes both ways.

We are going through environmental regulations that are challenging us, and we have different things going on in our utility. It is important for our college to understand what some of our challenges are.

So creating a partnership between your major industries that create real relationships I think starts to bridge that.

Mr. WALBERG. Ms. Smith, can you describe how employers or what employers are looking for in current college graduates?

Ms. SMITH. Current college graduates? Depending on what field they are coming out of college with, they want people who are willing to come on the job and work side-by-side with other people. They want them willing to continue to grow and to become part of a family. In Hillsdale, and I don't know if that is unique to Hillsdale, there is still pretty much a social contract with the employer and the employee. When they hire people and bring them in, they bring them in because they want them there and they want them to be a long-term employee for them. So they are just looking for people who have that will to continue learning and to do a good job.

Mr. WALBERG. I see my time has expired. I look forward to another opportunity.

Chairwoman FOXX. Thank you very much.

Ms. Dowler, to follow up a little bit on the last comments that you were making from Congressman Walberg, if you had to pass along advice to other institutions of higher education within the state about how they should work with other employers, what would you advise them to do?

Ms. DOWLER. Okay. So, in addition to asking them about what their needs are and what their skill gaps are, I think another key parameter would be, for the universities, is to share what they learn among other universities. So it is not enough for DTE to work with Monroe Community College and share our skill gaps and our needs with them, but it is important for Monroe Community College then to share that across their peers, their peer universities. So I think that is a critical element of the process, to partner across all of the elements, breadth and depth in sharing the workforce and talent requirements.

Chairwoman FOXX. Thank you.

Ms. DOWLER. I guess the other thing I would also add is helping to integrate us into the curriculum build I think is also paramount. What are you teaching? Let us help you in that curriculum build I think is also paramount.

Chairwoman FOXX. Thank you.

Ms. Smith, would you talk about how you are working to recruit new businesses to Hillsdale County? How are you presenting what is going on here to new businesses who may be considering coming here?

Ms. SMITH. Okay. Actually, right now, the State of Michigan has an initiative, and they try to combine the different counties together. I am part of Region 9, which is Hillsdale, Lenawee, Livingston, Washtenaw, Monroe County, and Jackson. We are working together on marketing to talk about the different assets that we have. We are all very different communities and have different things to offer. So as a package, we can do just about anything anybody needs in this country or overseas in that region.

So we are working as a large group of six counties to put together information and try to attract people and help them understand that Michigan is a great place to do business, and we have the skill, the talent, and we can transport things, we can engineer. We are good, and we are selling who we are.

Chairwoman FOXX. Thank you very much.

Ms. Dowler, you mentioned, and Ms. Smith mentioned also, the issue of soft skills. I picked up on that issue with you, Ms. Smith. But, Ms. Dowler, I appreciated the fact that you talk about skills, education and training, because they are distinct areas. I wonder if you could talk a little bit about the soft skills that you all are looking for. Again, Ms. Smith also referred to that.

Ms. DOWLER. Right. So, let me talk a little bit about some of the things that we do with universities to help kind of bring new employees in. We bring about 350 students, summer students and coops into our company every year to get them acclimated to the business world and the industry. Part of that process really gives them an opportunity to learn and grow, and that is their opportunity to learn and grow and our opportunity to groom them and coach them and teach them. We feel like as a corporation that is invested in our communities and in helping the students, we have an obligation to coach them, and we give them feedback throughout that process.

So every year there are 250 to 300 students that come from across the universities in the State of Michigan that learn not only hard skills but soft skills. Like you mentioned, if they are not in on time, not dressing appropriately, how do you give a presentation effectively, right? All of those things, that gets to the soft skills piece. We also have in the hiring process behavior assessments and all those kinds of things which I won't get into. But I would really speak to the student coop program, which would get right connected through our recruiting process with the colleges that I think is a wonderful way to help coach, teach, and mentor young people into the business.

Chairwoman FOXX. Congressman Walberg?

Mr. WALBERG. Thank you. Commissioner Lievens, let me ask you, in relationship to what the county government is doing in developing workforce, what efforts is the local government taking to help ensure the citizens of Monroe County are prepared for the shifts in the local economy? I think there have been a few in the past recent history.

Mr. LIEVENS. One thing the county is doing through its planning department is looking for one-stop shops to bring together employers with educational institutions. That way, folks don't have to look around to afford their resources. Interestingly enough, one of the recent reports made on behalf of our county planning department was just this issue that is coming up time and again in our field hearing regarding the soft skills, and that was something of a surprise to me a couple of years ago, because you have that expectation out of your educational institution. You are ready to find your position in whatever employment sector you went to school for. But beyond the basic writing, math and reading skills, students need to acquire the skills related to the work ethic, financial literacy, re-

sume writing, application filing, problem solving, teamwork, flexibility and communication skills.

I meet a number of folks that have applied for jobs that afterward, in speaking with them, they had the skills, they had the talents and ability, but they need to translate those into a resume, into the creativity of looking for that application. And then we hear about being timely, what is appropriate to wear. One of the things the county is doing is putting those resources together and feeding that to the education sector, to the employers and the like.

Mr. WALBERG. Why do you believe it is absolutely necessary to have a partnership between employers and post-secondary institutions?

Mr. LIEVENS. To help connect those. There is a lot of discussion out there about synergy. It is about bringing together your partners to open those lines of communication because no man is an island. We are all in this together.

Mr. WALBERG. Can the government get in the way of that?

Mr. LIEVENS. Absolutely.

Mr. WALBERG. How?

Mr. LIEVENS. By creating too much regulation, too much red tape, and that was one of the things mentioned here before. Government should be a partner, but it shouldn't be the employer.

Mr. WALBERG. Does industry come to you and tell you the hard, cold facts about maybe some of those challenges that are in place through no intention necessarily but is actually taking place?

Mr. LIEVENS. Certainly, through some of the things, especially here in the county, we need to be a little bit more open-minded and creative about is attracting businesses by eliminating certain land-use restrictions and the rest, to promote an open business environment.

Mr. WALBERG. I would ask you the same question, Ms. Smith. Since you work kind of in the center land between the employer and the government agency, what challenges do you face with the government agency there in Hillsdale County, which has been hit significantly with the downturn in the economy?

Ms. SMITH. Yes. I mean, we were at 18 percent in 2009, unemployment. So it was devastating.

Mr. WALBERG. You are still at about 11 percent, aren't you?

Ms. SMITH. We are at 10, 10.1, I think, right now. But that is still outrageously high unemployment.

You know, it is just programs that go into effect need to be a little more flexible for our employers. There can't be a lot of restrictions as far as if the person makes a living wage, they can't get any assistance and training. We are trying very diligently to bring our students from the schools and retain them locally, so we need to be able to train them locally. We work with the Academy for Manufacturing Careers. We are still a very heavily manufacturing community, as well as agricultural. But sometimes it is just very hard to use the dollars that are available because of the criteria attached to them, and I understand the need to track so that there is not abuse of money. That has happened, obviously. But there is a medium that we really need to hit.

Mr. WALBERG. Right, right.

Ms. Dowler, again, going directly to you in the final few seconds that I have here, do you find your employees taking advantage of the job training programs that are out there that you introduce them to? Are they aggressive in taking advantage of that? Are they seeking it, or are they being pushed?

Ms. DOWLER. It is interesting. I actually asked for some data to bring in here relative to educational reimbursement. We have a big educational reimbursement program in our company. I did not get the data quick enough to bring in here, but what I would tell you is every semester, every year employees take advantage of community college and higher education to get associate's, bachelor's, master's degrees throughout the company so they can advance themselves and advance their careers to make themselves better and to make the corporation better and stronger. So, yes, absolutely.

Mr. WALBERG. That is encouraging.

Madam Chairman, it is more discouraging to know the disincentives we give in the government bureaucracy, and your bill goes a long way in addressing the redundancies, the burdens of having multiple layers of overlapping job-training programs that really are making it more difficult for Ms. Smith and Ms. Dowler in getting people into a place of employment.

Chairwoman FOXX. Thank you, Mr. Walberg. I wasn't going to be self-serving too much in talking about bringing up what Ms. Smith brought up, but I do appreciate your mentioning the issue. We call them silos, where money is appropriated but people aren't able to take advantage of it even though they need it because they don't fit the exact criteria.

I think we have some information on the SKILLS Act here, if people are interested in doing that. Thank you.

I would like to ask Mr. Lievens if you would discuss a little bit the role of the local Workforce Investment Boards and how they play a role in job placement and job development here.

Mr. LIEVENS. The county currently has several different investment boards. We have Michigan Works. That is one organization that helps pool together local talent and connect those with the employers by providing a resume bank, helping to train the soft skills. So that is one area that the county is growing that I see a lot of good results from.

I think another thing to touch on, something that was mentioned earlier, that Michigan is known for its manufacturing, but I see that there are layers in manufacturing. There is manufacturing, and there is advanced manufacturing.

No one is asking for dollars to help develop the buggy whip industry. I think of that as manufacturing that has since passed its day. But we have new advanced manufacturing that is really shooting the moon. We have Ben Tower doing advanced welding to take advantage of some of these new green industries, and that is something that I think dollars should be targeted to these emerging sectors of the economy and retaining the existing employers. I know the college has recently embarked on some grant funding for incubators. I support that, and that is necessary, but we need to really look at who is here and doing well, and that is one of the things the county is keen on and has documented and has offered as a resource for people to look into.

Chairwoman FOXX. Thank you very much.

I wanted to ask Ms. Smith, can you talk a little bit more—again, you mentioned in your comments and in a question, a follow-up question that Mr. Walberg asked, but I don't think it is too much to emphasize again, what is it that employers are looking for in the current college graduates that are coming out? Because I think the audience here needs to hear that over and over again, and hopefully the audience of college folks who are here also. Talk a little bit more, if you would, about the kind of attributes that a college graduate needs to have these days.

Ms. SMITH. Well, I could give you a really good example. I was at the governor's economic development conference in Detroit, and there was a young lady there from Hillsdale College, and she was a marketing student. They had 20 students that were brought in to kind of sell themselves because there were a lot of employers there that would give them an opportunity. And this young lady was outstanding in several ways, and I think that is why one of the companies from Hillsdale picked her up. Not picked her up, tried to engage with her.

Mr. WALBERG. Picked her out.

Ms. SMITH. Yes. She was very confident in her presentation. She carried herself very well. She was very articulate. She was very driven and not afraid to talk about the fact that she has a very good skill set. They are looking for someone in the marketing arena. So she spent one evening looking at who the company was and what they were doing, because when I talked to her, I understood after talking to her that she was probably a very good match for one of our Hillsdale companies that was there.

So when you talk to young people and they have that, they make that connection, they look you in the eye, they are just there in the present tense, it makes a big impression with employers because they want somebody who is not going to come in and run the company but who is going to be able to hold their own and do a good job for them.

Chairwoman FOXX. So she not only had the skills, but she could show that she had the skills.

Ms. SMITH. Yes, yes.

Chairwoman FOXX. Okay. Thank you very much.

Mr. Walberg?

Mr. WALBERG. Boy, I like these field hearings. More questions to finish off.

Let me go back. Ms. Dowler, you made an interesting statement about getting in on the ground floor, working with community colleges or educational institutions on the curriculum build. That's a term that I think expresses an awful lot that I had not heard before, curriculum build. In the case of Monroe County Community College, how do you work with them to ensure that they continue to provide high-skilled graduates that meet your hiring needs in context with that curriculum build?

Ms. DOWLER. So let me speak about just a couple of examples. Our nuclear engineering technology program that ultimately ends up with an applied sciences associate's degree has several of the adjunct professors that are also employees of DTE Energy. So the DTE Energy employees work at the plant, the nuclear division,

every single day. They are also adjunct professors that teach several classes within the nuclear engineering technology program. So clearly, they are very, very involved in the curriculum, teaching the curriculum. They get to know the students. They get to know the capabilities of the students.

I also mentioned that coop program in the summer student program. Some of those very students that those professors teach end up coming in and being summer students at the nuclear power plant so they get some of that real-life experience at the power plant. So that would be an example, that would be a real, full-cycle example of how they are involved in that curriculum. I could give other examples, but that is probably the most succinct example. That is an accredited program within the NEI.

Mr. WALBERG. But as you say that, that is a comprehensive working relationship. How many schools and universities and training centers can you do that with?

Ms. DOWLER. So, I mean, we have adjunct professors on staff at Oakland Community College. We have several relationships with several colleges across the state. I can't say that it is every college, but several colleges.

Mr. WALBERG. Where it makes sense.

Ms. DOWLER. Where it makes sense, right. Ferris State, for example, we have great employment up in that area, so we have great partnership with Ferris State as an example.

Mr. WALBERG. Thank you.

Mr. Fairbanks, let me ask you if you could just give us some insight on what challenge the UAW faces with what is seen as government disincentives to producing job opportunities, to assisting the UAW in the training programs, in providing the jobs to train for.

Mr. FAIRBANKS. Could you please explain a little bit further disincentives?

Mr. WALBERG. Well, I guess what you perceive as disincentives to the UAW membership growing, but more specifically jobs, so that your union employees or membership could have employment in a growing way, in a growing economy here in Michigan specifically. But are there any government disincentives, red tape, bureaucratic overhead, whatever, that gives you acid indigestion as you attempt to provide jobs and train workers in those jobs?

