



ALUMNI PAY IT FORWARD

A large percentage of Kalamazoo Valley employees were once students here. The college is known as a high quality educational option as well as a great place to work.

Athletics department secretary at Kalamazoo Valley, Lisa Sanborn, decided to go back to school right about the time her children were attending.

"I had some experience with Valley since my two older children attended the same time I was deciding to attend, and I knew they liked it and had positive things to say about Kalamazoo Valley," said Sanborn. "I chose it also because it was a better fit for someone who was going back as an adult."

She felt at ease with the student population at Kalamazoo Valley since there are many non-traditional students on campus. Cost and a location close to home were also factors.

While pursuing her degree in occupational technical studies, Sanborn met support staff and faculty who were caring, helpful people. "I sought employment here because of the great experiences I had attending as a student," she said. "I really felt that this was a progressive and positive place to put my degree to use."

Sanborn said accessing resources and asking for help enhances the college experience. "My advice for others is to take advantage of everything Kalamazoo Valley offers. Use the tutors in the Learning Center. Talk with counselors. Ask for help in the computer lab," she said. "Don't go at it alone. Get the advice you need from the experts who work here."

English instructor Ron Higginbotham is

so happy with his job at Kalamazoo Valley that he sometimes feels like pinching himself to make sure he's not dreaming. "My students know I came from nothing," he said. "I like to start by telling them where I came from."

The Louisiana native was once forced to wear a dunce cap in front of his classmates. Humiliating experiences in grade school made him certain that his career options were bleak. He assumed "weak mind, strong back" was a motto that applied to him.

"I have a special attachment to the college because this is where I came to save myself," he said. "I feel very fortunate that I got hired. I can't believe what I'm doing. I fell into the right place with the right group of people."

Higginbotham was hired full time in 2010 to teach English and developmental education classes. "I love it. I love these students," he said. "In a way, I see myself in them." He remembers sitting in class and feeling like an outsider. "I can't do what other people have done to me," he vowed. He assures his students that he believes in them. "I have a different perspective," he said. "When I say I empathize, I really do."

Higginbotham, a former Checker Motors employee, said Kalamazoo Valley changed his life. "For the first time in my life, I feel like I'm doing something that matters," he said. "I think it's important to reach down and pull someone else up, and I feel very fortunate to be able to do that."

Carol Heeter will retire from Kalamazoo Valley this month after 31 years in the Information Technologies department. She was a non-traditional student who enrolled in her 30s as a single mother with



Former student and current English instructor Ron Higginbotham

three young children. "I knew I needed to do something to keep my family moving forward and the idea of working with computers intrigued me," she said. "I never thought I'd be here for 31 years, but it's been a good place to be."

Heeter took classes during the day when her children were in school. "I was in class with 18 and 19-year-olds so I had a lot of young friendships," she said. "It was kind of fun seeing their perspective. It was enlightening. It keeps you young."

Heeter earned an associate degree in computer programming and was initially hired as a laboratory technician. She was a programmer and a systems analyst before becoming the director of Administrative Computing. She also went on to earn a bachelor's degree in business administration from Nazareth College. "That was two years of intensive study," Heeter said. "Sometimes I wonder how I did it all."

She's enjoyed helping the college to move forward in terms of technology. "When I first started we had a monster of a machine, System 38, that had far less memory and power than a typical cell

phone, but technology has evolved and we keep moving forward," she said.

Director of Student Services, Diane Vandenberg, has worked at Kalamazoo Valley for 15 years. "My experience as a student was so great, I knew back then that I would want to return to work here," Vandenberg said.

Vandenberg transferred from Kalamazoo Valley to Western Michigan University where she earned degrees in both elementary and secondary education. While exploring career options, she discovered an intriguing job posting. "I got on Valley's website and found a job here as coordinator of Women's Services," she said. For a time, she also taught Career Decision Making and in 2004, she became the director of Student Recruitment. She has been an administrator in the Student Success Center since February 2008.

"I knew I wanted to work in education for the rest of my life," Vandenberg said. "I also wanted to work at an institution that values excellence. Kalamazoo Valley fit the bill. To work in a place where every person I work with truly cares about student success is very satisfying."

