

By Shelly Strautz-Springborn

# CONFUSED?

# MCC offers a variety of tools to help students decide on a career path



“(Students) know college is the next step, but the challenge becomes determining where to go from there.”

– Tore Skogseth, MCC student success counselor

**N**ot sure what you want to be when you grow up? We can help.

Montcalm Community College offers a variety of tools to help students already admitted to the college explore their interests and consider options for career training.

Student Success Counselor Tore Skogseth and Counselor Brandy Bunting said students enrolling at MCC are in various phases of life – some are high schoolers, some have just graduated from high school and others are already working in established careers but are looking to do something different.

“We’ve found more and more that students come in and really don’t know what they want to do,” Skogseth said. “They maybe have thought about it, but many have never seen it as a decision that is really important to make.

“They know college is the next step, but the challenge becomes determining where to go from there,” he added. “We often start by talking about what they have wanted to do in the past, just to get a feel for their interests.”

They agree the most important next step for students is to explore their options.

“We often talk about how much education they want and whether they are willing to transfer to another institution to pursue a higher level degree. We also counsel them to look into entry requirements at other institutions, and we talk about alternative career options,” Bunting said.

For example, a student may indicate a desire to become a nurse, but they can’t handle the sight of blood.

“In that instance, we typically discuss other health career options that may fit a goal, such as helping others. It may be a case where they find something in the medical office side of health care is a great fit for them,” Bunting said.

“It’s OK to be undecided,” she added. “I think there’s a lot of frustration for students sometimes when trying to decide on their career path, but we have several ways to assist them.”

MCC offers a variety of tools to help guide students.

John Holland’s Self-Directed Search is a workbook that leads students through the process of self-exploration. It provides narrative to help them explore career options, offers an occupations listing that includes information on thousands of occupations and leads students through a self-assessment in which they rank

*continued on page 10*



“It’s OK (for students) to be undecided ... we have several ways to assist them.”

– Brandy Bunting, MCC counselor



*continued from page 9*

statements as a “like” or “dislike” that are based on activities, competencies, occupations and self-estimates. The results are compiled by a summary code that can be used to discover how their special pattern of interests, self-estimates and competencies resemble the patterns of interests and competencies that many occupations demand.

Career Cruising is a complete online career guidance and pathways planning tool that assists students in finding careers that match their interests, search for schools and financial aid and build their career portfolio.

The college also offers a College Success class in which career exploration is done through the lenses of self-awareness and self-motivation.

“We use these tools to help tease out what students are interested in,” Skogseth said. “It’s not an easy decision for students to make. They tend to want to take a test and then have us tell them what to do – that’s the challenge. It typically comes down to helping students look at their core values and finding a career that supports them.

“We can provide the tools to research potential areas of interest, but the students ultimately have to make their own life decisions,” Bunting added.

She said another valuable tool is job shadowing.

“We encourage students to get some real life exposure to careers they think they may be interested in,” she said. “It’s often a good way for them to self-evaluate and decide whether they could see themselves working in a particular profession.”

To make an appointment to meet with a counselor, a student must have been accepted to attend MCC and have completed placement testing. For more information, call (989) 328-1264 or stop by MCC’s Student Success Center, located in room D318 in the Beatrice E. Doser Building on the college’s Sidney campus.

**For more information:**

Visit [www.montcalm.edu/counseling](http://www.montcalm.edu/counseling)

Email [brandyb@montcalm.edu](mailto:brandyb@montcalm.edu)

or [tores@montcalm.edu](mailto:tores@montcalm.edu)

Call (989) 328-1264