Mr. FAIRBANKS. To speak to that, offhand I really don't see any disincentives as far as education. This was spoken about earlier, about programs within companies to pay for employees going back to school. We have a tuition assistance program that the UAW and GM have put together. That does run into millions of dollars a year, into that program.

Back to what you were saying, we do believe there needs to be some levels looked upon as far as how these funds are allocated. In other words, we do not agree that funds are allocated directly to the governor of the state, and the governor of the state says, okay, we need these funds here, we need these funds here, we think that is the best place to go.

We do believe these boards serve a very important purpose. They are the ones closest to what is happening. We agree totally that they need to be there. What we are trying to emphasize is you need

a diverse group of people on there using their joint partnerships with companies. Like I said before, they are one of the largest entities in being able to educate their employees and their members. Therefore, we do believe that the workers need a voice on those boards, and that is the main emphasis that we wanted to come out with is let's keep the power with these boards. They know what they are doing. They are right there on the front lines. Let's keep it there.

Mr. WALBERG. Thank you.

Chairwoman FOXX. Well, thank you all very much for coming today and for the valuable testimony that you have given us. Again, I want to thank you for taking time out of your schedules to be here.

We're going to bring up the second panel now, so we will excuse you with our deep appreciation.

Now you all have had a chance to see how the first panel did, right? It is my pleasure now to introduce our distinguished second panel of witnesses.

Dr. David Nixon, currently serving his 10th year as President of Monroe County Community College. Prior to coming to MCCC, he served as Executive Dean of Iowa Lakes Community College in Estherville, Iowa, where he served as the Chief Administrative Officer of the Emmetsburg campus.

Ms. Sherry Betz currently serves as the Southeast Regional Director of the College for Professional Studies for Siena Heights University. While at Siena Heights, Ms. Betz has had the opportunity to present at the Trends in Occupational Studies conference, where she discussed the needs for articulation agreements and how institutions benefit from these types of partnerships.

Dr. Michelle Shields serves as a career coach, as well as the Workforce Development Director for Jackson Community College. Dr. Shields handles career coaching for students, sets up internships with local employers, and handles employers' requests to match qualified graduates with their needs.

Mr. Douglas Levy is the Director of Financial Aid at Macomb Community College, Michigan's largest community college. Prior to joining Macomb in early 2011, Mr. Levy spent the prior 21 years in various higher education leadership positions at the University of Michigan.

Again, let me briefly explain our lighting system. You will each have 5 minutes to present your testimony. When you begin, the light in front of you will turn green. When 1 minute is left, the light will turn yellow, and when your time has expired the light will turn red, at which point I would ask that you wrap up your remarks as best as you can. After everyone has testified, members will each have 5 minutes to ask questions of the panel.

Now I will recognize Dr. David Nixon for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF DAVID E. NIXON, PRESIDENT,  
MONROE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

Mr. NIXON. Thank you very much. Thank you, Chairwoman Foxx. I wanted first of all to welcome you on behalf of our faculty and our staff and our elected trustees, and I think at least one of our elected trustees has been here this morning to welcome you. I

mention that because they are all elected. They get no pay for that job. They are great trustees because they are involved in the community as well, and you will see why that is important.

As the President of Monroe County Community College, I would like to point out two of our major supporters here in this community that were here long before yours truly, and that is La-Z-Boy Furniture and Monroe Shock Absorbers. So you can see why manufacturing is in our DNA. We always like to say when we are visiting other parts of the country, we are the county that rocks, La-Z-Boy, and shocks, Monroe Shock Absorbers. But those people, or at least the people that came with Monroe Shock Absorbers, are still contributing to this community in many ways, because our biggest challenge is the value of higher education.

This has been a community where it was easy to get a job at age 16. If you could get a driver's license, you could probably get a job. Times have changed, and I am really impressed by the witnesses that have come before me with the comments that they have made.

This college is 50 years old, still one of the lowest tuition rates in the region. It is mission driven, and our mission is enriching lives through higher education. Monroe County Community College is nationally accredited in higher education, and our growth in enrollment over the past several years came to us because of the Great Recession, for the most part, but because a lot of the students wanted to improve their lives.

Living within our means has become a practice because the state's funds have dwindled and, as you know, we rely a great deal on the state funds here in the State of Michigan. But the truth be known is that the tuition, the money the students pay for their tuition is a greater portion of our annual budget than our appropriations from the State of Michigan. That is just the way the formula works out.

So in that regard, the largest revenues for the college is the local taxpayer. At one time, 60 percent of our annual budget came from the local taxpayers, but in recent times that has dwindled to a little less than 50 percent. So in learning how to live within our means, we have found the value of partnering with private partnerships and others to be able to sustain the college and offer higher education.

By the way, we have 9,000 students annually; 4,500 of those are credit students in certificate programs. The rest of those—and about the average age of our student is 25, with about a third of our students ranging in age up to 30.

More than 70 percent of our students work outside the college. So we have a lot of students that are going to college and working, some of them working full time. Half of the students qualify for some kind of financial aid. Thirty-seven percent of the college students here receive Pell Grants totaling \$6 million this last year. We are a great advocate of Pell Grants. We don't like some of the things that happen when some of the students bail out after they get the money, and we may get a chance to talk about that later.

Our default rate, by the way, last year was 2.2 percent, which isn't bad, but we have to write a check for \$240,000.

Of the entire student population, 43 percent of the students receive some type of Title IV financial aid, either the Pell, the Staf-

ford loans, or work study. But I need to point out that because of our involvement in the community and our private partners, this college generated \$500,000 in scholarships, our local scholarships, last year to supplement their education.

So if we are working on those limited resources, how do we move ahead with these programs we have discussed and some of the witnesses discussed earlier? How do we train the 21st century workforce? It is the combination of public/private dollars. The likes of a \$17 million Career Technology Center currently in construction on the campus you may have seen as you came in this morning, that is all about high-skilled workers for high-paid jobs.

Nuclear tech is one of the premiere programs, and if it had not been for DTE Energy and that partnership, it would not have happened.

In addition, we partnered with a community college in Ohio at the early start of that to be able to deliver those technical programs.

So it was combining curriculum with curriculum experts with what we call the content experts. Those are the professionals at the nuclear power plant that are on our campus, in our labs, helping us teach those students.

We have done the same thing with wind construction, 3-D computer-assisted drafting and design, robotics, auto engineering, auto tech. But probably the best example of a partnership with the federal government that benefitted this entire area was the successful competition for a Department of Labor grant for \$1.7 million to establish a welding center of expertise on this campus.

Five years ago we were charged with turning out 240 certified welders. Well, when the program concluded—by the way, we haven't concluded. We are still teaching welding. But when the grant program ended, we had actually certified 260 welders, and as we move on we will continue to certify more because there are 100 jobs open yet today in welding within this driving distance.

Similarly, 10 years ago there was a need for an Instructional Center for Business Training and Performing Arts. That was 10 years ago. And how did we do that? With public/private dollars, a capital campaign that created a \$12 million La-Z-Boy Center, as you may have seen when you came in.

Still, we have a shortage of welders. We still have the shortage of welders. We have a shortage of nuclear techs, as you heard from a witness previously, Ms. Dowler, by the way who is not only on our foundation at the college but is one of our experts. We have 200 professionals from the communities that belong to our advisory committees. They are the ones that meet regularly on campus and tell us what kind of curriculum that we need to have. We could not operate without them.

Our other partners, some of whom will be represented here in the witnesses, we have private colleges or private college partners on our campus producing 4-year degrees for our students who can live here in Monroe County and earn a 4-year degree, Siena Heights, and with that opportunity or that partnership Siena Heights not only has experts on campus but they also allow the community college students to continue in the third year of that program at our community college courses.

The Eastern Michigan University is on our campus. They are providing a BSN in nursing. Nursing is one of our strongest programs. We have a number of developments in that regard, but I needed to say that it was EMU that came to this campus and said that they would be able to deliver the 4-year degree in nursing.

I am going to conclude my testimony, Chairwoman Foxx, but I wanted to mention before I conclude that the students that you saw when you came in this morning, that is another wonderful program, a federal program, the Upward Bound program, part of a trio of programs. We were renewed, and those of you in Congress know the battle that went on for the renewal of that program. We were renewed for not only another five years at the high school in this community, but we were able to add a second high school. These are students who were at risk of never going to college. They are first-generation students, and they come to this college and participate in our activities in tutoring as a freshman in high school.

So thank you for the time, and I will leave a copy of more details in my script. Thank you.

[The statement of Mr. Nixon follows:]

**Prepared Statement of David E. Nixon, Ed.D., President,  
Monroe County Community College**

Good morning Chairwoman Foxx, and members of the Subcommittee: I am David E. Nixon. I am the president of Monroe County Community College, and I would first like to welcome you to the campus in Monroe County, Michigan (Pop >200,000); the home of La-Z-Boy Furniture and Monroe Shock Absorbers. Manufacturing is in our DNA.

- The college is 50 years old and still affordable \* \* \* with one of the lowest tuition rates in the region.

- Monroe County Community College is a nationally accredited institution of Higher Education with Record growth in enrollment until last year when enrollment declined 5-to-8% across the state.

- Funding challenges existed even with record enrollment which produces less than 30% of our annual budget. State appropriations are less than the tuition (12%)—challenged by dwindling state funding. Largest revenue stream for MCCC is a local tax for this district (originally 60% reduced in the Recession to less than 50%)

Regardless the faculty/staff and Trustees engaged in public/private partnerships to provide quality learning opportunities through the use of a variety of strategies.

- 9,000 students a year (4500 students in credit programs) and the remaining in certificate training programs associated with workforce development. The average age of our students is 25 which means the larger group of students is over age 21. A third of students range in age from 21 to 30. Others range up to age 50, but it is not uncommon for graduates at age 60.

- More than 70% students work outside the college and attend school part time. Only 36% attend classes' full time.

- Half of them qualify for some kind of financial aid (federal, state, and institutional funds) approximately 37% of MCCC students receive Pell Grants. Of the entire student population 43% of our students receive some type of Title IV financial aid (Pell, Stafford Loans, and Work Study)

HOW TO POWER THE 21st CENTURY WORKFORCE? Partnerships \* \* \* Public/private dollars \* \* \* with the likes of a \$17 million dollar Career Technology Center producing high skilled workers for high skilled jobs. Opening this fall, state-of-the-art labs for nuclear tech, Solar, Wind, Construction, 3-D computer assisted drafting and design, computerized CNC operation, metrology (non-destruct-testing), Robotics, auto engineering and auto technicians, in addition to the celebrated Welding Center for Expertise all under one roof—serving as a proud example of public/private partnerships. The local capital campaign that has already resulted in an 86% commitment which includes the state, the college, and private donations from small and large businesses. Opens in August.

Similarly, 10 years ago, a similar Public/Private collaboration resulted in the construction of a \$12 million Instruction Center for Business Training and Performing arts—again a mix of public/private dollars with the largest single gift of \$2 million from La-Z-Boy Inc. for the naming rights. The state's investment leverages private investors. The community wins.

Why all of this activity? It is still all about jobs. And it's about jobs that keep students here in the county to make their homes and raise families.

It's well-known that there is a worker shortage in Michigan, especially a shortage of those who possess high skills for high paid jobs—documented by the Workforce Intelligence Network (WIN)—A consortium of eight community colleges in south-east Michigan in a collaboration with seven Michigan Works Agencies.

A shortage of welders MCCC COMPETED FOR a \$1.7 million Department of Labor grant for training/certifying 240 welders over a five-year period. At the end of the five year, 260 welders had been certified and the current need is for 100 more. The grant funded scholarships directly to MCCC without a cumbersome pass-through funding system as with other workforce training funds. The Welding student tuition was funded direct from the DOL grant managed by the college allowing certificate short term certificate training. There are still 100 job openings for high skilled welders.

A shortage of Nuclear Techs led to the creation of a nuclear tech program to serve the needs of DTE Energy, the largest employer in the county operates one nuclear plant \* \* \* in the application for an additional nuclear plant right next to the current plant. MCCC responded with a Nuclear Tech training program in 5 YRS ago graduating more than 50 technicians completing since then.

Where do we get our expert advice?

ADVISORY COMMITTEES \* \* \* More than 200 community members and “content experts” working professionals from the jobs-community meet every semester or more with faculty leadership. Those “content experts” help us keep those programs in “state-of-the-art” delivery mode AND to solicit partnerships for student scholarships or technology upgrades.

Meanwhile four-year degree “partnerships” on campus offer baccalaureate degree opportunities in nursing, business, accounting, and early childhood education.

- Sienna Heights University (four year private) delivers classes on our campus—allows MCCC students to take Sienna Heights classes on campus at MCCC's lower tuition rates.

- Eastern Michigan University offers a Bachelor of Science in Nursing on campus—attracting graduates from MCCC's high quality nursing program.

- The most unique public/private partnership developed when MCCC and a local bank led the development of an outreach project to offer GED preparation for hundreds of county residents who are barred from higher education opportunities at the college for lack of a high school diploma. The bank provided the facilities and along with eight other community partners has managed to keep the facility open.

In conclusion? Partnerships are driving “higher education opportunities” at Monroe County Community College with the “focus” on student outcomes. What improvements could be made?—a more direct, less bureaucratized financial aid pathway to students like DOL Welding Grant.

What's needed? \* \* \* policies that give institutions more flexibility counseling and safeguards to ensure students understand their loan obligations, are academically prepared, and are able to keep loan borrowing in check. And to prevent “over borrowing.” We are prohibited from requiring additional loan counseling for students who appear to be over-borrowing or who are most at risk of defaulting.