THE FOUNDATION BUILDING STUDENT SUCCESS WITH SCHOLARSHIPS

The Kalamazoo Valley Community College Foundation plays a major role in providing students with scholarships and other forms of financial aid. The 36-year-old Foundation is an independent 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Donations are always accepted and can be earmarked for specific purposes such as scholarships, equipment to improve instruction, and the construction of new facilities.

This year, the Foundation distributed \$350,000 in scholarships to Kalamazoo Valley students. Steve Doherty, who has served as the Foundation director for the last 15 years, said more than half of the college's students apply for some form of financial aid and the Foundation is able to assist about 40 percent of the applicants.

"I am sincerely thankful to Kalamazoo Valley for having an amazing impact on

my life," said scholarship recipient Chelsea Packard, who is a pre-nursing student. "I've never been so grateful to receive something before."

Doherty said support of the Foundation has grown steadily. It isn't uncommon for a family to create a scholarship in memory of a loved one or a local business to donate a large sum to benefit student scholarships.

Recently, the Foundation received a \$10,000 check from OnStaff USA to benefit the Janet G. Allkins Memorial Endowment. The Janet G. Allkins Scholarship was established in 2011 by Allkins' son Patrick in memory of his mother. Each year, two business administration students receive \$500 scholarships from the fund.

"Money that comes in goes right out," said Doherty. "That's why we're always working to raise money for student scholarships." There are a variety of ways to make donations to the Foundation. Cash contributions are accepted, as are matching gifts. Many companies have established matching gift programs in support of education. Through this type of giving, employers match the donations made by current or retired employees. Information about this type of giving is usually available through an employer's human resources office.

Gifts for endowments are investments in a permanent fund that earn money for the college every year thereafter. The principal from the endowment remains invested and the earnings are used to fund the annual award.

The Foundation may also be named the beneficiary in a bequest. A bequest is a statement in a will that provides a gift for the Foundation's endowment or to an unrestricted fund to perpetuate the donor's future interests.

Charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder annuity trusts, and charitable lead trusts are all ways to donate to the Foundation. In addition, it is possible to designate the Foundation as a beneficiary of an insurance policy that is no longer needed.

For more information about the Foundation, contact Steve Doherty, sdoherty@kvcc.edu or 269.488.4442.

PROMISE SCHOLARS FIND SUCCESS

SUPPORT AT KALAMAZOO VALLEY



Kalamazoo Promise scholar Diamond Johnson

Diamond Johnson doesn't have a big sister. She found two, though, at Kalamazoo Valley Community College.

The 18-year-old Kalamazoo Central graduate considers her Kalamazoo Promise coach, Monteze Morales, and her Kalamazoo Promise counselor, Ciji Gamble, the older siblings she never had.

"They're like big sisters," Johnson said. "They provide the support and direction I need."

Morales and Gamble are part of the Kalamazoo Promise Services staff. While the college has provided support services to Promise students since the scholarship was announced in 2005, the Kalamazoo Promise Services department was created in 2014 to address the increased number of Promise students attending Kalamazoo Valley. Kalamazoo Promise Services offers academic and student support to Kalamazoo Promise eligible students. Through a series of appointments, the Kalamazoo Promise coach and the Kalamazoo Promise counselor assist students in successfully completing their academic goals. Students using The Kalamazoo Promise to attend Kalamazoo

Valley are required to utilize these support services. Both positions are funded by The Kalamazoo Promise.

"Many of our Kalamazoo Promise students have more challenging paths to success," said Bob Jorth, executive director of The Kalamazoo Promise. "The support of the Kalamazoo Promise Services staff offers one of the greatest opportunities to improve the success of Promise scholars."

More than 50 percent of Promise students use some portion of their Promise award at Kalamazoo Valley, according to Jorth.

"Kalamazoo Valley is the most popular and by far the least expensive place to receive a post-secondary education on The Kalamazoo Promise," Jorth said. "We have found that getting students, at any institution, to access support services on a voluntary basis has been problematic. We are able to offer additional funds to Kalamazoo Valley while still maintaining the affordability. We are requiring students to access these supports and are also assisting the school in increasing its capacity to provide these services."

Students schedule recurring appointments with the staff to stay updated on their academic progress to help ensure successful goal completion.

Morales, a Promise coach, is a student's Kalamazoo Promise contact person on campus. Serving as a mentor, she helps students navigate the college system – connecting them with the services and resources available to them on campus.

