Every year under the gold dome of Iowa’s capitol building, some of the best and brightest students of Iowa’s community colleges gather during an event called Community College Day on the Hill.

This year, on March 3, a couple of NCC administrators and seven students stood in the rotunda under the famous dome and shared their individual stories with some of our state legislators.

While every story is different, common themes run through each individual story. We hear how our students take their studies seriously in spite of life’s hindrances. They hold down jobs, take care of families, and often face barriers that they overcome so they can graduate and enter the workforce. Our students make tough choices and costly sacrifices by which they are building a better future for themselves, their loved ones, and their communities. They inspire everyone who listens to their individual stories, and we are super proud of each one of them.

This issue of The Connection magazine features some of these kinds of encouraging individual alumni stories. You will read about Industrial & Commercial Wiring alumna Ramah Knox and her successful experience working in the electrical industry. You will meet Cory Dorhout, a Diesel Technology alumnus, who now serves as the Lead Power Systems Technician at Butler CAT. We feature Nick Hengeveld, Electrical Technology alumnus, who is employed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Next, Susanna Schriever, Associate Degree Nursing alumna, will bolster your spirits as you read the story of her journey from receiving her nursing degree, to currently serving in the Air Force, to soon starting missionary work in Asia.

We also feature student and program updates from across campus, including: individual program updates, information about NCC’s Multicultural Club and Samson Nyambati, our TRIO Student Support Services Multicultural Academic Coordinator, who describes his mission trip to Africa last summer and his hopes to involve students next year. You will also discover details about our new non-credit program in Industrial Maintenance that we developed in direct response to our business partners’ requests for this much-needed training.
The annual Community College Day on the Hill is also a day for the community colleges of Iowa to convene and share our collective story. On March 2, in preparation for the “Day on the Hill,” the Iowa Department of Education released an Economic Impact Report for Iowa’s 15 community colleges, including Northwest Iowa Community College. Emsi Burning Glass, a major labor market analyst firm, produced this report which shows how Iowa’s community colleges made a $5.5 billion positive impact on the state’s economy and supported 87,149 jobs in Iowa last year.

The Economic Impact Report outlines and charts the collective story of Iowa’s community colleges. The conclusion of this collective story describes the positive return on the investments that Iowa’s taxpayers make in their community colleges because Iowa’s community colleges improve the lives of Iowa’s students, train future taxpayers to earn more, and enhance the economy and culture of the state. The report contains an investment analysis for each of these groups:

- Community college students see a return of $6.30 in higher future earnings for every dollar they invest in their education and have an average annual rate of return of 24.9%.
- For every dollar of public money invested in their community colleges, taxpayers receive $2.50 and an average annual rate of return of 6.2%.
- Society benefits from $277.9 million of public and private sector savings, receiving $8.60 in return for every dollar spent for as long as students remain active in the state workforce.

Iowa’s 15 community colleges and their students support one out of every 23 jobs in the state. Putting it all together, our collective story reads like this:

- Construction spending supports 352 jobs.
- Student spending supports 3,936 jobs.
- Alumni working in Iowa support 71,230 jobs.

Iowa’s community colleges also contribute to overall higher individual earnings. During fiscal year 2019–20, students collectively invested $626.2 million to attend Iowa’s community colleges. In return, students individually earn an annual income $7,900 higher than someone with only a high school diploma.

This is our collective story, and it is dramatic and promising. NCC and the other community colleges provide businesses and industries with skilled workers who populate vibrant communities. We do commendable work, making the most of taxpayer investments. This is why Iowans wisely look to their community colleges for many of their educational needs and workforce solutions.

While our collective story includes exciting details about better jobs and brighter futures, about economic growth and community vitality, the individual stories of NCC’s students and alumni are far more impactful than any graph, chart, or financial forecast. Our individual stories are legendary and run deeper than the tissue-paper-thin sheets of gold leafing on the state’s capitol building.

So, enjoy these stories, and as always, remember, at NCC—

Your Success is Our Story!

John Hartog III, PhD
President
what’s inside...

**STANDING OUT**
Ramah Knox excels in a male-dominated industry

**PATH TO SUCCESS**
Three NCC alumni take non-traditional paths to success

**ONE OF THE BEST**
NCC named a semifinalist for $1 million Aspen prize

**GLOBAL IMPACT**
NCC alumnus making a difference with Multicultural Club and mission trip

**INDUSTRIAL MAINTENANCE**
Grant creates opportunity for new program

**PROGRAM UPDATES**
The latest updates from around campus

about the cover
Samson Nyambati, NCC Nursing Alum and Multicultural Coordinator, takes part in a Multicultural Club dance party. See page 14
According to Zippia, a career expert company, only 5.3% of today’s electricians in the United States are female. Unfortunately, these low percentages of female workers are common among all careers in the trades. Although increases in the number of women in the trades have taken place, progress has been gradual at best. Attracting women to a traditionally male workforce is one way to help the trade professions with skilled labor shortages. Ramah Knox is an example of a female who not only entered the electrical profession, but also excelled in it and serves as an inspiration for other women to enter this rewarding field.