I appreciate this opportunity to speak before members of Chairwoman Fox' Subcommittee on behalf of students whose lives can be enriched by gaining the high skills for high pay jobs.

As a result, as Jim Clifton points out in *The Coming Jobs War* (2011), it's all about “making stuff” and the more we make/manufacture, the stronger the country through gross domestic product. MCCC's goal is to provide opportunities for our students to learn the skills needed for the high paying jobs.

Thank you for allowing me the time on behalf of Monroe County Community College.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Pell grant funding is essential for qualified students—but better control can be maintained if community colleges are allowed to participating in the development of new guidelines. (more detailed suggested at the end of this report).

There are numerous NON CREDIT TYPE WORK RELEATED certificate type accelerated programs, typically a few weeks in length (the shorter than one-or-two

year programs) the kind that lead to some of the high paid jobs “sooner than later.” Many do not qualify for workforce programs. One of them was a nine-week certificate program for Ophthalmic Assistants (entry level for Ophthalmologists). Students attended full time with few scholarships. More than 50 students have been placed.

The shortage of high skilled machinists in Michigan is the worst in 10 years.

The biggest bang for the buck is the funding directed to the students like the Welding Grant or GI Bill, rather than funding distribution agencies.

A barrier for many students are requirements that they need to attend school full time to get the tuition assistance as was the case in the recent Michigan Works administered program called No Worker Left Behind—or those Veterans on the GI Bill. Some have been denied because the need for earning a living while going to school prevents them from leaving current jobs \* \* \* even though they may be low paid-low skill jobs. Our goal is to help them gain higher skills for higher pay.

Based on our experience here at Monroe County Community College and visiting with our enrollment managers who process those students—my recommendation to the Subcommittee in re-writing Higher Education Act legislation is find ways to award students funding that accommodates their class schedule rather than tuition tied to a “semester” schedule.

Many need to work part time to support their family while enrolled in the Career Programs. The GI VRAP program requires full-time attendance for 10 month which challenges students who need to work while attending school.

The demands for high skills prompted a partnership with local high schools—reaching down into the high schools—bringing the high school students to campus for combined college credit and high school credit—supported by tax dollars already committed by the state for their high school education. (known as dual enrollment) or (early college). The talent for tomorrow—is in high school today.

#### MORE ON PELL GRANT CONTROLS

More detailed suggestions about Pell Control come from MCCC’s Director of Financial Aid Valerie Culler who provided the following that the subcommittee members may wish to consider.

The primary control that financial aid administrators have been advocating for years for the federal government to put into place is a national tracking system for Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP). One of the requirements for financial aid offices in administering Title IV funds is the monitoring of students’ academic progress. All schools are required to monitor the same standards for Title IV aid:

- Students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0
- Students must complete 67% of their overall attempted credit hours
- Students will lose Title IV aid eligibility once they have attempted more than 150% of the credits required to complete their program of study

All of these SAP standards are in place to make sure that students who are receiving Title IV aid are on pace to complete a degree program timely. While all schools are required to monitor the same standards, the determination of a student’s eligibility for Title IV aid is based only on the student’s SAP status at the school the student is currently attending. The student’s SAP status at a school the student previously attended is not a factor. What happens now is that when a student is denied Title IV aid at one community college due to failing to meet SAP standards, the student can transfer to another community college and begin with a “clean slate” and receive federal aid again. For example, if a student has failed classes at the University of Toledo and Owens Community College and no longer qualifies to receive Title IV aid at those schools, I cannot deny that student Title IV aid at MCCC based on his/her SAP status at UT or OCC. This allows students to “swirl” from community college to community college and continue to receive Title IV aid, even when the student has not demonstrated academic progress at any of the schools.

The U.S. Department of Education already has systems in place that track students’ entire history of Title IV aid usage. While there would be some programming involved in creating a national tracking system for Satisfactory Academic Progress, I’m sure much of the functionality already exists, and because schools are already held to monitoring the same standards for SAP for Title IV eligibility, the implementation of a national tracking system would not be that much of an administrative burden on financial aid offices.

While the U.S. Department of Education has taken a step for 2013/14 by flagging students who have receive Pell Grant funds at three or more institutions within the past two or three years, this practice still gives students an opportunity to “jump” between multiple schools and receive a significant amount of Title IV aid before they are caught. A national tracking system for SAP would allow us to catch these

students much earlier and hence lessen the abuse of Title IV aid. It is also important to keep in mind that for students who do not meet SAP standards at a school, the regulations do allow the students to appeal to the Financial Aid Office and document that the student did not meet SAP standards due to extenuating circumstances, which have since been resolved, so there is already a process within the SAP monitoring that gives students who legitimately had serious hardships during a semester a second chance.

Other controls that could reduce waste/fraud:

1. Give financial aid offices more authority to limit loan borrowing. We see students who transfer to MCCC and have already borrowed large amounts of loans at other schools, and we have no authority to deny them their maximum loan eligibility for the term, even when they have a Pell Grant that pays their costs in full.

2. The Department of Education needs to give better guidance on whether or not schools are allowed to divide Title IV aid payments up in multiple disbursements. Right now we get a mixed message from the Department of Ed. We've been told that it is okay to do this for students in distance education classes, but at the same time schools are still held to the requirement of giving students access to their Title IV refunds early in the semester, which paying out aid in multiple disbursement could prohibit. Hence, financial aid administrators are reluctant to move to a practice of multiple disbursements, because of concerns about remaining in compliance with the rules about giving students access to their funds timely.

3. Put more funding into the Work Study program. It is critical to fund the Pell Grant program, but I think Federal Work Study is a great source of self-help financial aid that is often overlooked. Students earn this aid and develop skills that give them an edge in the job market when they leave school.

With my written testimony, I am attaching documents that further explain the Workforce Intelligence Network (WIN).

"Employers say talent is their number one need to grow or expand their businesses," said Lisa Katz, WIN Executive Director, "as such, we know that the key to economic develop is talent development, including fostering creativity and education of Michigan's youth."

A testament to that enthusiasm and commitment is evidenced by the construction currently underway on campus for a new Career Technology Center that will transform Monroe County's workforce through hands-on instruction and access to cutting-edge equipment and technology.

But "they must be good jobs," says Jobs Wars author Jim Clifton, CEO of the prominent Gallup polling giant \* \* \* who suggests "good" jobs are being the new currency for world leaders. And he challenges us in higher education that "students want education that results in GOOD jobs" and that is evident right here in Michigan as automakers and others are tooling-up for the new economy—with high energy workplaces, requiring high skilled hi paid workers.

WIN has learned that the job demand in the areas of information technology, advanced manufacturing and healthcare, as evidence by the number of employer job postings, has been substantial to the point where employers are significantly challenged in filling positions. Monroe County Community College is addressing the skills shortage in a number of ways. For Monroe County Community College, the advantage of partnering with the Workforce Intelligence Network is having access to sophisticated data gathering research software that looks at the occupational demand and the skills, educational credentials, and experience needed to work in those occupations. While much of our conversation has been focused on manufacturing, the current list of high-demand jobs include radio mechanics, vet techs, diagnostic stenographers, physical therapists, med equipment repairs, cardiovascular techs, and environmental techs. But the truth remains there is an extreme machinist shortage—the most extreme in ten years in southeast Michigan.

Chairwoman FOXX. Thank you, Dr. Nixon. I am a former Upward Bound Special Services director.

Mr. NIXON. Good for you.

Chairwoman FOXX. So I am very familiar with the program.

I recognize now Ms. Cheri Betz for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF CHERI BETZ, SOUTHEAST REGIONAL DIRECTOR, COLLEGE FOR PROFESSIONAL STUDIES, SIENA HEIGHTS UNIVERSITY**

Ms. BETZ. Good morning and greetings to Chairwoman Foxx and Congressman Walberg, fellow panelists and distinguished guests. Thank you. My name is Cheri Betz, and I am the Southeast Regional Director for Siena Heights University's College for Professional Studies, with managing responsibilities for the Monroe and Southfield campuses.

Our President, Sister Peg Albert, sends her greetings and extends her apologies for not being able to join us today. She did have plans to be here to discuss this important topic, but because of an urgent matter she was unable to do so.

First, I would like to provide a brief background on Siena Heights University. We are a Catholic, liberal arts university offering associate's, bachelor's, master's and specialist's degrees. Founded in 1919 by the Adrian Dominican Sisters congregation, our main campus is located in Adrian, Michigan, with degree completion programs in Battle Creek, Benton Harbor, Jackson, Lansing, Monroe, and Southfield, as well as totally online. Siena Heights enrolls approximately 2,400 undergraduate students and 350 graduate students across all campuses.

Siena has long had a strong relationship with both employers and educational partners. In fact, Siena took a pioneering role in providing opportunities for adult working students by offering evening and weekend classes by opening degree completion centers throughout Michigan beginning in 1975. One of these sites is located at Monroe County Community College, where we have had a presence since 1990. We continue to enjoy a productive and effective partnership with President Nixon and his team.

One of our institutional goals is to identify the personnel needs of local and regional communities and prepare the professionals needed in these areas. However, the key is not only identifying these needs but responding to those needs as well. In the Monroe community, a recent example of this includes an RN to BSN degree completion program we implemented at Mercy Memorial Hospital. The cohort was offered through Mercy Memorial after Siena was approached by hospital administration regarding an onsite degree completion option for their employees.

This is the kind of collaborative approach that Siena takes as much as possible. In fact, we consider ourselves to be an enabling institution that seeks to develop cooperative arrangements with a wide variety of individuals and institutions in the interest of creating effective learning outcomes and environments.

Siena also regularly updates articulation agreements with area community colleges and proprietary trade schools. These agreements provide students with an understanding that their earned degree or college credit will be accepted by Siena if they meet the standards outlined in the formal document. Siena takes it a step further and we have created user-friendly transfer guides that are based off of these formal articulation agreements that students can refer to when selecting courses to take at the community college to transfer into Siena. Examples of these transfer guides are included in the formal testimony.

Many of our students transfer in up to three years of college credit from the community college, allowing them to complete their bachelor's degree with one additional year of college course work at Siena. By accepting such a high number of credits, Siena is saving students thousands of dollars and increasing the number of courses students can take right there at the community college.

Siena's unique Bachelor of Applied Science degree allows students without traditional transfer options for degree completion an opportunity to earn a bachelor's degree without repeating course work within their major. The Bachelor of Applied Science degree works on the inverted major concept, acknowledging the work the student has completed within their Associate of Applied Science degree. Community colleges are the leaders in offering AAS degrees in technical and occupational areas. Siena has helped students in these degree fields obtain a relevant degree that will help them advance in their chosen careers. In fact, we have a number of student testimonials that are also included in the testimony.

Siena is also actively engaged in developing relationships with employers and key constituent groups on our Adrian campus. Our Career Services Office led to the development of Operation SERVE, which is a job opportunity fair targeted to help job seeking community members, including military veterans. This annual one-day fair completed its third year and had more than 70 employers and service providers attend.

Working with the local South Central Michigan Works agency, there were several community "boot camps" leading up to the event that addressed everything from how to dress appropriately for an interview to resume creation. A similar fair was conducted at the Monroe County Community College campus based off Siena's concept. Career Services also participates and brings our students to job fairs in Livonia, Lansing, and even Toledo, Ohio.

Another example is the development of a services-learning philosophy by many of our academic programs. This approach, which allows our students to integrate with community businesses and organizations, is instrumental to their career development. In the area of internships, Siena can claim that more than 80 percent of our Adrian campus undergraduate students who complete internships end up employed at the place where they completed that internship. Because we have federal programs such as McNair, Student Support Services and Upward Bound on our campus, Siena plays a pivotal role in developing first-generation and low-income students for not only the workforce but also society at large. In fact, Siena has adopted the Soft Skills Initiative the State of Michigan developed several years ago after surveying more than 1,500 state employers and asking what they were looking for in new hires. These soft skills of developing self-managing behaviors align exactly with the university's learning objectives.

Siena also offers federal monies, utilizes federal monies from the Workforce Investment Act, as well as On-the-Job Training funding from Michigan Works. We also take advantage of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit.

Finally, Siena is actively involved in addressing the needs of students with disabilities by making direct referrals to the State of Michigan's Rehabilitation Services Agency. These federal dollars,

along with additional federal funding from such areas as Pell Grants, the GI Bill and work-study, are appreciated and greatly assist us in bringing higher education to underserved student populations. An important fact to note is that in the fall 2011 semester, 43 percent of our enrolled students received Pell Grant assistance.

Siena's mission is to assist people to become more competent, purposeful, and ethical through a teaching and learning environment which respects the dignity of all, and that is really what drives us as an institution, and we believe in being true to that mission. We best prepare our students to become successful not only in their careers but as productive society members.

Again, thank you for the honor of testifying before you today.

[The statement of Ms. Betz follows:]

**Prepared Statement of Sister Peg Albert, President, Siena Heights University [Presented by Cheri Betz, Southeast Regional Director, College for Professional Studies, Siena Heights University]**

Greetings to Chairwoman Foxx, Congressman Walberg, fellow panelists and distinguished guests. First, we would like to thank the organizers of this field hearing for the opportunity to participate in this panel discussion. We are privileged to have been invited to this hearing and share our experiences and testimony with you.

