

# Agent in training: Lakeview student excelling in Early College at MCC

Jack Snyder says the program is ‘efficient and cost-effective’

Submitted by MCC

SIDNEY — Jack Snyder, 17, of Lakeview wants to be a special agent with the FBI.

The Early College program at Montcalm Community College is helping him reach that goal.

“I’m currently working toward a degree in criminal justice from MCC through the MiTransfer Pathway option,” Snyder said. “This allows me to get my basic classes done and out of the way, and then transfer to a four-year university.”

Early College enables juniors from participating high schools in the Montcalm Area Intermediate School District to complete high school while taking college classes. They may earn up to two years of college credit or an associate degree as part of their high school learning experience.

“The Early College program stood out to me because of how efficient and cost-effective it was for me,” he said. “I knew after high school I wanted to go on to college and get my bachelor’s and MCC offered a way for me to get a foot ahead of my peers with no extra cost.”

Snyder said his favorite part of the program is the independence it gives. He said students are treated as adults and that is a change from high school.

Snyder’s favorite classes at MCC are his criminal justice classes because of how they relate to his degree.

“One of my favorite classes I’ve had is Introduction to Criminal Justice with Kevin Sweeney,” he said. “Not only was the class very enjoyable, but a lot of discussions took place in that class where I had to apply critical thinking skills to find a good answer, not to mention the material was also interesting to me.”

In the Early College program, each student is partnered with a mentor to help them along the way.

“While I was not a big fan of having a mentor, I quickly realized how helpful it was to have someone who was familiar with the process,” Snyder said.



Jack Snyder is getting a head start on a criminal justice degree at Montcalm Community College. — Submitted photo

“My mentor, David Pyle, has helped me through not only college-level classes, but also personal dilemmas that I’ve dealt with.”

Pyle, who also is an instructor in the Early College program, said Snyder is a strong student and isn’t afraid to ask questions.

“All in all, Jack is a polite, punctual and focused student,” Pyle said. “I am sure he will do well out in the ‘real world’ representing the Early College Program and MCC in a positive manner.”

One of the most challenging things for Snyder was acclimating to the college environment. He also said planning and prioritizing the workload took some getting used to.

“It’s hard coming from a high school where you know everybody to go to a new environment where there are separate buildings for separate classes and you’re meeting new students, but also after your first year you’re also meeting new professors with different standards,” he said.

The Early College program allows

## A CLOSER LOOK AT EARLY COLLEGE AT MCC

At Early College, students benefit from a personalized learning environment that fosters the development of critical thinking skills within an innovative curriculum that promotes excellence in the fields of math, English, social studies and science. Students will spend their entire school day at Montcalm Community College for grades 11-13.

Early College accepts up to 45 students per year, and students must apply for admission to the program during their sophomore year of high school the spring prior to enrolling. Participants earn a high school diploma and up to 60 college credits, tuition free.

Each participating school is allotted seats based on its total school headcount. Participating schools include Belding, Carson City-Crystal, Central Montcalm, Greenville, Lakeview, Montabella, Saranac, Tri County and Vestaburg.

Shannon Tripp, associate superintendent of the CTE/Early College program, visits all participating high schools each spring and offers multiple informational meetings so students and their families can learn more about the program. Whether your school district participates in the program or not, you may be eligible to become an Early College student.

Applications are available at the parent night informational meetings, at the counseling office at participating high schools, by stopping by MCC or by emailing [earlycollege@montcalm.edu](mailto:earlycollege@montcalm.edu) or calling Tripp at 616-225-5706.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

**Visit:** [montcalm.edu/early-college](http://montcalm.edu/early-college)  
**Email:** [earlycollege@montcalm.edu](mailto:earlycollege@montcalm.edu)  
**Call:** (616) 225-5706

students to get a step ahead of their peers, Snyder said.

“It is also very cost-effective because the Early College program is no cost to the students,” he said. “You have two full years of college for free and not many people can graduate with an associate degree and say that they got it for free.”

In his free time, Snyder likes to work-out, hunt, fish, and play with his dog.

He would recommend the Early College program to his peers because of all the opportunities it offers.

“I would strongly recommend anyone who is even interested in the idea of it to go to a parent meeting and find out a little bit more about the program,” Snyder said.

Get a

# tuition-free college degree



## while in high school!

Early College at MCC allows high school students to earn up to two years of college credit, or an associate degree or occupational training certificate, while completing their high school education. The three-year program encompasses grades 11 through 13.

Students benefit from a personalized learning environment that fosters the development of critical thinking skills within an innovative curriculum that promotes excellence in the fields of math, English, social studies and science.

### benefits

- Earn a high school diploma and up to 60 college credits, tuition free.
- Reduce time in college by one year if an associate degree is earned.
- Successfully transition to a college environment.
- No tuition or fees paid by the students or their families.
- Potential savings of \$25,000 to \$50,000 (if a student planned to attend a university and live on campus).
- Students may still participate in activities at their home school such as athletics, performing arts and clubs.

### information

Contact Shannon Tripp at **616-225-5706** or **[earlycollege@montcalm.edu](mailto:earlycollege@montcalm.edu)**



Montcalm Community College