Ramah developed a love for working with her hands at a very young age. She grew up with three older brothers who were constantly taking things apart and putting them back together, and this ended up rubbing off on her. They were a family who loved the challenge of building and fixing things. Their neighbor was an electrician, and when Ramah’s family built a new house, she enjoyed watching her neighbor install the electrical boxes and panels.

Ramah graduated from South O’Brien High School in Paullina, Iowa in 2006. Her family had moved to Northwest Iowa during her high school years, so even though she graduated from a high school within Northwest Iowa Community College’s service territory, she had actually never heard of NCC before. When Ramah began researching electrical schools, she quickly discovered that NCC was one of the best in the nation. Since NCC’s electrical program was so highly rated, Ramah chose to enroll in the Industrial & Commercial Wiring program.

Although she was the only female in her electrical classes, Ramah enjoyed the program. During her first semester at NCC, she made another big decision — to join the Iowa National Guard. NCC was supportive of this and worked with her so that she could serve while also completing the electrical program. She had to take one extra semester in order to complete all of the program requirements, but Ramah graduated in December of 2008 with an Associate of Applied Science degree in Industrial & Commercial Wiring.
Not only was Ramah working full-time and raising a family, she had also been promoted to platoon leader in the Iowa National Guard. She served as the only female platoon leader and was in charge of the Sioux City Platoon. During this time, Ramah was exposed to Military public affairs. One highlight from Ramah’s career during this time was her involvement in the Waterloo Tyson Fresh Meats Facility improvements. Tyson and Crescent Electric employees worked together to come up with a light fixture that could hold up to the strict wash-down codes that Tyson maintains. Ramah was not only on the team in charge of this project, she was also involved in providing a tour and more information about the project to Senator Joni Ernst. In addition, she was able to write about the project to share on the military public affairs side. This project enabled her to see the manufacturing and engineering industries working together, and she was able to combine her position in the electrical industry with that of her military experience.

Ramah was promoted to Business Development Manager at Crescent Electric. This position brought new challenges for her, such as learning more about solar energy. Even though this was a new concept to her, Ramah was able to use the knowledge obtained in her electrical classes at NCC to help her better understand solar concepts. She was involved in constructing one of the largest privately-owned solar arrays in the State of Iowa, Great River Health’s thirty-acre solar array.
In her military career, Ramah attended the Defense Information School in Washington DC. She received a special designator of PA on her military branch and got more involved in the Public Affairs Detachment. It was here that Ramah became interested in the Air Force. Ramah switched to a position within the Sioux City Air Guard. She was involved in working on refueler planes and working with STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) and simulators. She was also responsible for conducting interviews and writing articles about the projects. It was a great experience for Ramah to be able to use her electrical knowledge and also write for the National Guard as a journalist. One of the articles she wrote during this time was regarding fighter jet hooks that attach during landing. Her involvement in this project sparked her interest in the mechanical side of the electrical industry.

In early 2020, Ramah left Crescent Electric to pursue her love of writing. During this time, she wrote many articles for the Iowa National Guard. She traveled to observe the Army’s projects, assisted news stations with interviews and shared news regarding the influential work the Iowa National Guard was doing. The National Guard noticed her work and asked Ramah to serve as the Director of Public Affairs full-time — normally they have a lawyer in this position. Ramah was eager to serve in this role and set the course for the direction of the Iowa National Guard from a public relations standpoint. She completed a variety of interviews and press conferences with Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds. One of her proudest moments was witnessing the first Iowa Guard female-to-female battalion commander handover.

Ramah knew this position would be temporary, and she wanted to get back into an electrical role. This led her to Emerson Automation Solutions.

Ramah began as a District Sales Manager for Emerson Automation Solutions in February of 2021. As a District Sales Manager, Ramah is responsible for managing relationships with customers and driving specifications in the territories of Iowa and Nebraska. In this position, Ramah works primarily with fluid motion control and pneumatics. These are concepts she would have experienced at NCC if she had taken the Electrical Technology, or ET program. She encourages current Industrial & Commercial Wiring students to take the ET program.

Ramah loves her current position at Emerson, and enjoys that every project is vastly different from the one before. On the military side, Ramah currently serves as Commander of the 135th Mobile Public Affairs Attachment. Her goal is to help grow the next group of journalists and continue to bring awareness to what the National Guard is doing.