First, let me provide a brief background of Siena Heights University. We are a Catholic, liberal arts university offering associate's, bachelor's, master's and specialist's degrees. Founded in 1919 by the Adrian Dominican Sisters congregation, our main campus is located in Adrian, Michigan, with degree completion programs in Battle Creek, Benton Harbor, Jackson, Lansing, Monroe, and Southfield as well as Totally Online. Siena Heights enrolls approximately 2,400 undergraduate students and 350 graduate students across all campuses.

Siena Heights has long had a strong relationship with both employers and educational partners. In fact, Siena Heights took a pioneering role in providing opportunities for adult, working students by offering evening and weekend classes and opening degree completion centers throughout Michigan beginning in 1975. One of these sites is located at Monroe County Community College, where we have had a presence since 1990. We continue to enjoy a productive and effective partnership with President Nixon and his team at MCCC.

One of our institutional goals is to identify the personnel needs of local and regional communities and prepare the professionals and paraprofessionals needed in these areas. However, the key is not only identifying needs, but responding to those needs as well. In the Monroe community, a recent example of this includes a RN to BSN degree completion program we implemented at Mercy Memorial Hospital. The cohort was offered through Mercy Memorial after SHU was approached by hospital administration regarding an on-site degree completion option for their employees. This is the kind of collaborative approach that Siena Heights takes as much as possible. In fact, we consider ourselves an "enabling" institution that seeks to develop cooperative arrangements with a wide variety of individuals and institutions in the interest of creating effective learning outcomes and environments.

Siena Heights also has regularly updated Articulation Agreements with area community colleges and trade schools. These agreements provide students with an understanding that their earned degree/credit will be accepted by SHU if they meet the standards outlined in the formal document. Siena has created user-friendly transfer guides based off these articulation agreements that students can refer to when selecting courses to take at the community college and transfer to Siena. Examples of these transfer guides are included in the written portion of this testimony. Many of our transfer students are able to transfer in three years of college credit from the community college allowing them to complete their bachelor's degree with one additional year of college course work at Siena. By accepting such a high number of transfer credits Siena is saving students thousands of dollars and increasing the number of courses students take at the community college by encouraging the student to return to the community college to complete more course work. SHU's unique Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degree allows students without traditional transfer options for degree completion an opportunity to earn a bachelor's degree without repeating courses within their major. The BAS degree works on the inverted major concept, acknowledging the work the student has already completed within their Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree. Community colleges are the

leaders in offering AAS degrees in technical and occupational areas. SHU has helped students in these degree fields obtain a relevant degree that will help them advance in their chosen careers. In fact, we have a number of video student testimonials that attest to that fact. Links to their video testimony can be found in the written evidence we provided to the hearing committee.

Siena Heights is also active and engaged in developing relationships with employers and key constituent groups on our Adrian campus. Our Career Services office led to the development of Operation: SERVE, a job opportunity fair targeted to help job-seeking community members, including military veterans. This annual one-day fair completed its third year and had more than 70 employers and service providers attend. Working with the local South Central Michigan WORKS agency, there were several community “boot camps” leading up to the event that addressed everything from how to dress appropriately for an interview to resume creation. A similar fair was created at the Monroe County Community College campus based on SHU’s successful concept. Career Services also participates and brings our students to job fairs in Livonia and Lansing in Michigan, and Toledo, Ohio.

Another example we would like to cite is the development of a service-learning philosophy by many of our academic programs. This approach, which allows our students to integrate with community businesses and organizations, is instrumental to their career development. In the area of internships, Siena Heights can claim that more than 80 percent of our Adrian campus undergraduate students who complete internships end up employed by the place where they had their internship.

Because we have federal programs such as McNair, Student Support Services and Upward Bound on our campus, Siena Heights plays a pivotal role in developing first-generation and low-income students for not only the workforce, but also for society at-large. In fact, Siena Heights has adopted the “Soft Skills” initiative the state of Michigan developed several years ago after surveying more than 1,500 state employers what they were looking for in new hires. These “Soft Skills” of developing self-managing behaviors align exactly with the University’s learning objectives. Siena Heights also utilizes federal monies from the Workforce Investment Act as well as On-the-Job Training funding from Michigan Works! We also take advantage of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit. Finally, Siena Heights is actively involved in addressing the needs of students with disabilities by making direct referrals to the state of Michigan’s Rehabilitation Services Agency. These federal dollars, along with additional federal funding from such areas as Pell Grants, the GI Bill and work-study are appreciated and greatly assist us in bringing higher education to underserved student populations. An important fact to note is that in the fall 2011 semester, 43 percent of our enrolled students received Pell Grant assistance.

Siena Heights’ mission to assist people to become more competent, purposeful, and ethical through a teaching and learning environment which respects the dignity of all is what drives us as an institution. We believe in being true to our mission. We best prepare our students to become successful not only in their careers, but also as productive members of society.

Again, thank you for the honor of testifying before you today.

#### *Additional SHU Points of Pride*

- Transfer Friendly—students can transfer in up to 90 semester hours of credit towards the 120 hours needed for the bachelor’s degree. This saves the student money by allowing them to transfer in more credit than many other colleges and universities would allow. Our academic advisors regularly advise students to return to the community college to obtain additional credits at a lower cost before transferring to SHU.

- Regularly updated Articulation Agreements with area community colleges and trade schools provide students with an understanding that their degree/credit will be accepted by Siena if they meet the standards outlined in the agreement.

- Siena has a long history of serving employers directly at their locations. Besides the Mercy Memorial Hospital example, SHU has had a similar cohort program at the Cook Energy Center in Bridgman, Mich., and a number of cohorts who have completed their master’s degree in Health Care Leadership onsite at the St. John Hospital System in several locations in southeastern Michigan.

- Our College for Professional Studies academic advisors are regularly invited to actively participate in a number of community college advisory committees. Some regional examples include: Monroe County Community College Business Management Advisory Board, Monroe County Community College Criminal Justice Advisory Committee, Henry Ford Community College Culinary Arts Advisory Committee and the Henry Ford Community College Energy Technology Advisory Committee. Siena’s participation in these advisory committee meetings benefits both institutions by increasing awareness of each other’s programs and increasing communication

about issues students may face within these industries so that appropriate changes can be made to the various programs.

- Siena Heights is one of 14 institutions that will participate in a conference June 30, 2013, hosted by the Michigan Colleges Foundation that will discuss the role of higher education in workforce development.

- SHU regularly performs program reviews, watches for industry trends, and listens to the community to ensure the majors offered are relevant to the workforce needs. Some examples of our response to these trends include:

- SHU's Community Services program is a primary example of responding to industry trends with the addition of the Family Systems concentration that addresses the need of our Community Services graduates qualifying for certain positions within the State of Michigan.

- SHU's Graduate College will offer a Master of Arts degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling, responding to the industry's expected need/standards in this important field. The decision to change the program from a 48-hour Community Counseling degree to a 60-hour Clinical Mental Health Counseling degree was a result of an immersed education review of the CACREP standards (both 2009 and proposed 2016), licensure laws in contiguous states (increasing portability of the degree to other states), the overall status of licensure across the states and in discussion with policy makers in Lansing.

- In response to the declining demand for school counselors within the state of Michigan, the Graduate College placed a moratorium on its MA in School Counseling degree in 2012. This decision was made because Siena is committed to offering programs with a positive career outlook.

- The Homeland Security and Emergency Management Advisory Committee has had an impact on the curriculum of that master's degree program. The Homeland Security and Emergency Management program was developed through a collaboration with the Center for Homeland Defense and Security and the Naval Postgraduate School.

- SHU's Biology program currently has a 90 percent acceptance rate to medical schools. Also, the University recently signed an early acceptance agreement with the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine for medical, dental and pharmacy.

- SHU recently completed a Healthcare Feasibility Study and discussed what programs/majors are being considered to help address some of the growing needs within that industry.

- In 2004 Siena began offering a totally online bachelor degree program. Since its inception the Distance Learning Program has served students in 34 states. Currently, we offer online courses to students residing in 30 states. Although we are in compliance in these states, additional federal regulations do/might put a restraint on a small institution like Siena Heights in its ability to provide quality educational programming. For instance, online enrollment growth at Siena has steadily increased with a retention rate of approximately 94 percent.

- SHU's Graduate College now offers a totally online Master of Arts degree in Leadership, increasing opportunities for advanced degrees for those unable to attend campus courses.

- Approximately 75-80 percent of all students enrolled at a College for Professional Studies degree completion center and just over 90 percent of all students enrolled in the Distance Learning Programs complete their program and graduate.

- In a 2009 Eduventures(c) study, 95 percent of all Bachelor of Applied Science graduates were satisfied with their degree completion program, with many citing career advancement opportunities.

- Operation: SERVE job opportunity fair completed its third year with more than 70 employers and service providers attending to help community members find jobs.

- Siena Heights was named a "Military Friendly" institution for the fourth consecutive year by GI Jobs Magazine. To keep up our good standing in this area, we recently hired a VA administrator to assist our registrar with these administrative and reporting duties. Our registrar, who previously handled all duties related to the VA, said increased regulation and reporting to the VA has increased "four-fold" in the past two years alone. Her suggestion to lighten that burden would be to develop a more consistent and uniform system for payment, reporting and communicating the changes/updates of these multiple veterans programs.

#### SIENA STUDENT SUCCESS STORIES

##### 1. Richard Pazdar:

<http://www.sienaheights.edu/MeetSienaDetails.aspx?NewsArticleID=6338&NewsCategoryID=3&CampusID=1>

**2. Tayleitha Pythowani:**

*<http://www.sienaheights.edu/MeetSienaDetails.aspx?NewsArticleID=6351&NewsCategoryID=3&CampusID=1>*

**3. Leha and Keith Miller:**

*<http://www.sienaheights.edu/MeetSienaDetails.aspx?NewsArticleID=6344&NewsCategoryID=3&CampusID=1>*

**4. Elizabeth McKay:**

*<http://www.sienaheights.edu/MeetSienaDetails.aspx?NewsArticleID=6352&NewsCategoryID=3&CampusID=1>*

**5. Marc Pierce:**

*<http://www.sienaheights.edu/MeetSienaDetails.aspx?NewsArticleID=6337&NewsCategoryID=3&CampusID=1>*

**6. Tanya Chappell:**

*<http://www.sienaheights.edu/MeetSienaDetails.aspx?NewsArticleID=6341&NewsCategoryID=3&CampusID=1>*

**7. Kristi Biundo:**

*<http://www.sienaheights.edu/MeetSienaDetails.aspx?NewsArticleID=6325&NewsCategoryID=3&CampusID=1>*

**8. Alison Myers:**

*<http://www.sienaheights.edu/MeetSienaDetails.aspx?NewsArticleID=6348&NewsCategoryID=3&CampusID=1>*

**9. Mary Stephens:**

*<http://www.sienaheights.edu/MeetSienaDetails.aspx?NewsArticleID=6331&NewsCategoryID=3&CampusID=1>*



Think **HIGHER**  
 SIENA HEIGHTS UNIVERSITY  
 at Monroe County Community College



#### Open New Doors

The Bachelor of Business Administration Degree with a major in Accounting is designed for people planning to work in the field of accounting for either a public or private firm. The Accounting major at Siena Heights University meets the current requirements for those planning to take the Certified Public Accountant Examination or the Certified Management Accountant Examination.

#### Curriculum Overview (see more details on back)

30 semester hours from Siena Heights University that includes:

- 21 semester hours in accounting and business administration
- 9 semester hours of general education courses including:
  - LAS 301 The Adult Learner
  - LAS 401 General Education Senior Seminar
  - An approved Philosophy or Religious Studies course

21 semester hours of Division Core and Cognate courses...which can be transferred in from MCCC and other accredited institutions.

#### Program Distinctions

- Transfer friendly policies and services; Siena Heights allows up to 90 semester hours of transfer credit toward its 120 semester hour Bachelor's Degree requirement.
- Credit for CLEP tests and other "college equivalent" prior learning, including workplace training and hospital-based programs.
- Evening, weekend and online courses offered to meet the needs of working adults throughout the Monroe area.
- Personalized advising and outstanding faculty with real world experience.
- A university that recognizes the dignity of each student...you are treated as an individual and not a student number.