"College can be difficult," Morales said. "But with the proper help and support, students can succeed. As their Promise coach, I'm there for them from start to finish. Degree completion is the ultimate goal."

Students meet with Morales before school starts to complete their Kalamazoo Promise scholarship acceptance form. She continues to meet with students through regularly scheduled appointments to ensure that they are staying on track. She

contacts the nearly 500 students who attend Valley on the Promise several times throughout each semester.

Gamble, a Promise counselor, advises Promise students on program options, assists in course selection, discusses transfer options and course scheduling.

"Students don't know what they don't know," Gamble said. "I'm here to help fill in those blanks – whether it's how to register for classes at the downtown campus or finding a class that has tutoring included."

Gamble pays particular attention to students who are struggling academically.

"Students must maintain a certain grade point average to remain Promise eligible," Gamble said. "I'm here to help keep them motivated and make sure they are taking the right classes at the right time to successfully complete their degree."

Nina Ruiz was one of those students. The 21-year-old Kalamazoo Central graduate began her college career at Western Michigan University. An honor student in high school, she felt overwhelmed on the large campus. She left and took a semester off. She came to Valley in 2014, met with Gamble and Morales, and has thrived in a community college setting.

"Ciji really helped me develop a plan to get back on track and has supported me beyond measure," Ruiz said. "She has been so motivating and helped create a real sense of success for me."

Ruiz finishes up her studies at Valley this year and will return to Western full time in the fall of 2017, as an early childhood education and Spanish double major. Gamble connected her with an advisor at WMU, and together, the three have a plan to ensure that Ruiz is taking the correct classes at Valley that will transfer and count toward her bachelor's degree. She plans to attend graduate school and eventually become a pre-school teacher.

As a licensed professional counselor, Gamble also can assist students with

personal concerns and college-related issues such as time management, motivation and stress.

"College is new and can be overwhelming," she said. "I help students deal with those feelings."

Additionally, Morales and Gamble host meetings during the semester to connect students with other services and resources on campus.

Morales found Johnson an opportunity to work on campus. The psychology major is now working 16 hours a week while maintaining a full class load. She plans to complete her associate degree at Valley and transfer to Western Michigan University.

In addition to informational meetings, a luncheon is held once a semester giving students an opportunity to socialize and review their progress reports with the Kalamazoo Promise Services team.

"The students are genuinely excited to have specific people dedicated to helping them succeed," Gamble said.

And that dedication is paying off.

"The ultimate goal of The Kalamazoo Promise is post-secondary credential attainment: certificate, associate degree or bachelor's degree. Kalamazoo Valley offers a pathway to all of these credentials," Jorth said. "In less than two years, we are seeing improvements in grade-point average, credit completion and numbers of students attending Kalamazoo Valley. These indicators bode well for credential completions to go up in the very near future."

Kalamazoo Promise Services is located in the Student Success Center, Room 9300, on the Texas Township Campus.

For more information about Kalamazoo Promise Services, visit www.kvcc.edu/services/successcenter/kpromise.html.



FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

Michael Clarke

Biology instructor Michael Clarke was one of six instructors to receive a 2016 Faculty Instructional Award. Clarke has taught for Kalamazoo Valley since January 2015. He earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Michigan and a master's degree from Western Michigan University. In addition to teaching a Kalamazoo Valley class on Saturdays, he is a full-time instructor at Grand Valley State University.

"I love my Saturday crew," Clarke said. "People who go to class on Saturday are very motivated. I see a lot of self-driven people at the community college. The vast majority of people are there because they want to better themselves."

Clarke said he works hard to develop good relationships with his students. "I want them to believe that the environment they're going into is one that wants them to succeed," he said. "I have never wanted a student to do poorly. I want them to know that I believe in them."

That supportive attitude came through loud and clear to the students who nominated him for the Faculty Instructional Award. "Mr. Clarke is very passionate about what he teaches and it shows through each and every lecture," one student said. "He makes each topic we discuss in anatomy and physiology very easy to follow

and understand, which is no small feat because anatomy is not an easy course. This anatomy class is laying the foundation for my health career major and I wouldn't want to have taken it with any other professor. He is good at teaching and making even the most difficult of concepts easy to grasp. He is very personable and is willing to do what it takes to help each student succeed academically."