She credits her education from NCC in getting her where she is today. “The electrical program at NCC trained me to be malleable, to be a problem-solver and to look for ways to make processes better. The program provides its graduates with a well-rounded set of skills that we can take any direction in the electrical industry. Working for a manufacturer such as Emerson requires you to have experience and be a problem-solver. Nothing compares to a real experience that you can bring to the table when solving problems and coming up with solutions.

Don’t be afraid to get in the trenches, to work hard and to dream big — the world is waiting for you to get out there and do more,” she stated.

Looking back on her career path thus far, Ramah is grateful to have had so many different experiences within the electrical industry. She has been able to move through the different parts of the supply chain and understand each process and how each role she has had fits into the “big picture.” Surely Ramah will continue to do great things within the electrical industry, to make a difference through her military involvement and serve as an inspiration for other females to enter male-dominated professions.
Northwest Iowa Community College now has over 13,000 alumni. While a majority of graduates enter common jobs related to their program of study, a select few choose to take “the road less traveled.” NCC is proud to highlight three alumni that have taken a less traditional path in their career trajectories. Many programs at NCC can boast that they have a variety of career options for graduates to enter upon graduation. The stories of Corey Dorhout, Nick Hengeveld and Susanna Schriever prove this to be true.
Experience at NCC
NCC’s Truck & Diesel program provided me with a solid background and with general mechanic’s knowledge. I was fortunate that I grew up on a farm helping my dad work on various pieces of equipment, so I had a lot of knowledge and hands-on experience before entering the program.

During my time at NCC, I was introduced to Butler CAT. Wayne Mohr, a member of the Truck & Diesel Program Advisory Committee at that time, came to NCC and assisted with the VICA competition (now known as Skills USA). I was fortunate enough to score well and was able to go on to the National Competition. After this, Wayne invited me to a job interview in Sioux Falls and this is how I got my foot in the door. At that time, it was a lot harder to get a job in the industry than it is today.

Path after NCC/jobs held
I began at Butler CAT as a Diesel Technician and for about ten years, I worked in the engine division where I primarily worked on trucks and engines. I am always looking for ways to self-improve and learn new skills. Because of this, I have been able to move into different opportunities within the company and have a different scope of work now. When the opportunity of Lead Power Systems Technician became available, I applied and accepted the position. I had to get some additional generator and electrical training and, fortunately, Butler CAT provides this. They have given me tools and training I need to be successful. Butler CAT has been a great employer that serves a massive customer base.

Current position/company
I am currently the Lead Power Systems Technician for Butler Machinery/CAT Sioux Falls. Power systems include generators and engines that provide power for equipment like rock crushers, wood chippers, electrical power plants, and power plants for towns and municipalities throughout our region. The engines I work on now are standard engines, but I also work with more specialized electrical components and my work is more complex. Every generator requires a prime mover, whether that is a turbine in a massive power plant, a hydroelectric propeller or a diesel engine. One thing I love is that I never have a typical day. One day I could be doing a job at an oil field, and the next day I could be at a hospital or nursing home working on an emergency power generating system, then I could be off to a bluff in Nebraska working on a generator for a water tower, or in downtown Sioux Falls in a high-rise building. I travel throughout the large region that we serve and spend most of my time in Southwest Minnesota, Northwest Iowa, Northeast Nebraska, and Southeast South Dakota. I occasionally have special projects that I travel to in other states as well.

Emergency power is a large portion of our business. A few examples of projects I have worked on recently are emergency power generators for nursing homes and water plants. I also work on projects dealing with prime power. This is when a generator is the only source of power for an entire site. The state of Hawaii is a good example of a location that uses prime power sources.

One project that stands out in my mind is one we worked on for a company that makes beef jerky. Our team came up with a process to capture the waste from the jerky plant, breaking down the waste through a fermentation process to produce methane gas. The gas is then brought through a cleaning process and run through a generator to power the plant. A portion of the plant is essentially powered by the waste from its product. This is an example of a clean, renewable energy form of gas that we use to power a generator.

What led you to your current position? As a student at NCC, did you ever imagine you would hold your current position?
Back in 2001 when I was starting the Truck & Diesel program, I had no idea that my position existed and had never given thought to the Power Systems industry. The amount of positions available in the Power Systems industry and the complexity of the work is amazing. My training and hands-on experience at NCC prepared me for many aspects of my current position such as problem solving, the ability to think on my feet and, of course, the knowledge of various diesel systems, equipment and processes. The continuous training opportunities I have through Butler CAT are phenomenal and keep me up-to-date. The work I do every day is different, interesting and engaging, and I am always learning new things.

Any advice you have for individuals entering the diesel industry?
Invest in yourself with industry knowledge, emulate your successful peers and coworkers, and conduct yourself with integrity — your customers will notice.
Experience at NCC
My experience at NCC was great. I was able to live at home while attending class. The instructors were always helpful and made my education a priority. The courses were challenging and taught me a wide range of skills that I will use for the rest of my life.