### Call Today for More Information!

734.384.4133

[www.sienaheights.edu/mccc](http://www.sienaheights.edu/mccc)

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Thirty (30) hours of course work from Siena Heights University at 300/400 level including:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 21 semester hours of course work in Accounting and Business Administration as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ACC 441 Auditing</li> <li>• FIN 340 Managerial Finance</li> <li>• ACC 460 Advanced Accounting</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Two Approved Electives from the following list: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ACC 376 Accounting Information Systems</li> <li>• ACC 463 Financial Statement Analysis or another approved accounting elective</li> </ul> </li> <li>• One Management Validator from the following list: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MGT 357 Production and Operations Mgt.</li> <li>• MGT 360 Human Resource Management</li> <li>• MGT 361 Organizational Behavior</li> <li>• MGT 440 Small Business Management</li> </ul> </li> <li>• One Marketing Validator from the following list: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MKT 350 Consumer Behavior</li> <li>• MKT 351 Advertising and Promotion</li> <li>• MKT 436 Marketing Research</li> <li>• MKT 460 Marketing Management</li> <li>• MKT 470 Global Marketing</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. LAS 301 The Adult Learner</li> <li>3. LAS 401 Senior Seminar</li> <li>4. One Philosophy or Religious Studies Course</li> <li>5. Proven proficiency in Math and Writing</li> </ol> | <p><b>Division Core and Cognate course requirements can be taken with Monroe County Community College. Courses are listed in the MCCC course numbers.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Business and Management Requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BMGT 201 Principles of Management</li> <li>• MCOM 201 Principles of Marketing</li> <li>• ENGL 102 or 155 Business Communications or Technical Writing</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Cognate Requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ACCTG 151 Principles of Accounting I</li> <li>• ACCTG 152 Principles of Accounting II</li> <li>• CIS 130 Principles of Computerized Information Systems</li> <li>• ECON 251 Principles of Economics I</li> <li>• ECON 252 Principles of Economics II</li> <li>• BSLW 251 Business Law or BAM 340 Legal Environment of Business (SHU)</li> <li>• MATH 162 Descriptive Statistics</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Accounting Requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ACCTG 251 Intermediate Accounting I</li> <li>• ACCTG 254 Intermediate Accounting II</li> <li>• ACCTG 252 Cost Accounting</li> <li>• ACCTG 255 Intro to Taxation</li> </ul> </li> </ol> |
|--|--|

**Other Requirements:**

1. All students must submit an Application for Admission and be accepted into the program.
2. Students must maintain a 2.0 GPA in all course work and a 2.25 GPA in the core program requirements and all accounting elective coursework.
3. Students undertaking double or contract majors or minors must maintain a 2.25 GPA overall and a 2.5 GPA in the major or minor concentrations.
4. Accounting students transferring credit for MGT 302, Management Principles and Cases, or MKT 310 Marketing Principles and Cases must complete a minimum of one additional upper level course in Management and Marketing. These courses are known as *validators*. Not all elective courses qualify as *validators*. See your advisor for details.
5. All major requirements must be met through classroom experience. Independent study, co-op, CLEP or prior learning experience credit do not fulfill the requirements of the major and will be applied toward overall degree requirements.



## Earn Your Bachelor of Applied Science Degree in Radiography with Siena Heights University

### 3 + 1 = Bachelor of Applied Science Degree

Graduates of Henry Ford Community College's program can easily transition their associate degree studies into Siena Heights University's Bachelor of Applied Science degree program. By combining the completed 90 credit hour HFCC program and Siena Heights University's required 30 credit hour program, a student can earn a Bachelor of Applied Science degree (assuming all liberal arts requirements are met). The Siena Heights University program uses the completed HFCC associate degree major as the BAS major. See the other side for more details.



### WHY Siena?

- The HFCC program prepares students to go immediately into their chosen field.
- Siena Heights University's flexible evening, weekend, blended online and totally online classes enable working professionals to work full-time and complete their bachelor's degree at the same time.
- The HFCC/Siena Heights University partnership makes earning a bachelor's degree affordable, as students are able to complete 90 semester hours at the lower community college rate.
- Siena Heights University is located just 15 minutes north of Henry Ford Community College in Southfield, on 10 Mile near Evergreen.

[www.sienaheights.edu/mdp](http://www.sienaheights.edu/mdp)

## Advising Overview for the HFCC/SHU Radiography BAS Partnership

| <br>Henry Ford Community College                          |             |
|--|-------------|
| <b>Prerequisite Courses</b>  |             |
| BIO 233 Anatomy & Physiology   | 4           |
| AH 100 Medical Terminology   | 4           |
| <b>SUBTOTAL</b>  | <b>8</b>    |
| <b>Radiography Requirements</b>  |             |
| <b>Required Core Courses</b>   |             |
| RAD 101 Introduction to Radiography  | 1           |
| RAD 108 Patient Care Techniques  | 3           |
| RAD 109 Clinical Education I   | 3           |
| RAD 111 Principles of Radiation Protection   | 2           |
| RAD 118 Radiographic Positioning I   | 3           |
| RAD 158 Radiographic Positioning II  | 3           |
| RAD 161 Imaging Equipment  | 1           |
| RAD 166 Radiographic Film Processing   | 2           |
| RAD 171 Principles of Exposure and Film Evaluation   | 3           |
| RAD 188 Radiographic Positioning III   | 2.5         |
| RAD 190 Clinical Education II  | 3           |
| RAD 194 Clinical Education III   | 1           |
| RAD 197 Clinical Education IV  | 3           |
| RAD 206 Pathology/Film Evaluation  | 2           |
| RAD 209 Clinical Education V   | 3           |
| RAD 212 Introduction to Quality Assurance  | 1           |
| RAD 227 Radiographic Positioning IV  | 3           |
| RAD 257 Radiographic Positioning V   | 2           |
| RAD 267 Radiation Physics  | 4           |
| RAD 274 Radiation Biology  | 2           |
| RAD 286 Registry Review  | 2           |
| RAD 290 Clinical Education VI  | 3           |
| RAD 294 Clinical Education VII   | 3           |
| RAD 298 Clinical Education VIII  | 1           |
| <b>SUBTOTAL</b>  | <b>56.5</b> |
| <b>REQUIRED SUPPORT COURSES</b>  |             |
| BIO 234 Anatomy and Physiology II  | 4           |
| HCS 106 Introduction to Phlebotomy   | 1           |
| HCS 131 Computers in Health Care   | 3           |
| PHYS 133 Principles of Physics   | 4           |
| POLS 131 Introduction to American Government and Political Science OR  |             |
| SSC 131 A Survey of the Social Sciences  | 3           |
| <b>SUBTOTAL</b>  | <b>15</b>   |
| <b>GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES</b>   |             |
| ENG 131 Composition  | 3           |
| ENG 132 Composition II   | 3           |
| <b>SUBTOTAL</b>  | <b>6</b>    |
| <b>ADDITIONAL ELECTIVE COURSES</b>   |             |
| SHU accepts up to 90 credit hours towards their 120 hour program. To select additional elective courses contact an academic advisor at SHU | 12.5        |
| <b>SUBTOTAL</b>  | <b>12.5</b> |
| <b>TOTAL PREREQUISITE COURSES</b>  | <b>8</b>    |
| <b>TOTAL RADIOGRAPHY COURSES</b>   | <b>56.5</b> |
| <b>TOTAL SUPPORT COURSES</b>   | <b>15</b>   |
| <b>TOTAL GENERAL EDUCATION</b>   | <b>6</b>    |
| <b>TOTAL ADDITIONAL ELECTION COURSES</b>   | <b>8.5</b>  |
| <b>TOTAL TO TRANSFER</b>   | <b>90</b>   |

| <br>Siena Heights University  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| <b>BAS Degree Requirements</b>   |                            |
| <b>Liberal Arts Education Requirements at SHU Credits</b>  |                            |
| LAS 301 The Adult Learner  | 3                          |
| An Approved Philosophy or Religious studies course   | 3                          |
| LAS 401 Senior Seminar: Integrative Experience   | 3                          |
| <b>Electives to be taken at SHU</b>  |                            |
| 7 elective courses (3 credits each) to fill the remainder of the 30 credit hour residency requirement  | 21                         |
| <b>Total Hours At SHU to complete BAS Degree</b>   | <b>30</b>                  |
| Candidates for the Bachelor's degree must fulfill a liberal arts requirement and must demonstrate proficiency in writing and mathematics.  |                            |
| <b>Available Minors</b>  |                            |
| Siena Heights University offers a number of optional minors for students who would like to focus their elective credits in one area. The credits taken as part of these minors fit into the "Elective Credits to be taken at SHU" area listed above (21 credit hours), though some are a better fit than others. The following minors are available:   |                            |
| Management   | Technology Management      |
| Marketing  | Health Care Administration |
| Business Administration  | Psychology                 |
| Behavioral Science   |                            |
| <b>Other Available SHU Degrees/Majors</b>  |                            |
| Though the Bachelor of Applied Science degree program is probably best suited for working professionals, there are other majors offered by the Siena Heights University Metropolitan Detroit Program. Additional majors include Bachelor of Arts degree programs in community services, multidisciplinary studies, and professional communication; and Bachelor of Business Administration degrees with concentrations in management, marketing and finance. Speak to a Siena Heights University advisor to see how your completed HFCC degree program might transfer into one of these additional majors. |                            |
| To take the next step in transferring from Henry Ford Community College to Siena Heights University's Metro Detroit program, call the number listed below  |                            |
| If you are interested in transferring to Siena with a different curriculum or before you have the full 90 semester hours detailed please call the number listed below and talk to an advisor. We can develop a transfer plan that will work for you.   |                            |

Henry Ford Community College  
Radiography Program  
313.317.6595 • www.hfcc.edu

Siena Heights University  
Metropolitan Detroit Program  
800.787.7784 • www.sienaheights.edu/mdp

Chairwoman FOXX. Thank you, Ms. Betz.  
Dr. Shields, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

### STATEMENT OF MICHELLE SHIELDS, CAREER COACH/WORK-FORCE DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR, JACKSON COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Ms. SHIELDS. Thank you. Good morning, Chairman Foxx and Congressman Walberg, and other distinguished guests. Thank you for the opportunity to speak before this subcommittee. I also will

be reading my testimony so I do not miss any paramount or important aspects of this discussion.

Jackson Community College each year serves more than 9,000 students in three counties—Lenawee, Hillsdale and Jackson—as well as through online delivery of our courses. Students enroll at JCC for a variety of reasons. To better align with students' educational and career goals, JCC is adapting existing programs.

Employers from all sectors have identified a variety of deficiencies related to the workforce. JCC is working to address these issues through curriculum and program reform, customized training, and student seminars, including work-based learning opportunities such as internships and advisory groups.

Recently, a number of employers have contracted with Jackson Community College through MNJTP, Michigan New Jobs Training Program. It is a grant to proactively address training needs for workers. Training for employees is more than just an on-boarding for technical or hard skills. It includes a host of communication skills and behavior awareness initiatives.

Examples of training requests and objectives we have received from local employers include personal coaching and mentoring, time management, trust and team building, employee engagement, in addition to sensitivity training. Additionally, local employers have expressed the need for quality workers in the field of manufacturing at all levels of the organization.

To help meet employer needs, the Associate in Applied Science program at JCC is designed to provide hands-on training and theoretical knowledge necessary to produce graduates that are properly trained and job ready. The various concentrations within the sciences are in high-demand technical and manufacturing disciplines. JCC is currently adapting existing programs and creating new curriculum to meet the newest technology and more rigorous technical expertise that employers are seeking in their job candidates.

JCC is in the preliminary stages of creating the framework within this system to allow students interested in perhaps only a concentration, and then moving toward an immediate goal later for an associate degree. So they can add to their academic core courses to expand on their concentration to get that Associate degree if they so choose.

This restructured approach will allow for a larger student base and assist in getting students aligned with their educational and career goals faster. An additional benefit will be realized in meeting employer needs through access to qualified and competent job candidates.

Further, employer feedback tells us that many workers do not demonstrate proficiency in problem solving and critical thinking skills. To address this concern, JCC will be integrating basic math skills into the early concentration courses. This method should allow students to get the math experience they need and require within the courses that are in their area of interest through a platform designed to engage them while learning.

In addition to critical thinking and problem solving skills, employers report that they are experiencing and observing a lack of communication skills, specifically soft skills such as diversity ap-

preciation, appropriate messaging and trust. As JCC continues to demonstrate flexibility and reform curriculum to address employer needs, the First Year Seminar or FYS course for new students is also being modified.

This is a life/work skills course that is designed to set the student on a pathway of success from a 360-degree perspective with both technical and soft skills embedded into the coursework. To do this, the message of creating a culture of achievement is woven throughout the course and maintains center focus. This is the framework needed to support the stronger work ethic of a future workforce. Changes to this class are ongoing and key stakeholder voices are heard to ensure that outcomes align with student success.

With course outcomes such as time management, critical thinking and teamwork, students taking this course will be entering the workforce as change agents, giving employers the quality and caliber of employees they need.

JCC employer partnerships are beneficial to students. As the Career Coach, I see this firsthand through contributions students make in the workplace through internships and other learning assignments.

Ensuring that employers are finding quality in their workers is a priority for JCC, and we will continue to participate in valuable discussions regarding expectations, implementation of best practices, and researching market trends to demonstrate our support.

In summary, JCC is actively responding to our local employers by providing quality, work-ready graduates through reformed curriculum and programs designed with their input.

Thank you for allowing me to speak with you today.

[The statement of Ms. Shields follows:]

**Prepared Statement of Michelle M. Shields, Career Coach,  
Jackson Community College**

*Executive Summary*

STATE OF THE COLLEGE

- Each year JCC serves more than 9,000 students in three counties and through on-line delivery of courses.
- Students enroll at JCC for a variety of reasons. To better align with the educational and career goals of our students JCC is adapting existing programs.

PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN HIGHER EDUCATION AND EMPLOYERS

- In December 2012, JCC received notification by the Michigan Community College Association (MCCA) of available Michigan New Jobs Training Program (MNJTP) funds. Employers in essence receive free training dollars for individuals, by adding new jobs to their payroll.
- In early February, MNJTP contracts were sent to the Michigan Treasury totaling \$499,500.00 earmarked for training, through diversions of state withholding from new employees/positions
- Employers have identified both soft and technical skill deficiencies in workers, and therefore connected with JCC to create customized training to remedy these issues.
- An on-line job board was created for employers to utilize for their hiring needs. Qualified job candidates are referred to employers by JCC Faculty and the Career Coach in response to job vacancies.