Another student gave Clarke an impressive compliment. "Prior to attending Kalamazoo Valley, I earned a bachelor's degree at another university," the student said. "I can say without a doubt that Mr. Clarke's dedication to his students' learning ranks among the highest of any professor I've ever had. Community college classes are incredibly diverse with students of all ages who stretch across a wide spectrum of subject knowledge and educational experience. Mr. Clarke teaches the material in a way that

is easily accessible to his students, translatable to the real world, and, considering anatomy and physiology is a subject requiring the memorization of a massive amount of information in such a short time span as one semester, he does his best in helping to make it retainable."

Because his students are with him for more than six hours each Saturday, Clarke said he does his best to create a friendly, encouraging environment. "I try to make the classroom a place where everyone belongs," he said.

In addition to his passion for teaching, Clarke is an animal lover, a proud uncle and a supportive brother. "My nephew Steven is the coolest person I've ever met," Clarke said. "School, family and pets are pretty much what I'm about." He has three dogs and four cats and may go on to veterinary school. "I don't think I can ever give up teaching, though. It's my calling card," he said.

A STEPPING STONE TO A BRIGHT FUTURE



Genevieve McDaniel

Like many high school students, Genevieve McDaniel planned to get out of town as fast as she could. A middle child, she couldn't wait to leave her hometown and venture out on her own. "I didn't think Kalamazoo Valley was going to be the ideal place for me, but then I looked at my bank account," the Lawton High School graduate said. "It's been such a great experience – better than I could have imagined! I've had some of my best instructors here and I've really been challenged."

McDaniel, an officer with the school's Phi Theta Kappa honor society, graduated in December with an associate degree in liberal arts. Before

she transfers to a university to complete a bachelor's degree, she plans to travel to Israel and Hungary. "It was a big decision, but because I went to Kalamazoo Valley, I can afford to do it. I'm not in debt," she said. Her parents, Timothy and Martha McDaniel, were a little surprised by their daughter's ambitions, but they are totally supportive. "My parents were hesitant at first, but they said if you think you can do it, go for it!"

McDaniel was chosen to speak at Kalamazoo Valley's commencement ceremony on Dec. 18. She reflected on her time at Kalamazoo Valley and explained her future plans. Her father is an adaptive physical education teacher who has stressed the importance of education and encouraged his daughter to dream big.

During her second semester at Kalamazoo Valley, McDaniel took an Introduction to Psychology class with instructor Steven Louisell, who encouraged her to apply to the Honors Program. "The Honors Program pushed me, but not just academically," she said. "I met some of my closest friends through the program. It helped me realize that not all of life has a social dynamic like high school. I've loved Kalamazoo Valley's diverse student

population. It helped me grow a lot and staying home has strengthened my relationship with my parents and my sisters."

McDaniel's original focus was to work with animals but that has shifted to working with people. "For a long time I wanted to work with animals because I thought I didn't like people," she said. Eventually, she began to find her work on horse farms draining. Instead, she now finds social interaction invigorating. "It's opened me up to new experiences and helped me gain confidence," she said of Kalamazoo Valley. She spent two weeks in Hungary last summer and is now eagerly planning her next adventure. She will spend three months in Israel working in a hostel. After that, she'll travel to Hungary. After she gains certification as an English as a Second Language instructor, she'll remain there teaching for a few months.

She's also weighing her options for next year when she returns to the United States. She has applied to Kalamazoo College, the University of Michigan, University of Chicago, and Yale. "It was nice to come here and be challenged," McDaniel said. "I know this has been a stepping stone on to greater things."



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT
Jillian Howland

College can be intimidating at any age, but Jillian Howland was not deterred – even though she first came to Kalamazoo Valley as a high school student. "I started at Kalamazoo Valley when I was 16," she said. "I was a home school student following in the footsteps of many before me, but what I liked best were the relationships I was able to form with the Kalamazoo Valley community."

She graduated in May with an associate degree in chemical technology and is now double majoring in biochemistry and molecular biology and genetics and molecular genomics at Michigan State University. Before she graduated, she worked at Kalamazoo Valley as a microbiology lab assistant. Straight out of Kalamazoo Valley, she landed a job as a research assistant at MSU's Center for Microbial Ecology.