Path after NCC/jobs held
After graduation, I moved to Arizona to be near my fiancé Allison, who is now my wife. I moved without getting a job, which was a major challenge and something I do not recommend. My first job was with Siemens in Phoenix as a fire alarm tech. It was not the job I envisioned, but it was a start. After nearly a year at Siemens, I worked as an electrician in Mesa for 3 months while my background check was being completed for my current job.

Current position/company
I currently work as an Electronics Technician for the FBI in Phoenix. In my position, I mainly work with radios, access control, alarm systems, and video. While there are aspects of the job that I didn’t learn at NCC, the education I received did lay the foundation for me to learn and adapt quickly. I love that every day is something new. I’ve been able to travel the state of Arizona as well as other parts of the United States. It is truly a rewarding career and one that keeps me thinking and learning every day.

What led you to your current position? As a student at NCC, did you ever imagine you would hold your current position?
It is important to make connections wherever you live. I was fortunate enough to meet someone who, after hearing about my education, encouraged me to apply at the FBI. The process took a while to complete, but I stayed patient with it. I knew there were many career paths I could take after college, but this was definitely not one I had thought of! I think it is a great career choice for someone looking to get outside of his or her comfort zone and see new places. I am grateful for the education I received at NCC, which allowed me to be qualified for this career. I would encourage students to look at fbijobs.gov to look more into this and other careers.

Any advice you have for individuals entering the electrical field?
First, go into the program with an open mind. Next, so many job opportunities exist that you have no idea about. It may take a few positions before you find the right one, like it did for me. The program allows students a wide variety of careers to choose from, so you will always have other options. The final piece of advice I have is that the Electrical Technology program is not mandatory for Industrial & Commercial Wiring students, but in my opinion, every student should complete it. I would not be where I am today without that program and it is definitely worth the extra time and effort.
Experience at NCC
My time in the nursing program at NCC was invaluable. I have used many of the skills acquired in nursing school in my various roles held in the Air Force. Having my RN degree has given me huge advantages as I have progressed through my career.

Path after NCC
I began Air Force Basic Training in November of 2017. I was stationed at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas. I was honored to be named Top Airman out of my class of 712 graduates. I was honored during the Coin Ceremony, which marks the transition of recruits into Airman status.

Upon my graduation from the Air Force, I received additional nursing and medic training at Fort Sam Houston and graduated at the top of my class in May of 2018. I went on to spend six weeks at Elgin Air Force Base in Destin, Florida, where I was placed in a base hospital and worked in a variety of capacities as both a medic and a nurse.

Then I was placed at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland. The years of 2019–2020 were busy as I took on more teaching responsibilities at Andrews. My time in the nursing program at NCC was invaluable as one of my nursing Instructors, Dawn Recher, loved teaching trauma nursing. I was able to apply much of what I learned in my new role as an EMT and TCC (tactical combat casualty care) instructor. It was my job to train and certify nearly 300 Air Force medics in prolonged field care, prehospital transportation, and advanced life support. Also during this time, I finished my Bachelor’s in Nursing. I was able to finish my degree while working in the COVID treatment tents at Andrews.

These experiences prepared me well for when I deployed to Prince Sultan Air Base, Saudi Arabia, in 2021. During my 6 months in Saudi, I had many different roles including clinic work, EMS, patient transport & evacuation, and flightline emergency response. I was able to do everything from wrap sprained ankles to manage a MasCal, or mass casualty, emergency to participate in drills with the Army and Marines. Toward the end of my deployment, I was very involved in the Afghanistan evacuation and was able to provide medical care for thousands of refugees.

What led you to your current position? As a student at NCC, did you ever imagine you would hold your current position?
I have always had a desire to do mission work and this has been a goal of mine since my years at NCC. This is my final year in the Air Force as I will separate in June of 2022. This fall, I plan to move to Southeast Asia to do full time missions work. Both my time at NCC and in the Air Force have been instrumental in preparing me for the mission field. The knowledge and skills I have gained will help me better serve people around the world as I seek to share the hope of the gospel.

Any advice you have for individuals entering the healthcare field?
I have two pieces of advice I would give to someone starting the nursing program or another healthcare program. The first is to never lose your sense of compassion. It is easy to get into the everyday doldrums and become cynical toward your patients or your job. Don’t forget why you started healthcare in the first place. The second piece of advice I have is to take every opportunity to get hands-on experience. There will be times during simulation or clinical where you are tired and ready for the day to be over, but this is the best time to practice and gain more experience. You will never regret having given that extra time to run through another scenario or learn a new skill.