MATCHING EMPLOYER NEEDS THROUGH CURRICULUM

- Technical expertise is integrated into curriculum to meet employer expectations, demonstrated through work based learning opportunities and job offers.

- The curriculum of the work/life skills class (FYS) will incorporate the importance of soft skills, critical thinking and problem solving as these are fundamental characteristics found in successful employees.

#### *Field Hearing*

Good morning. Congresswoman/Chairwoman, Foxx, Congressman Walberg and other distinguished guests.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak before the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training at this hearing entitled “Reviving our Economy: The Role of Higher Education in Job Growth and Development on behalf of Jackson Community College”.

Employers from all sectors have identified a variety of deficiencies relating to the workforce. JCC is working to address these issues through curriculum and program reform, customized training, student seminars; work based learning opportunities and advisory groups.

Recently a number of employers have contracted with JCC through the MNJTP grant to proactively address training of workers. Training for employees is more than just on-boarding for technical or hard skills; it includes a host of communication, soft skills and behavior awareness initiatives.

Examples of training requests and objectives we have received from local employers include personal coaching and mentoring, time management, trust and team building, employee engagement and sensitivity training. Additionally, local employers have expressed the need for quality workers in the field of manufacturing, and at all levels of the organization.

To help meet employer needs, the Associate in Applied Science program at JCC is designed to provide the hands-on and theoretical knowledge necessary to produce graduates that are properly trained, and job ready. The various concentrations within the Associate in Applied Science are high demand technical manufacturing disciplines. JCC is currently adapting existing programs and creating new curriculum to meet the newest technology and the more rigorous technical expertise that employers are seeking in candidates.

JCC is in the preliminary stages of creating the framework within this system to allow students interested only in a concentration to achieve that immediate goal and then later, as they progress in their careers, they can add the other academic core courses to expand their concentration to earn the Associate degree if they so choose.

This restructured approach will allow for a larger student base, and assist in getting students aligned with their educational and career goals faster. An additional benefit will be realized in meeting employer needs through access to qualified and competent job candidates.

Further, employer feedback tells us that many workers do not demonstrate proficiency in problem solving and critical thinking skills. To address this concern, JCC will be integrating basic math skills into the early concentration courses. This method should allow students to get the math experience they require within course(s) that are in their area of interest and through a platform designed to engage them while learning.

In addition to critical thinking and problem solving skills, employers report that they are experiencing and observing a lack of communication skills. Specifically, soft skills such as diversity appreciation, appropriate messaging and trust. As JCC continues to demonstrate flexibility and reform curriculum to address employer needs, the First Year Seminar (FYS) course for new students is also being modified.

This life/work skills course is designed to set the student on the pathway for success from a 360 degree perspective with both technical and soft skills imbedded into the coursework. To do this, the message of “creating a culture of achievement” is woven throughout the course and maintains center focus. This is the framework needed to support a stronger work ethic of the future workforce. Changes to this class are on-going and key stakeholder voices are heard to ensure that outcomes align student success. With course outcomes such as time management, critical thinking and teamwork, students taking this course will be workforce change agents, giving employers the quality and caliber of employees they need.

JCC’s employer partnerships are beneficial to our students. As the Career Coach, I see first-hand, the contributions students make in the workplace through internships and other learning assignments. Students share positive feelings about their experiences in addition to a sense of pride and achievement which serves as validation for their sacrifices and hard work.

Ensuring that employers are finding quality workers is a priority for JCC and we will continue to participate in valuable discussions regarding expectations, implement best practices and research market trends to demonstrate our support. For the convenience of employers seeking to fill positions, the Jobs for Jets section on JCC’s

main web page was created. This venue affords employers the opportunity to quickly post jobs vacancies which are accessible to JCC students and alum. Later this month we are hosting a job fair to help local employers find the talent they seek for their organizations.

In summary, JCC is actively responding to our local employers by providing quality, work-ready graduates through reformed curriculum and programs designed with their input.

Thank you for allowing me to speak with you today.

Chairwoman FOXX. Thank you very much.  
Mr. Levy?

**STATEMENT OF DOUGLAS A. LEVY, DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL AID, MACOMB COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

Mr. LEVY. On behalf of Macomb Community College and our President, Dr. James Jacobs, I wish to thank Chairwoman Foxx, Representative Walberg, Ranking Member Hinojosa and the rest of the committee for the opportunity to testify before you today. Dr. Jacobs has already submitted a written testimony which highlights some of the great work that Macomb is doing in the area of workforce development. To complement this, my comments will focus on the critical importance of federal student aid for students, the workforce, and America's economy in general.

To frame the discussion, I will start by offering a few relevant statistics that highlight the importance of federal student aid for students pursuing higher education at Macomb. This past fall, 24,160 students enrolled in credit classes at Macomb, which represents a 15 percent increase since the fall of 2004. During that same eight-year period, the number of students receiving some form of federal student aid increased by 327 percent, and Pell Grant recipients increased by 231 percent.

Stated slightly differently, more than half of all currently enrolled students depend on some form of federal student aid, and a full one-third of all currently enrolled students receive a Pell Grant. Each of those numbers was less than one-tenth of all students eight years ago.

When put into the further context of the many job-skill-based certificate programs and employment-driven associate degrees that Macomb Community College offers, the significant impact that federal student aid has on the economy in general is also exemplified. Related, more than half of the current aid recipients at Macomb are classified as non-traditional, with an average age of 34 years old. While the reasons for this particular population attending Macomb are obviously diverse, it is well-documented that the single biggest factor is directly related in one way or another to improving their employment situation, including having lost a job and having to learn a new employable skill. Without the assistance of the Pell Grant, many of these students would not be able to afford to attend college and thus would face greatly diminished employment prospects.

For the many students currently receiving federal student aid at Macomb who, rather than entering the workforce upon graduation, continue to pursue a bachelor's degree at a four-year institution, the importance of financial aid is also very evident. With low tuition and fees, many Pell Grant recipients at Macomb achieve their

associate's degree with little or no loan burden, which ultimately translates into significantly less debt upon completion of a four-year degree. Clearly, there are many benefits, both to the student and for our economy in general, when graduating students enter the workforce with less loan burden.

The next topic I wish to mention is the need for change in the way that financial aid is administered. There is little debate that many aspects of financial aid are far too complex, from a regulatory standpoint, how institutions are required to administer aid, and how students interact with it.

One specific area in need of change that directly impacts the ability of community colleges to more fully leverage federal aid is what I refer to as the fallacy of a one-size-fits-all approach to financial aid administration. The current approach is analogous to having the same set of manufacturing, safety and consumer regulations for bicycles, cars and yachts, since they are all considered forms of transportation. For example, having the same loan limits for community colleges as for a four-year private institutions is problematic for community colleges for a variety of reasons, including the potential for excessive and abusive borrowing, default rates that continue to rise, and escalating levels of non-collectible bad debt.

Financial aid policy and regulations need to recognize and account for these differences. By doing so, it will make the process more efficient, thereby reducing the overall cost of aid administration, and resulting in federal student financial aid being significantly more responsive to all those it is intended to serve.

Before closing, I would like to briefly comment on the general topic of student aid as it relates to the federal budget. First and foremost, I sincerely appreciate the bipartisan support that federal aid in general, and the Pell Grant program in particular, has received over the past several years. Pell is a universally important program, and as a member of the higher education community, I am very thankful for your support.

Secondly, I recognize the threat of record levels of federal debt but urge you to continue to invest in students by fully funding student aid programs to ensure that these programs remain predictable, reliable, and sustainable. Attempting to balance the budget through reduced funding in federal aid diminishes our odds of future success.

In conclusion, I leave you with the following observation. As demonstrated by the information provided in my testimony today, federal student aid continues to play an increasingly critical role in the lives of so many people in building a well-trained, expanding workforce and in maintaining a thriving economy. The evidence is clear and indisputable: a strong commitment to federal student aid is, above all else, a solid investment in America's future.

Thank you for your time.

[The statement of Mr. Levy follows:]

**Prepared Statement of Douglas A. Levy, Director of Financial Aid,  
Macomb Community College, Warren, MI**

On behalf of Macomb Community College and our President, Dr. Jim Jacobs, I wish to thank Chairwoman Foxx, Representative Walberg, Ranking Member Hinojosa and the rest of the Committee for the opportunity to testify before you today.

With prior approval from the Committee, Dr. Jacobs has submitted a written testimony which highlights some of the great work that Macomb continues to do in many areas of workforce development and advanced in-demand training. To compliment this, my comments will focus on the critical importance of federal student aid for students, the workforce, and America's economy in general.

To frame the discussion, I would like to start by offering a few relevant statistics that highlight the importance of federal student aid for students pursuing higher education at Macomb. This past Fall, 24,160 students enrolled in credit classes at Macomb, which represents a 15% increase since the Fall of 2004. During that same eight-year period, the number of students receiving some form of federal student aid increased by 327%, and Pell Grant recipients increased by 231%. Stated slightly differently, more than half of all currently enrolled students depend on some form of federal student aid and a full one-third of all currently enrolled students receive a Pell Grant. Each of those numbers was less than 10% eight years ago.

When put into the further context of the many job-skill-based certificate programs and employment-driven associate degrees that Macomb Community College offers, the significant impact that federal student aid has on the economy in general is also exemplified. Related, more than half of the current aid recipients at Macomb are classified as non-traditional, with an average age of 34 years old. While the reasons for this particular population attending Macomb are obviously diverse, it is well-documented that the single biggest factor is directly related in one way or another to improving their employment situation, including having lost a job and having to learn a new employable skill. Without the assistance of the Pell Grant, many of these students would not be able to afford to attend college and thus would face greatly diminished employment prospects.

For the many students currently receiving federal student aid at Macomb who, rather than immediately entering the workforce upon graduation, continue to pursue a bachelor's degree at a 4-year institution, the importance of financial aid is also very evident. With low tuition and fees, many Pell Grant recipients at Macomb achieve their Associate's Degree with little or no loan burden, which ultimately translates into significantly less debt upon completion of a 4-year degree. Clearly, there are many benefits, both to the student and for our economy in general, when graduating students enter the workforce with less loan burden.

The next topic I wish to mention is the need for change in the way that financial aid is administered. There is little debate that many, if not most, aspects of financial aid are far too complex, from a regulatory standpoint, from how institutions are required to administer it, and from how students interact with it. One specific area in need of change that directly impacts the ability of community colleges to leverage federal student aid to the maximum benefit of students and ultimately for the greater good of the economy, is what I refer to as the fallacy of a one-size-fits-all approach to financial aid administration. The current approach is analogous to having one set of manufacturing, safety and consumer regulations for bicycles, cars and yachts, since they are all considered forms of transportation. For example, having the same loan limits for community colleges as for 4-year private institutions is problematic for a variety of reasons, including the potential for fraud and abuse of loan borrowing at community colleges. Financial aid policy and regulations need to recognize and account for these differences. By doing so, it will make the process more efficient for each type of institution, reduce the costs of administration, and result in student financial aid being significantly more aligned with and responsive to all those it is intended to serve.

Before closing, I would like to briefly comment on the general topic of student aid as it relates to the federal budget. First and foremost, I sincerely appreciate the bipartisan support that federal student aid in general, and the Pell Grant program in particular, has received over the past several years. Pell is a universally important program and as a member of the higher education community, I am very thankful for your support. Secondly, I recognize the threat of record levels of federal debt, but urge you to continue to invest in students by fully funding student aid programs to ensure that these programs remain predictable, reliable, and sustainable. Attempting to balance the budget through reduced funding in education diminishes our odds for future success.

In conclusion, I leave you with the following observation. As demonstrated by the information provided in my testimony today regarding Macomb Community College's experiences, federal student aid continues to play an increasingly critical role in the lives of so many people, in building a well-trained, expanding workforce and in maintaining a thriving economy. The evidence is clear and indisputable: a strong commitment to federal student aid is, above all else, a solid investment in America's future.

I thank you for your time.

Chairwoman FOXX. Thank you very much.

I would like to start questions with an issue that Ms. Betz brought up. I am fascinated, and all of us on the committee are fascinated with the different ways to bring down the cost of a college education, and you have raised the issue here that I think is very important about the program that you have, the three years on campus here, and the one year at Siena. Tell me how you got the accreditors to approve that.

Ms. BETZ. Well, I think it goes back to our mission, and that is to be confident, purposeful, and ethical. If we were able to assist students to manage what their debt was going to be when they elect school, I think that spoke highly of what we were trying to do with our community partners.

The program is really remarkable in that it is accepting such a high credit amount of transfer work. Typically, schools do not transfer in up to 90 semester hours of credit, or if they do, students find out once they are in the program that they have to repeat many of the courses within their major. Our students are bringing us their transcripts, and they have an answer with what is going to be transferred in before they begin the program. I think that speaks to the high ethical standard that we hold ourselves to, and that was another factor that was a benefit.

Chairwoman FOXX. Well, again, I worked at a university before I went to a community college, and I worked out articulation agreements with community colleges to do exactly what you are talking about, to make sure that students knew when they took the classes at the community college, or even at another four-year school, what they could transfer in, but I have not seen a program that does three years on the community college campus, and then one year at the four-year school. So it is another arrow in the quiver, as far as I am concerned, for how we can talk about reducing the cost of going to college.

