

**MCHENRY COUNTY COMMUNITY RESPONDING TO NATIONAL ECONOMIC DECLINE BY
OFFERING FREE TUITION AT MCHENRY COUNTY COLLEGE TO LOCAL STUDENTS**

[Jan. 9, 2009. Crystal Lake, IL] The MCC Promise, a unique community-funded program for prospective McHenry County College (MCC) students, is causing people to think twice about staying close to home for college and making college a viable choice in the current economy. “Today’s high school graduates did not pick this economy. If you do not have the money to go to college, that is a lifetime of consequences,” said Mike Luecht, MCC Promise Committee member and one of the lead donors. “College may not be for everyone, but every person should have access to college.”

There are few families who are not affected by the struggling national economy and rising cost of higher education. MCC and the Friends of MCC Foundation are responding to this national economic crisis by creating an all inclusive scholarship program completely free from state or federal funding. “This community is funding the program themselves by looking into their own board and living rooms to ensure that higher education opportunities are available for young adults,” said E. Regan Daniels Shepley, Foundation Board/Promise Committee. “We are providing a life raft for families who need help in this economy.”

Beginning in fall 2009, the MCC Promise will take the financial burden off high school seniors and their parents. Funded solely by private donations from generous individuals and/or businesses, the MCC Promise will provide free tuition for high school seniors who graduate from a McHenry County College District 528 high school, live in the district, and who choose to attend MCC full-time and work toward the completion of a two-year associate’s degree or certificate. The MCC Promise could provide thousands of area students the opportunity to earn a college degree – regardless of their economic status. “What MCC is offering falls under the miracle category for us. I have a sophomore in high school who will benefit from this extraordinary opportunity,” said a resident of McHenry County.

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McHenry County community offers free
tuition at MCC to local students
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One distinctive component needed to maintain the scholarship is volunteer service. Students who receive the MCC Promise must volunteer in the community for a minimum of 32 hours per year. Through their service, students will gain an understanding of volunteerism and the spirit of giving back to the community. In return, local businesses and organizations will benefit from an influx of young volunteers through this collaboration of resources. The volunteer service coordination will provide much needed assistance to many nonprofit agencies throughout McHenry County and the surrounding area – a benefit to those organizations that may otherwise not be able to recruit such a large number of available volunteers.

The Foundation’s active Promise campaign committee has secured a core fund of lead gifts. “I donated to this program because it was a guarantee for any young person to receive an education for free,” said Vince Foglia, MCC Promise Honorary Campaign Chairperson and the lead inaugural donor. “I wanted to be a part of starting them off with no loans and no excuses to get their education started.”

During the coming months, the Foundation will work to secure additional contributions to help sustain the MCC Promise so that MCC can continue to provide an accessible college education to every young adult in the area.

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About McHenry County College

McHenry County College (MCC) offers a wide range of high-quality learning opportunities, enabling both traditional and adult students to meet their educational, career and personal goals close to home and at an affordable price.

The College was founded in 1967, just two years after the community college system was established in Illinois in 1965.

MCC provides both credit and non-credit educational, professional and training opportunities, as well as special events for close to 60,000 participants annually. The College serves one of the most rapidly growing counties in Illinois and offers six associate's degrees and 17 Associate of Applied Science degrees. MCC also offers free adult education (including ESL and literacy classes) and free GED and Spanish GED classes.

MCC's main campus is located in Crystal Lake, IL and also has several satellite locations, including a center for corporate training and development. For more information, visit www.mchenry.edu

About Friends of McHenry County College Foundation

The Friends of McHenry County College Foundation is a not-for-profit organization that works in partnership with McHenry County College. It is the sole organization authorized to raise private funds on behalf of the college. Because it is an Illinois 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, gifts to the Foundation are tax deductible. For more information, visit www.supportmcc.org or contact Donna Magnani, Executive Director at 815-479-7510.