SUSANNA SCHRIEVER

Program: Associate Degree Nursing ‘17

Current Position: EMT/Tactical Combat Casual Care Instructor/Medic/Nurse, Air Force

SPRING 2022 | 11
The 25 semifinalists are:
Amarillo College, TX
Broward College, FL
Cloud County Community College, KS
Elgin Community College, IL
Georgia Highlands College, GA
Harper College, IL
Hostos Community College (CUNY), NY
Imperial Valley College, CA
Itawamba Community College, MS
Kingsborough Community College (CUNY), NY
LaGuardia Community College (CUNY), NY
Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, MS
Moorpark College, CA
North Iowa Area Community College, IA
Northwest Iowa Community College, IA
Pierce College, WA
San Jacinto College, TX
Seminole State College of Florida, FL
South Florida State College, FL
South Puget Sound Community College, WA
Southwest Wisconsin Technical College, WI
Southwestern Community College, NC
Tallahassee Community College, FL
Union County College, NJ
Western Technical College, WI
The Aspen Institute announced 25 semifinalists for the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence, adding a milestone in the award selection process. The $1 million Aspen Prize is the nation’s signature recognition of community colleges that are achieving high, improving, and equitable outcomes for students. In years past, only ten finalists have been named on the road to the winner, and this change is designed to highlight the increased number of colleges across the country doing excellent work.

Awarded every two years, the Aspen Prize honors colleges with outstanding performance in five critical areas: teaching and learning, certificate and degree completion, transfer and bachelor’s attainment, workforce success, and equitable outcomes for students of color and students from low-income backgrounds. The winner will be announced in the spring of 2023.

The Prize selection process began this past October, when the Aspen Institute invited 150 community colleges to apply, based on data showing strong and improving student outcomes in key areas such as retention, completion, transfer, and equity. Applications went to a diverse selection committee of 16 higher education experts who reviewed extensive data and application narratives.

Dr. John Hartog, president of Northwest Iowa Community College, explained,

“NCC is one of the few colleges that has been among the 150 colleges that are eligible for the Aspen Prize all seven times since the inception of the competition (2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2021, & 2023). This places NCC among the highest performing community colleges in the nation.”

NCC performed well when compared with the other 150 Aspen Prize eligible colleges:

• Top 5% for graduation rates for Pell Grant recipients (low-income students)
• Top 8% for first-year retention rate
• Top 8% for 3-year graduation rate for first-time, full-time students
• Top 11% for 3-year graduation rate for students of color

As a result, NCC has been honored as one of the 25 semifinalist colleges for the 2023 Aspen Prize competition.

“The Top 8% for first-year retention rate is a milestone for NCC,” said Dr. John Hartog, president of Northwest Iowa Community College, explaining the college’s success. “This places NCC among the highest performing community colleges in the nation.”

He cited graduation rates that have risen more than six percent for all students since 2015, and five percent for students of color. “These twenty-five colleges represent our dreams for a better country and a reinvigorated democracy.”

Hartog responded, “In previous award cycles, Aspen had not recognized the top 25 colleges, so this is an exciting new step for NCC in this award process. We are grateful for this prestigious recognition which speaks so well of our Trustees and employees—all of whom constantly focus on student success. NCC contributes to the strength and vitality of Northwest Iowa by providing quality, accessible, and affordable education to all our students.”

Next, the committee will review its interviews with college leadership teams and will narrow this selection of 25 semifinalists to 10 finalists, to be announced in early June 2022.

After 10 finalists are announced, next steps include:

• Fall 2022: Multi-day site visits to each of the 10 finalists, when teams of experts collect even more student outcomes data and gather insights about effective practices
• Winter 2023: A distinguished jury decides who wins the Aspen Prize, based on quantitative data and qualitative information from each of the 10 finalists
• Late spring 2023: Announcement of the Aspen Prize winner

Hartog concluded, “We are humbled by Aspen’s repeated recognition and excited to be a semifinalist in this award cycle. At times like this, we reaffirm our missional commitments. Regardless of the outcome, as a semifinalist, we determine to do even better for all our students, industry partners, and communities.”

The Aspen Prize is generously funded by Ascendium, the Joyce Foundation, JPMorgan, and the Kresge Foundation.

Previous winners are:

• 2021: San Antonio College (TX)
• 2019: Indian River State College (FL) and Miami Dade College (FL)
• 2017: Lake Area Technical Institute (SD)
• 2015: Santa Fe College (FL)
• 2013: Santa Barbara City College (CA) and Walla Walla Community College (WA)
• 2011: Valencia College (FL)

The Aspen Institute College Excellence Program aims to advance higher education practices, policies, and leadership that significantly improve student outcomes, especially for the growing population of low-income students and students of color on American campuses.