I would like to follow up with you a little bit on talking a little bit about what you are doing in distance education and how is that fitting into your overall program. Are the students that you are serving through distance education very different from the students you are currently serving or have been serving?

Ms. BETZ. That is a great question. We started our distance learning program in 2004. Currently, we have 351 students enrolled in that specific program in 30 states. So our students differ in that the program, in order to be enrolled and admitted into that program, the admission standard is slightly higher, and you will see that our retention rate is slightly higher as well in that area compared to our other College for Professional Studies programs. Both are very respectable, but I think that makes a difference and an impact.

We do offer a number of tutoring options as well for our distance programs, as well as online library resources. So we are not just saying, okay, here is the course, and it is just a silo within that course. There are other resources that students can reach out to to ensure that they are successful.

We also boast a very highly personalized advising mantra, so to speak, so that students aren't a number. They are a person to us, and we take them in as part of our Siena family. So I think that

speaks highly of how we have been able to maintain such good retention rates within the College for Professional Studies.

Chairwoman FOXX. And according to your comments, you have been doing off-campus programs since 1975.

Ms. BETZ. That is correct.

Chairwoman FOXX. You were ahead of the curve of many, many schools in terms of offering these kinds of programs.

Ms. BETZ. Yes.

Chairwoman FOXX. And here at Monroe since 1990. Is that correct?

Ms. BETZ. That is correct.

Chairwoman FOXX. Great.

My time is almost up, so I am going to yield to Mr. Walberg, and then I will come back with some other questions for other members of the panel.

Mr. WALBERG. Thank you. And if I could, a point of personal privilege. Madam Chairwoman, you know that we, as brothers and sisters in the battle of public policy, experience a life that is different than the rest of the world. Maybe that is our problem. But I have a former colleague of mine in the room from the state legislature, former State Representative Greg Pitoniak, who is involved heavily in workforce issues in the region. I just wanted to thank you, Greg, for joining us today. Even though we didn't let you speak because politicians generally speak too long anyway, it is good to have you here.

Dr. Nixon, again, I appreciate you allowing us to be here today for this hearing. The subcommittee is always concerned with waste, fraud and abuse, and each of you have mentioned the area of financial aid. So I guess I would like to ask each of you to respond to this question, but Dr. Nixon first.

Often, community colleges are at risk because of their low tuitions, at least at risk of the perception of fraud and abuse of federal aid to students. Can you describe how MCCC deals with this and prevents that from happening?

Mr. NIXON. I appreciate that question because it is a concern. Our goal, obviously, is to give students the opportunity of reaching their career goals through higher education.

By the way, just to expand on the Chairwoman's questions for Ms. Betz, another bonus, if you will, is that both Monroe County Community College and Siena Heights are accredited by the Higher Learning Commission, so it is easier to work with them.

But in response to your question, yes, there is an opportunity for fraud and abuse. We cherish the Pell Grant opportunity for our students. You have heard how many of our students require some type of tuition assistance. The problem is that for a student who comes in here and is maxed with a \$5,500 Pell Grant, you have a lot left over after tuition. They are allowed with that extra money, which is a couple of thousand dollars, to purchase computers or to help out with their transportation.

So the challenge for us is to track those students in those classes to make sure we know if they have left the campus, and that is the greatest challenge for us, because we have had students that do that. Just recently in Detroit, publicly stated, publicly reported, there were two rings of individuals who had figured out the Pell

Grant system, and they were going around to the community colleges and enrolling in each one.

Fortunately, our financial aid and enrollment management people have figured out a system to start on the front end to measure where those students are, or to determine whether and if they have gone to another college, or if they have not told the truth on their registration packet, which is one way of putting up a stop sign and saying, oops, you have not told the truth in your registration forms, we are not going to allow you into the program.

Now, there are not many of them, but as you see, even with a 2 percent default rate, that is \$250,000 we have to turn back to the federal government. So I think there are some ways, according to our financial aid experts here on the campus—they have done a tremendous job working with these students. They need more opportunities to intervene, because they cannot tell a student—if, based on their professional judgment, a student shouldn't be loading on some additional loans in addition to the Pell Grant, they are not able to do that. So I think that would benefit at least our financial aid folks to take better control of that.

Mr. WALBERG. To have that ability.

Mr. NIXON. Yes.

Mr. WALBERG. Ms. Betz?

Ms. BETZ. Our regular practice is to monitor attendance, both on the ground and in participation in our online courses, so that if students are not participating or attending class, they are dropped within that first week. Because we are on an eight-week term, we have two eight-week accelerated programs through the College for Professional Studies, we are able to help catch some of that. Maybe they were enrolled in the class but they never had intentions of taking the course and participating for a grade, so that we can be corrective in getting them out of the class before aid has been distributed if they are receiving that type of aid.

Another thing that I think is important for us to remember is, yes, we do have approximately 43 percent of our students receiving the Pell Grant this past year, but just to be cognizant of any additional regulations. In speaking with our financial aid director, she just wanted me to convey that if there is anything that can be done for assistance and how those monies are reported back, that would be greatly appreciated.

Mr. WALBERG. Let me jump in here. Dr. Shields, so we can get some response from Jackson Community College.

Ms. SHIELDS. Sure, thank you. At JCC, we check transcripts of incoming students to see if they have perhaps enjoyed the academic career at a former institution, and we check to ensure that they are in good standing with academic progress, SAP.

Additionally at JCC, we have an HQV system, a Help Quit Verify system, and it is a three-point system, three checks within the semester. If a student needs help, if they are not doing well, they may get a call from our Learning Support Center. If they have not attended, we also do drop them, of course, in that earlier time period. And then, of course, the "V" to verify that they are, in fact, attending class and participating. So we have implemented some safeguards to our benefit.

Mr. WALBERG. With your indulgence, Madam Chairwoman, may I continue on?

Chairwoman FOXX. Certainly.

Mr. WALBERG. Thank you.

Chairwoman FOXX. I tell you what, I will yield you my question, my round this time, just to keep things straight. How is that?

Mr. WALBERG. Thank you.

Mr. LEVY. Thank you. Yes, it is a great question. As I mentioned in my testimony, one area specifically as it relates to the fact that community colleges are strapped by the same loan limits that four-year publics are, and four-year privates. So I am obligated to give a student, a first-year student, up to \$5,500 in loan money even if they have a full Pell Grant, as Dr. Nixon said.

Now, having said that, there are things that we try to do to mitigate the risk. One area is that we don't actually disperse funds to students until after the three-week census date so that we know who is in class and who isn't. At the beginning of the term, we are able to provide for their direct costs of tuition, obviously, because it is on the student account, as well as we have an agreement with our bookstore. So students can get their direct costs taken care of without having the money in their pocket. So that is a way that we can slow down the abuse factor.

I would also suggest that the federal government is doing some things right now with the new regulations for enrollment and unusual enrollment history. We are getting flagged now for students who are running from one institution to another, and we are obligated to look into those students before we give them federal aid.

It is really a matter of, as I said in my testimony, looking at the individual types of institutions and providing the kinds of regulations so that we can have professional judgment, as Dr. Nixon said, that we can look somebody in the eye and say we know that you are borrowing \$5,000, but it is not for educational expenses, and we are not going to provide that money to you. Right now we cannot do that unless we are absolutely sure that they can look me in the eye and say I am not going to pay that back, and that is the only regulatory reason I can deny somebody a student loan. So there has to be a better capability.

Mr. WALBERG. Those are challenging things, and it is good to get information for us to hear as we battle with that whole issue of diminishing dollars at this point in time and getting a \$16 trillion debt and deficit spending under control, and dealing with what the real world has to deal with. These are challenges, and yet still to get people educated.

For me to have a young lady come to my office requesting help on a foreclosure situation and the purchasing of a replacement or paying off so they can keep the house and say, within three weeks I will be able to get my Pell Grant money, and then I can pay, that wasn't for education. Though I felt for that young lady and her desire to keep that home, that wasn't the purpose. So those are the challenges we face.

Let me go on.

Chairwoman FOXX. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. WALBERG. Yes, I would.

Chairwoman FOXX. Okay. I think you are on the right line of questioning. So if I could, I would like to ask one quick question of Mr. Levy.

I have not heard anything at all from the financial aid administration or the National Association—I have lost track of the title of it. But has your association made recommendations to members of Congress along these lines? I am curious to know if there is a set of legislative recommendations.

Mr. LEVY. Yes, absolutely. The National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators is actively pursuing recommendations on several fronts, including the areas we are discussing today, transparency and award notification, and so on and so forth.

At a more global level, the Melinda and Bill Gates Foundation just commissioned grants from over 15 organizations to come up with white papers about what they call “Reimagining Aid Design and Delivery.” There are some people who are a lot smarter than I am who will do some very important think pieces about accountability of financial aid offices in universities and joint partnerships, skin in the game so that completion rates are tied to financial aid. There is a lot of activity around the area of really redesigning financial aid to both address what you are talking about, the escalating costs, as well as making it a more efficient operation for everybody involved.

So, absolutely, there is much activity in that regard, very good activity in that regard.

Chairwoman FOXX. It is your turn again. We will set the clock again. I yielded to you, then I took back some time. Now it is your turn again.

Mr. WALBERG. I like this process. We ought to talk to Chairman Kline about continuing this.

Let me go along the line again asking each of you, and I will start with Mr. Levy first, so we will go back in this direction.

It comes up with the idea that I am meeting and going manufacturer to manufacturer, business place to business place, and I hear so often the frustration that employers are saying, you know, not every student should go to college or university. There are trade programs. We’ve been talking about that, and I think you are attempting to meet that aggressively, those concerns.

But let me ask you, do you counsel and have in place a process of counseling certain students against pursuing education for job fields that the jobs aren’t there right now? Do you have any process in place to do that, Mr. Levy? We will start with you.

Mr. LEVY. I believe that Dr. Jacobs would be much better to answer that question than I. But when students come into my office, and you can tell that they are not academically equipped for what we are offering them for a degree program, we do send them over to the academic advising and counseling office to see what other opportunities there are at the community college, non-credit classes, other workforce development activities within the college.

Mr. WALBERG. Dr. Shields?

Ms. SHIELDS. We have in my office, I put students through what is called Job Fit. It is an assessment tool to help them understand what would be expected of them in their desired field when they

come to talk about their hopes and dreams, because clearly we want to help people succeed in advance.

Additionally, we have what is called Career Coach. It is a program that allows students to type in an occupation, and then it more fully discloses to them the level of education they will need, the trends, so that they are not getting a degree and spending a lot of money for something where they will not find successful employment. So we have those tools in place for our students and applicants, yes.

Mr. WALBERG. But it is still up to them to make that final decision.

Ms. SHIELDS. They do make that decision.

Mr. WALBERG. Ms. Betz?

Ms. BETZ. We have two things that come to mind that I think would be a good example of what Siena does. As I mentioned earlier, our personal advising. We meet with the student individually with an academic advisor and we listen to what they are telling us their goals are, why they want to pursue higher education. If we feel that it is not a good fit, we will recommend another path for them, whether it is another college or another program. It may be a proprietary school may be a better fit for their career goals, or it may even be going back to a community college to enroll in a separate or different path.

The other thing that we have recently done is we have increased some of the standards within our programs for admission. A recent example of this that will be happening this fall is with our professional communication major where we are asking students to have a certain GPA in courses that lead up to the higher level, the junior/senior level classes, so that they are not getting in just with a 2.0. They are going to have to have a 3.0 in order to advance in their major.

So those are just two examples of what we are trying to do.

Mr. WALBERG. Dr. Nixon?

Mr. NIXON. Thank you very much. Monroe County Community College has a number of strategies in that regard. And, by the way, the best assistance we got in that regard was from Global Engines five years ago that opened an engine plant here in Monroe, and their requirement is an associate degree to work at a plant. That spoke volumes to the community and the students who are starting to think about these new careers.

In addition to that, Monroe County Community College is a member of the WIN, the Workforce Intelligence Network, that was funded by employers and others in Detroit. We are one of eight community colleges, including Macomb, and the greatest tool in our toolbox is getting all the data now for what is driving these jobs, what are the best paying jobs. The latest data that I have is in your material in part of my text that I didn't read this morning.

But here is why this is important. Fortunately, we have a marketing department that is working closely with the local newspaper that is continually informing the students of where those high-skilled, high-paying jobs are, so that when they come to the campus, they at least have an idea.

My concern is that there is another population of individuals, according to the WIN data, that are 40-years-plus whose shelf life on

their skills may have expired, just like software does. Those are the adults that come back for the short-term training programs for some of these high-skilled jobs. Our challenge is finding the money for the tuition for those programs as we have had in the past.

But there are a number of strategies in addition to that in the high schools, the high school counselors that our enrollment management people work with all the time. We also have a high school program on campus which with the ISD which is geared on all healthcare careers, which takes care of all the healthcare careers. They are coming onto the campus as a freshman in high school instead of going to their high school, and they are here five years, and by the time they finish they will have an associate degree and their high school diploma. When the new career tech center is open, that is the plan for that, to reach down, do the talent searching into the lower grades.

So we don't have this issue of a student coming here and saying, "What should I take?"

Mr. WALBERG. Yes. Well, I appreciate that, and I certainly think we ought to be encouraging our young people to be all that they can be.

Mr. NIXON. Right.

Mr. WALBERG. But not necessarily telling them you can be anything you want. Even if you could be, you still have to make a contribution to society that adds to the tax base and to paying your own way, as opposed to the dreams that never come true. Ultimately, with the vanishing dollars we have, we can't afford that.