"The best preparation I received was hands-on laboratory work," Howland said. "In every Kalamazoo Valley science class, a lab is required with the lecture. Because of this I was able to immerse myself in the laboratory environment sooner than most undergraduates. When I accepted a research position, the transition time was shorter than anticipated due to my knowledge of the lab and the work within. I was also recently informed by my Post Doc advisor that she has had the most confidence in my work than any of her other undergrads."

In the lab at Kalamazoo Valley, Howland was responsible for the maintenance of the microbiology lab, during and in between classes. She also trained new lab assistants so they could successfully fill her position when she transferred to MSU.

Howland said Kalamazoo Valley's instructors helped ensure her success. "Every instructor I had the privilege of working with was 100 percent willing to help me succeed," she said. "More than one told me 'once you are my student, you are always my student,' and asked me to keep in touch with them."

Those relationships helped prepare her for life at MSU. "The relationships I was able to form with my instructors and classmates are so cherished and because of them I am much more confident and comfortable approaching my university classmates and professors," Howland said.

She encourages other students to take the time to get to know classmates, instructors and professors. "Take the time to go to office hours and ask as many questions as possible," she said. "It is far better to go a bit slower and fully understand what is being taught than it is to play catch-up down the road."

WELDING STUDENT ON HISTORY CHANNEL'S FORGED IN FIRE

A love for creating quality hand-made tools with the skill and craftsmanship of yesteryear recently earned a Kalamazoo Valley Community College welding technology student national television exposure.

Nineteen-year-old Chase Wilder of Kalamazoo appeared on "Forged in Fire," an original History Channel series in October. The show, in its third season, pits world-class bladesmiths against one another to create history's most iconic edged weapons, ranging from a Viking battle ax and hooked sword to a spiked shield and boar spear.

In each episode, four of the nation's finest bladesmiths put their skills and reputations to the test in a three-round elimination contest in hopes of winning a \$10,000 prize. Contestants use traditional and state-of-the-art tools to turn raw metal into authentic, fully functional implements of war. A panel of experts specializing in weapon history and usage crown the winner the "Forged in Fire" champion.

While Wilder didn't walk away with the top prize, he says his time on the show was one he'll never forget.

"It was a very awesome experience," Wilder said. "I'd watched the show, so it was interesting to see what goes on behind the scenes."

He was flown to New York and spent two days meeting the other contestants, doing interviews, visiting the set and finally competing.

His appearance on the popular show has increased interest in his own business, Wilder Forge.

"I create and sell quality hand-forged knives, tomahawks, fire steels, period cookware, and bushcraft gear," Wilder said. "Each and every piece that comes out of my shop has been forged to shape by hand, on an anvil, with a hammer, the same way the smiths of old did it."

He has a vast customer base – shipping items nationally and internationally.

"I hear from a lot of people who saw me on the show. It's pretty exciting," he said.

Making knives began as a hobby for Wilder, who was home schooled, when he was just 14.

"I have experience in many areas of blacksmithing, but I specialize in making high carbon steel knife blades," he said. "I love what I do. Every piece that comes out of my shop is a reflection of how much I enjoy my craft."



Chase Wilder competes on "Forged in Fire." Photo courtesy of "Forged in Fire."

He opened his store in 2013.

"I spend a lot of time using knives while hunting and prowling the woods. I have learned what kinds of knives are the most useful in a given situation," he said "My goal is to offer hand-made goods, reminiscent of a time when things were not engineered to fail, and when things were still built with pride in America. Items that are far too rare in today's world."

Wilder will graduate with a welding technology certificate in April of 2017 and plans to enter the workforce, while expanding his online presence and growing his business.

"My welding certificate gives me some real marketable skills and the job market is great right now for welders – a lot better than a bladesmith – so I'll work at doing both."

For more information, visit www.wilderforge.com.

EARN AND LEARN

APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM OFFERS TRAINING, CREDENTIALS AND A PAYCHECK

Ryan Storehalder, 39, spends his days working at global healthcare supplier Perrigo Company as a dual trade repair/electrician journeyman worker and automation control technician apprentice. At the end of his shift, he travels to Kalamazoo Valley Community College to take classes in the fundamentals and operation of automation control variable speed drives.

After winter semester, Storehalder will have three more courses to complete before he earns his Automation Control Technician Apprenticeship Certificate of Completion from the U.S. Department of Labor, and have a wealth of new skills under his belt. This is the third apprenticeship the Plainwell resident has taken at Kalamazoo Valley during his 15 years at Perrigo. His classes are paid for by his employer, leaving him debt free and adding more credentials to his resume.