The Aspen Institute is a community-serving organization with global reach whose vision is a free, just, and equitable society. For 70 years, the Institute has driven change through dialogue, leadership, and action to help solve the world’s greatest challenges. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., the Institute has offices in Aspen, Colorado, and New York City, and an international network of partners. For more information, visit aspeninstitute.org.
Over the past several years, Northwest Iowa Community College has seen a significant increase in the number of ethnically and culturally diverse students enrolled, and college staff are constantly looking for ways to make these students feel welcome and at home on campus and within the community. The Multicultural Club was officially established in June of 2020 with a purpose to connect students, staff and community members in finding common ground and educating one another on various cultures. NCC Alumnus, Samson Nyambati, came up with the idea for this student organization during his time as a student at NCC. Through NCC’s TRIO program, this idea came to life.

Samson and his family moved to Northwest Iowa from Minnesota in 2018 when he was accepted into NCC’s Licensed Practical Nursing program. During his time as a student, Samson recognized that there were not a lot of opportunities for students from different cultures to connect with one another. Samson was a member of NCC’s TRIO Program, which is a federally funded program designed to help low-income Americans attend college, graduate and participate fully in America’s economic and social life. TRIO’s services include academic advising, career planning, personal counseling, financial aid advising, tutoring, transfer assistance, lunch & learn workshops and cultural activities. At the time, the cultural activities offered through TRIO consisted of off-campus activities including plays, operas, museum tours and symphonies, and were dependent upon student requests. Samson enjoyed participating in these offerings, but desired more cultural awareness and activities that could take place right on campus. He saw so many students that would attend class, visit TRIO to study for a few hours and then head to work or home. He desired to create more options for these students to make meaningful connections outside of homework and study groups.
At the time of Samson’s graduation from the Associate Degree Nursing program in 2020, NCC was looking for a Multicultural Academic Coordinator to work in the TRIO Department. This individual would be mainly responsible for coordinating and recruiting for the Multicultural Club on campus and assisting diverse students with the challenges they face throughout college. Although his goal had always been to become a nurse, he felt this position was calling to him and decided to apply. Samson loved NCC as a student, and he received a lot of support that was instrumental in his success. He wanted to assist students and provide the same support that was provided to him. Samson was hired as NCC’s part-time Multicultural Academic Coordinator in June of 2020. He could finally bring his vision of a multicultural organization to life, while also working part-time as a Registered Nurse.

Since its official inception in the summer of 2020, the Multicultural Club has had active participation from students, employees and community members. Each month the committee hosts activities that highlight the different cultures of current NCC students. Students from various countries will teach others about food, dress, political norms, landmarks, historical people, popular music and other notable qualities about their home country. A big highlight of these monthly activities is the food that students bring to share with attendees. The club also hosts a variety of other activities throughout the year. One example is the annual Taste of the World event that takes place in the spring semester. All students who participate in the Multicultural Club wear attire and bring dishes native to their home country and share them with the entire campus and community.

continued on next page...
Another opportunity for Multicultural Club members is the option to sign up for a host family. A number of students do not have family in the Northwest Iowa area or even in the United States. These students have the option to sign up for a host family who will provide them support during their time as a student at NCC. Host families provide gifts, food, gas or grocery gift certificates and a place to stay during holiday breaks. They also serve as a support system for the student during their time at NCC.

Offerings and activities for multicultural students have come a long way over the past couple of years, but Samson still has big goals in mind for the future. A long-term goal that he has is to organize mission trips to other countries for current students, college employees, alumni and community members. COVID-19 put this goal on hold for a couple of years, but planning has begun for the first mission trip where students, employees and members of the community will be involved.

In December of 2021, Samson went on a mission trip to his home country of Kenya, Africa. This trip was originally designed for students to get involved, but COVID-19 made this impossible. The main mission on this trip was treating homes and individuals for chiggers. The local government in Kenya helped to supply nursing personnel, vehicles and medications to assist with the treatment of individuals and homes. Samson and his team were able to treat around 30 families altogether. Other projects they completed were building a home for a needy family and assisting with Vacation Bible School for nearly 600 children.

Samson was extremely grateful to receive support from the First Reformed Church in Sheldon, Iowa. Through this support, Samson and his team were able to supply some families with mattresses, food, shoes and clothing items. They were also able to teach children important hygiene skills that will assist them throughout their lives.

For Samson, this trip will be the first of many! His goal is for the next mission trip to take place during the summer of 2023 with current students, college employees and community members involved. Samson’s NCC journey began with a goal to make a difference in people’s lives through Nursing. Now he can say he does just that, but he has also been instrumental in the success of NCC’s Multicultural Club where he makes a difference in the lives of numerous students and future nurses. Many of these students will be inspired to provide support to future students, just as Samson was. Like a pebble dropped in a pond, this ripple effect will leave a lasting impact.