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

Chairwoman FOXX. Thank you.

Dr. Shields, Dr. Nixon brought up an issue that I had wanted to explore a little bit, and that is the issue of dual enrollment. Do you do a lot at your college with students who are in high school, and does Michigan have an overall program to promote students getting college credit while they are still enrolled in high school?

Ms. SHIELDS. Yes, and thank you. JCC in all three counties has dual enrollment agreements, and specifically at our Lenawee facility, which is JCC at LISD Tech. So clearly, we have those relationships wherein students do come to us and they are enrolled at their high school and also JCC to get their preliminary coursework completed, and it also helps to offset the cost of college for so many of those students who may otherwise not be able to find the funding to attend.

Chairwoman FOXX. And I would like to switch gears, then, just a little bit. How are you working with the employers that you are hoping will employ your graduates? How are you working with them to get the feedback that you need to get the skills for the students so that when they graduate or when they complete a certificate program or in whatever way they decide to move on to work, how are you working to get those skills imbued in your classes?

Ms. SHIELDS. Yes, thank you for asking. Well, three different ways right now. This is perfect timing. We are hosting a job fair next week at JCC, and employers in our community are just so excited about that, to be able to come to our campus and get a talent match.

Additionally, we have advisory groups wherein we sit down and have those candid discussions, and sometimes they are very sensitive, basically helping us understand what they are looking for when they hire on our graduates, and then how those graduates can be successful long-time employees.

So, as I stated earlier, our first-year seminar class is being redesigned to incorporate the information that I get as a career coach and connecting with our employers with regard to those soft skills and the 360 approach to the students to help them have a greater work ethic and be that workforce, the desired workforce that is going to support our community and the local employers. So advisor group meetings.

Additionally, many of our faculty are adjuncts that work as professionals or practitioners in their field of expertise, and they bring forth some amazing information that helps us as we look to curriculum reform and re-delivery.

Chairwoman FOXX. Thank you very much.

I wonder, Ms. Betz, if you wanted to mention anything else about what Siena Heights is doing to meet the local workforce demands. Have you ever been faced with eliminating programs that are no longer in demand as regards the workforce?

Ms. BETZ. Sure. We recently put—within our graduate college, we have a Master of Arts in Counseling. One of the concentrations that students could obtain was called school counseling. We were receiving feedback from students, and from those on our practicum sites as well, that it was kind of a declining market with some difficulties facing that particular area. So we decided this past fall to, in fact, put a moratorium on that particular concentration, and in doing so we took a look at the program as a whole.

It was 48 semester hours. We recently adopted a 60-semester-hour program for the counseling degree, and that would bring us up to standards for the accreditation, which is the Council for Accreditation in Counseling and Related Educational Programs, both their 2009 and the expected 2016 recommendations for that program. So that is one example.

In our undergraduate program, our community services major, we were hearing feedback from DHS administrators that students, in order to get hired into particular jobs within the State of Michigan, needed to have specific skill sets that our curriculum was not addressing at the time. So we created a family systems concentration within that major that students could elect to do, and that has been very helpful in helping them obtain employment.

Chairwoman FOXX. Great.

Mr. Walberg?

Mr. WALBERG. It was mentioned, I believe, Dr. Shields, you mentioned earlier about responding to employer concerns on employee deficiencies. I think that was the term you used. It sounded to me like you were saying there are employers who say, “They are trained, but they are not trained to what we really need in the field.” And so I would ask the question, how do they report those needs to you?

Ms. SHIELDS. Thank you. They are very clear and honest about when they hire in a new employee and they have expectations, and oftentimes it is not a technical expectation or a specific hard skill,

but it is more a work ethic issue. To give you a perfect example, a discussion I had with an employer, she simply said if I could just get these people to return after payday. So we are looking at some life skills training and other types of characteristics found in successful employees. So those are the types of problem solving, financial literacy, communication, diversity, those types of skill sets that seem to not be as proficient in the candidate as an employer would hope.

Mr. WALBERG. But what systems do you have in place, what mechanisms do you have in place that makes it possible, or maybe a better term is easy, for employers to get back to training institutions like yours and say, "Appreciate the help, but we are missing something." Do you have any concrete systems in place that do that?

Ms. SHIELDS. We have our Corporate and Continuing Ed Division that interacts with the workforce of our communities, in addition to our advisory group meetings.

Mr. WALBERG. So they are going out to their workplaces and—

Ms. SHIELDS. Yes.

Mr. WALBERG [continuing]. Saying we know that some of our graduates, our students who are there with you, our coops, whatever, how is it working?

Ms. SHIELDS. What type of training do you need, how are things going. So, those open dialogues.

Mr. WALBERG. Okay. Do any of the rest of you want to answer?

Mr. NIXON. Just a comment about those. I mentioned that we had 200 professionals that give us advice. It is through the advisory committees like you mentioned just a couple of moments ago. But our workforce development—and I should also mention on their behalf that they are in the audience—they are presenting a career fair also on this campus this coming Friday.

But having said that, when we have new employees, and we hope we have a lot of them in the future, one of them is the wind tower company, they were the first ones that came to us and told us that all of those certified welders that are coming out of the program had some skills gaps. That's when it was a one-on-one, if you will, like a triage working with them to see, well, if they are missing something you need specifically for welding those great big tall towers, then we can step in and help them in that regard.

Mr. WALBERG. Well, I appreciate that.

Madam Chairwoman, I yield back.

Chairwoman FOXX. Thank you.

I have one question I wanted to ask Dr. Nixon that he raised a little earlier in his comments, and that is you mentioned working across state lines.

Mr. NIXON. Correct.

Chairwoman FOXX. On the nuclear program I believe it was.

Mr. NIXON. Yes.

Chairwoman FOXX. I wondered if you would talk a little bit more about the experience that you have in working across state lines with other industries or other colleges.

Mr. NIXON. Right. This was when the nuclear tech program became a critical need for DTE. Our problem was we didn't have the three or four core courses that were required to start that program

immediately. There is a community college, Lakeland Community College in Ohio, that did have that. So DTE helped us fund a two-way television system, and then using some of their content experts from the Fermi plant here locally, we were able to start up that program right away with two-way television classes from Ohio. That gave our curriculum committee, our faculty about a year to develop our own program or our own courses so that then that certificate would be ours.

Interestingly, the first nine students that graduated walked across our stage, but they had certificates, associate degrees from Lakeland Community College in Ohio, and then the next year they became the Monroe County Community College students. The reason why that is important and I am happy that I had an opportunity to say this, that is how much we appreciate these direct competitive grant programs like the Department of Labor's. We have 260 welders trained, and they don't have to be limited to anywhere. It is a federal grant. Students can come from anywhere and take those certificate programs, and we still have 100 openings, as I said, within a 50-mile driving radius.

So we enjoy the opportunity to have a program like that, direct tuition for those students to get good jobs, whether they are in Michigan or wherever.

Chairwoman FOXX. Well, thank you very much.

Mr. Walberg, do you have any other comments? I know we are up against a hard break here for people's schedules. So, do you have any other questions you would like to ask the panel?

Mr. WALBERG. I'm sure there are plenty more, but I know you have a hard break. But could I ask one final question?

Mr. Levy, you mentioned that there was a 15 percent increase in enrollment in the last eight years, correct?

Mr. LEVY. Yes, that is correct.

Mr. WALBERG. Have the rest of you seen that similar increase in enrollments?

Mr. LEVY. Let me clarify that. Like I said, that was an eight-year period. But in the last few years, it has been relatively flat. There was a jump up, and then it is relatively flat.

Mr. WALBERG. Okay. And the reason for that jump in your determination?

Mr. LEVY. I am imagining it is because of economics, people going back to community college to get retrained and retooled. I would imagine that would be the main reason.

Mr. WALBERG. So they saw the local community college, the local training entity near them as an asset at that point in time?

Mr. LEVY. Absolutely, and just a general comment about that. Having come from the University of Michigan, now that I am at the community college here, there isn't a day that goes by that they don't recognize the importance, the critical importance of community colleges as it relates to the discussion in this hearing. It is a phenomenal asset that this country has. So we should continue to foster community colleges. They are instrumental to everything we are talking about today. There is no question in my mind about that.

Mr. NIXON. Chairwoman Foxx, if I may, just very briefly, we had gangbuster enrollment until this last year, and in all 28 community

colleges we have seen a diminishing enrollment of 5 to 8 percent. It is because those first jobs that did start opening back up after the recession students are tending to take to put bread on the table. Now, that is a tribute to the shortage of high skills, because we still have a need for the high skills out there, but they are taking these low-paying jobs for obvious reasons, and that is something that we are looking at.

Mr. WALBERG. Are they deciding not to continue on developing the high skills?

Mr. NIXON. Well, they will come here as part-time students, but they have to put food on the table. They need a job. You would think there would be huge enrollments, but not all of them are able to do that if they have to get what is termed in the public's remarks as low-paid jobs. They will just take them.

Mr. WALBERG. Thank you.

Chairwoman FOXX. Well, I would like again to thank the witnesses from both panels for taking time to testify before the subcommittee today. Again, I am very grateful to the community college here, Monroe County Community College, for hosting us, but everybody else for coming.

Now I would like to recognize Congressman Walberg for any closing remarks he would like to make.

Mr. WALBERG. I thank the chairperson for taking your time to come. I know all members of our subcommittee were invited on both sides of the aisle. Whether it is a result of sequestration and the House's efforts to identify with that by reducing our budgets for our offices that have impacted travel as well, that may be the reason why a number of our members aren't here.

But the fact that you were willing to hold it and continue it is greatly appreciated by me because in Michigan, the first state into the recession and the downturn in the economy and the loss of jobs, the unemployment rate, we also know it has been a tough-fought battle uphill again to come to the place we are now where we see some encouraging signs through policy put in place by local and state governments, but also by increasing efforts from our education establishments identified by those here on the panel and others I see in the room that are trying to meet the needs of preparing people for real-life work situations that makes a difference not only in their lives and their family lives but the lives of the community, because we know the only way to foster positive growth in the economy is if we do it at the grassroots level, where individuals who want to take responsibility, to be accountable, to carry on for their own lives and their families' lives and have an opportunity, as we all had, for future growth and making decisions that provide the dreams that is called the American Dream in our lives, we need a growing economy that starts with people who are trained, who are looking for their sweet spot and then functioning in their sweet spot, and then also cognizant of the fact that, hey, I don't have to stay here. I can grow. I can be retrained. I can add to my abilities.

So we appreciate the efforts of the community colleges, the local colleges and universities, and the training programs. But we also have to identify, Madam Chairperson, as I know you understand very well from your perspective about efficiency and doing things

without waste and doing things that are right-headed thinking, and I am not talking about the political context there, but right-headed thinking, things that make sense, that we need to be pushing for that and doing it as efficiently as possible.

So with the information that we have gleaned today and what we will glean in further hearings, both in Washington and other places around our country, we hope that we can make an impact for the future that says to our kids and our grandkids we didn't screw it up totally for you, but we saw the problems. We have redeveloped, we have repositioned, and now we can expand for the future, for your opportunities as well, to continue making this the country that every other country on this earth gravitates toward to find the best practices.

So I appreciate again the ability to be here today, the opportunity, and we look forward to the future. Madam Chairperson, thank you.

Chairwoman FOXX. Well, thank you. And I appreciate the opportunity to come to Michigan. This is my second opportunity to come here. I was here about three or four years ago, down in Chairman Upton's district. I flew into Grand Rapids and had a chance to visit that area and enjoyed my visit here. I believe it was in May, and it snowed, but I am used to that because I come from the mountains of North Carolina and we had a big snow last week, and we are used to cold weather. So when looking at the trees, they look like they do around my house this past weekend. It is not time for spring yet. So I am used to that.

Having been at Appalachian State University for many years and in a community college for several years, I am very well aware of the superb history of education that Michigan has, obviously. I am very familiar with the names of your community colleges from having worked in the education field over the years. I am very familiar with the University of Michigan, and Hillsdale College has a tremendous presence on Capitol Hill these days. They have a seminar one Friday a month. They are bringing in people all the time. I have had interns from Hillsdale, and so I know Hillsdale County and the name Hillsdale from the very great presence that Hillsdale College has on Capitol Hill right now.

I wanted, to save a little time, to say, as we often say on the Floor or in committee meetings, I associate myself with the remarks of my distinguished colleague, Mr. Walberg, his opening remarks as well as his closing remarks. He talked a lot about hard-working taxpayers in the United States, and I too am very concerned about that. We have a lot of people who are working, and we are all very grateful for those people who are working and paying taxes right now. It is their money that we are spending for these other programs, and it is important that we be good stewards of that money.

So our hearings, both in Washington and here, are to help us learn how we can help the higher education community be better stewards of the money that is given out directly through student aid, as well as indirectly in the programs that are being operated by very many people.

All of us would like to see the United States be the manufacturing powerhouse it has been in the past, and North Carolina and

Michigan share a history in that area, I believe. So we would love to see manufacturing come back. We would like to see the kind of jobs that are value-added jobs be available to our constituents.

So again, I want to thank our staff, the staff of the Education and Workforce Committee, as well as the staff here at Monroe County Community College for the effort that you put in. And to the folks here who took their time to observe this hearing, I hope we have helped enlighten you a little bit as it has helped enlighten us.

And with that, there being no further business, the subcommittee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:21 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