"The classes are very applicable to work and the instructors are very knowledgeable," Storehalder said. "Being part of the apprenticeship program offers good pay, opportunities to work in different areas of the company and endless opportunities to learn new skills."

Storehalder is one of 313 active apprentices at Kalamazoo Valley – a number that has nearly doubled in the last two years, according to LaJoyce Brooks, director of Apprenticeships at Kalamazoo Valley.

"There is a real demand for people in the skilled trades," Brooks said. "Companies are constantly looking for talented people. The pool is low and the demand is high."

An apprenticeship, Brooks explained,

is a method of career preparation for those careers which do not lend themselves to preparation by classroom study alone. There are two components that prepare an apprentice for success: on-the-job training and technical-related instruction of theory and practice. Required classroom instruction is typically provided by technical schools and community colleges. The program allows for advancement and progressive wages, and is driven and funded by sponsoring employers. Apprenticeships vary in length – ranging from one to six years, with the majority requiring a completion of 2,000 work hours. Throughout that time, apprentices work, learn and earn as employees. Programs are endorsed by and registered with the U.S. Department of Labor.

Upon completion, apprentices receive a nationally recognized certificate from the U.S. Department of Labor, as proof of their qualifications. Additionally, Brooks said, the classroom instruction received during the apprenticeship often counts toward other licenses, certifications and college degrees – making the employee even more marketable. The most popular apprenticeships at Kalamazoo Valley include electrical, HVAC, engineering/manufacturing and industrial technology.

Since 1979, Kalamazoo Valley has offered apprenticeship training programs to area employers. Brooks currently works with more than 70 different companies, including Perrigo Company, American Axle, Stryker Instruments, Mol-Son, Landscape Forms, Parker Hannifin, Metal Technologies, and Esper Electric. As program sponsors, they choose the apprentices, develop the training

standards, and pay wages and tuition.

Brooks works with Kalamazoo Valley faculty and each company's onsite apprenticeship coordinator to design programs to match the necessary technical and academic skills for a specific job. The goal, she said, is to provide workers with advanced skillsets that meet the specific needs of the employer.

The benefits to the employer, she added, include reduced training costs, long-term employee commitment, and a workforce that keeps the company competitive, flexible, and adaptive.

"It's a great partnership that is a win-win for everyone involved," she said. "Every person is passionate about the success and development of the employees."

Diane Long, apprenticeship coordinator at Perrigo Company, and a former apprentice herself, agrees.

"We have a wonderful working relationship with Kalamazoo Valley. On average we have 12-15 employees enrolled in classes at Valley each semester," Long said. "Perrigo apprentices have been taking classes at Kalamazoo Valley for more than 20 years."

And while those numbers are impressive, Long said, they must increase in order for companies like Perrigo to fill important skilled-trade positions.

"We are constantly looking for good people," Long said. "The need for people in the skilled trades is huge and is only going to increase in the coming years." Over the next decade, nearly 3.5 million manufacturing jobs will likely need to be filled and the skills gap is expected

to result in two million of those jobs going unfilled, according to a recent survey by The Manufacturing Institute and Deloitte.

The two major factors contributing to the widening gap are the impending retirement of nearly 76.4 million baby boomers and economic expansion. Baby boomers occupy the majority of all skilled-trade positions. For example, 72 percent of electrical workers are 45 years old and older, with 38 percent of electrical jobs being held by workers over the age of 55.

In addition to retirements and economic expansion, the survey also found that other factors influencing the widening gap include the loss of embedded knowledge due to movement of experienced workers, a negative image of the manufacturing industry among younger generations, lack of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) skills among workers, and a gradual decline of technical education programs in public high schools.

To address these needs, Kalamazoo Valley offers numerous classes as well as certificates and degrees in the skill trades.

Together with faculty and staff at Kalamazoo Valley, Brooks hopes to change the perception of the professions in the skilled trades. "These aren't just jobs, these are careers," Brooks said. "These are fields that promise job security, excellent earning and advancement potential."

Companies interested in partnering with Kalamazoo Valley Community College to provide training in the skilled trades should contact Brooks at lbrooks@kvcc.edu.

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