If you have an interest in participating in or supporting upcoming NCC mission trips or Multicultural Club events, please contact Samson Nyambati at snyambati@nwicc.edu or (800) 352-4907 ext. 271.
Northwest Iowa Community College has received a $50,000 2022 Future Ready Iowa Employer Innovation Fund Grant from the State of Iowa. NCC will be creating an industry-recognized, non-credit certificate program in Industrial Maintenance. The grant funds will specifically support the purchase of needed equipment for the training program.

This new industry-recognized, non-credit certificate program in Industrial Maintenance will focus on skills needed in both electrical and mechanical fields. The 200-hour training program will teach industrial maintenance technicians to maintain, repair, and replace electrical and mechanical systems key to manufacturing processes. The program covers shop math, measurement, blueprint reading, tools, electrical safety, variable frequency drives, programmable logic controllers, troubleshooting techniques, maintenance of bearings, motors, process controls, hydraulics/pneumatics, pumps and valves, and lubrication of equipment.

The goal is twofold. Firstly, help those that are unemployed or underemployed begin a career in an in-demand field. Secondly, NCC will help to fill job openings that are vital to the success of our area business partners. By completing this program, which was created with company feedback during the curriculum design stage, participants will be able to immediately enter into employment with NCC business partners.

NCC has partnered with area manufacturers, food processors, and bio-industries to create a training certificate program that will provide a broad skill set that is acceptable for new entry-level hires within their organizations. Company feedback during roundtable events have ensured the curriculum and training equipment that will be used is appropriate.

Upon successful completion, participants will have an NCC Industrial Maintenance non-credit certificate that is locally recognized along with industry-recognized credentials from the National Coalition of Certification Centers (NC3) and Amatrol training systems. There will be NC3 or Amatrol certification showing participants’ competency in each subject area of the program.

Finally, this training program is being created to allow business partners to develop apprenticeship opportunities. The curriculum can also be used to serve as the Related Technical Instruction component for an Iowa Workforce and Development registered apprenticeship.

Jason Anderson, NCC Director of Workforce and Economic Development said, “Northwest Iowa businesses and NCC are beginning to come together to address the statewide Industry 4.0 initiatives. Many of the skills learned within the Industrial Maintenance program can serve as foundational knowledge for automation and operational technology training needs that local companies currently have. The equipment purchased with the help of this grant will allow for more training programs to be created quickly to meet area needs.”

“NCC is addressing a pressing industry need,” said Dr. John Hartog, NCC President.

“By involving our local industry partners in the development of this non-credit training, we are providing solutions to real and persistent workforce shortages in our area.

Manufacturers, food processors, and other plants desperately need skilled industrial maintenance technicians, and NCC wants to help. This training initiative will allow individuals who are currently in a lower paying job and who have no means to attend a for-credit program to enhance their job opportunities in a shorter amount of time. We are also confident that these non-credit training opportunities will enhance our existing, for-credit applied technology programs."

The Industrial Maintenance Training certificate program is planned to start the summer of 2022. To find out more about the program, both individuals looking to register and industry leaders wanting specific employee training, please call Jason Anderson at 712-324-5061 ext. 194, or email him at janderson@nwicc.edu.
Agriculture
The online Agriculture program draws students from all across the United States, with students from 17 different states currently enrolled in the program that was recently recognized as #3 in the nation (onlineschoolsguide.net). Amanda LaRoe is a current, first-year Agriculture student who is taking the program fully online from her home in Michigan. She discovered the program through an online search and liked that the program provides a broad overview of the agriculture industry. Amanda’s interest in Agriculture came from her involvement in 4-H and FFA throughout high school. A long-term career goal she has is to work in farm/barn management with an emphasis in equine or cow breeding. Amanda enjoys being able to work and manage the program. She stated, “I would highly recommend NCC’s Agriculture program to other distance students. The program is very easy to manage as I have been able to continue working and still have some free time. The assistance from counselors, instructors and other college staff has been exceptional.”

Automotive & Light Duty Diesel
*Best Accredited Colleges* recently ranked the Automotive & Light Duty Diesel Technology program as #4 in the Nation for best associate degrees in Automotive Technology. *Best Accredited Colleges* uses criteria such as financial aid, tuition cost, retention rates, student-faculty ratio, support and resources, and graduation rates when creating their rankings.

Diesel Technology
Welcome to Brent Noteboom and Eric Spanjer! Brent began at NCC in the spring of 2022 as NCC’s 2nd year Diesel Technology Instructor. He holds a degree in Farm Equipment and Diesel Technology. Throughout the past twenty years, he has worked at John Deere in West Bend, IA, and Freeman, SD, Tom’s Repair in Granville, IA, AgriVision, and he most recently served as a warehouse and material coordinator for North West REC. Eric began at NCC in the spring of 2022 as NCC’s part-time Diesel Technology Program Lab Assistant. He has owned and operated Sheldon Countryside Repair for a number of years. NCC is excited for Brent and Eric to share their extensive backgrounds with Diesel Technology students!

Accounting
Best Accredited Colleges recently ranked the Accounting program as #6 in the Nation for best online associate degrees in Accounting. Best Accredited Colleges uses criteria such as financial aid, tuition cost, retention rates, student-faculty ratio, support and resources, and graduation rates when creating their rankings.

The Accounting program has an opening for a full-time instructor. If you hold a Master’s Degree in Accounting and have a passion for higher education, consider applying for this position. Apply online at www.nwicc.edu.
Heavy Equipment
The Heavy Equipment Operation & Maintenance program is busy with a variety of projects this spring and summer. Current and upcoming projects include: NCC Powerline field, Sheldon Community School District Turf field, Rock Valley Rural Water pond equalization, Rock Valley Sewer and Clay County Conservation projects.

NCC was saddened to hear of the passing of Lyle Mosier. Lyle served as an Instructor for NCC’s Heavy Equipment Operation & Maintenance program from 1981–1998. In Lyle’s 17 years of teaching, he trained numerous heavy equipment operators and touched the lives of many. Lyle passed away on February 24, 2022.

Industrial & Commercial Wiring/Electrical Technology
The Industrial & Commercial Wiring program is at capacity for incoming students for the fall 2022 semester. The program currently has a waitlist in place. Beginning for fall 2023 acceptance, a $100.00 advanced tuition deposit will be required to hold a spot in the program. Quality, trained electricians continue to be in high-demand!

Medical Laboratory Technology
More students are inquiring about this new program opportunity in Northwest Iowa. The program is shared between Kirkwood Community College (KCC) and NCC. Students dually enroll at KCC and NCC. Kirkwood provides the core MLT courses and NCC provides the general education courses. Students complete core courses and lab requirements in a hybrid format. Students will graduate from Kirkwood Community College. Upon successful completion of the program, students are eligible to take the national certification exam from the American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP).

Industrial Instrumentation & Control
The Industrial Instrumentation & Control Department is currently in the preliminary planning stages to update and re-tool the instrumentation lab. Stay tuned for future updates!

Medical Coding/Health Information Technology
The Health Information Technology and Medical Coding students continue to complete program courses online through NCC. The college uses CANVAS as its Learning Management System (LMS). In addition to this technology, students also learn using the 3M Health Information Systems encoder and grouper software, the EHR Go electronic health record simulation exercises, and Microsoft Office applications such as Word, PowerPoint, Excel and Access. Textbooks continue to update their online student resources while some books are completely electronic. Honing these technology skills is essential as health information continues to evolve in healthcare settings, the industry, the country, and the world.

Online Programs
NCC has been recognized as the top online community college in Iowa by UniversityHQ.org and continues to explore ways to expand offerings. NCC has been participating in a statewide initiative to research a graphic design transfer agreement between the Iowa community colleges and the Iowa Regents. While nothing has yet been decided, the discussions are informing ways in which we can add a transfer path to our Web & Graphic Design program.

The pandemic has shown that more and more employees are working remotely. Our online Virtual Administrative Management program prepares students to manage remote offices to meet this growing need.

Pharmacy Technician
Students can now take the Pharmacy Technician program completely online. The certificate option can also be completed entirely online and is now only one semester in length. Graduates are able to sit for the Pharmacy Technician Certification Exam after completing either the certificate or diploma option. These changes allow NCC to train more Pharmacy Technicians and prepare them more quickly for certification.

Radiologic Technology
The Radiologic Technology program is gaining an energized lab on campus. The new lab will host three stationary machines and will simulate a real lab environment. The program thanks Sioux Center Health for its donation of one of these machines to be installed in the new lab space.
What are YOU up to?
We love to connect with alums and want to hear your stories of success! Email alumni@nwicc.edu or go to nwicc.edu/alumni-foundation/what-are-you-doing to share your latest update! Your success is our story!

Future Ready Iowa Scholarships are guaranteed for many programs offered at NCC! Scholarships range from $500–full tuition.

IF YOU LIVE IN IOWA, YOU AUTOMATICALLY QUALIFY!!

Here’s what you need to know: Iowa needs workers, and they also understand that finances can be a roadblock to many students. There is a scholarship opportunity called The Future Ready Iowa Last-Dollar Scholarship that will fill in the gap between your scholarships and total tuition due.

The only requirement is that you fill out a FAFSA each year to qualify and attend a school that offers qualifying programs to be eligible for a potential full-funded college education. Good news...we offer tons of qualifying programs at NCC.

FREE COLLEGE?
YES, PLEASE!

Find out more at nwicc.edu/future-ready-iowa