



Taking You Where You Want To Go

THE bridge

2022



working toward a future in ag



shaping minds daily

*faces of
our college*

Stories about the
remarkable students
and faculty of SRC.



teaching students to be healthcare heroes



set for a career in a medical lab



changed careers... from policeman to traveling nurse



Message from President Curt Oldfield

Welcome to this issue of *The Bridge* from Spoon River College. Throughout this publication, you will see examples of the work being done at your community college. This work makes our communities stronger. We work every day to create an environment that supports student success.



Student Zoey Lane studies at a table outside of the River Roast Coffee Co. on the Canton Campus.

Spoon River College has an open door for anyone aiming to improve their lives. The faculty and staff are here to help students be successful in their academic journey. I hope you enjoy seeing the success stories of our students from a variety of programs and take a moment to learn about some of our outstanding faculty and staff.

SRC faculty and staff are working with local employers to provide education that meets the needs of businesses and individuals. We work cooperatively with our economic development organizations in the district to support the economic viability of our communities.

Our partnerships with local universities and colleges continue to be vital to student success. We collaborate with our four-year partners to create a smooth transfer from SRC to the next institution.

SRC has a strong commitment to the communities we serve. Our students and our employees have provided over 2,000 hours of volunteer time, this last year alone, in our communities. We believe strongly in supporting the communities that support us.

As a college, we are focusing on the future. We are making necessary improvements and enhancements that will help us grow and improve student success. I am proud of the innovation, creativity, collaboration, and entrepreneurship our faculty and staff have displayed during some of the most challenging times our college has faced.

The Mission of Spoon River College is to provide innovative learning opportunities that enhance the quality of life in the communities we serve. I hope after reading this issue, you will agree that we are achieving our Mission.

Spoon River College is *taking you where you want to go.*



President Curt Oldfield and Amanda Saylor have a little fun with a candid shot during the 2021 Commencement Stage Walk.

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Mission

Spoon River College provides innovative learning opportunities that enhance the quality of life in the communities we serve.

Core Values

Caring • Respect • Integrity
Fairness • Responsibility

For more information about Spoon River College graduation rates, the median debt of students who completed our programs, and other information, please visit our website at (www.src.edu/academics/Pages/gainful-employment.aspx).

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MEDICAL LABORATORY TECHNICIAN

The Right Path



Deanna Patton-Spotser knew she wanted to work in the medical field but wasn't sure in what capacity. Already a licensed massage therapist with her own business, the single mother of three was looking for the stability that comes with a steady paycheck and benefits. "I also wanted to keep enjoying my business and not have it become something I had to do."

She heard about a new Medical Laboratory Technician degree at SRC and reached out to Melissa Miller, coordinator of the allied health programs at the College. Miller told her the MLT program was still being developed but encouraged her to consider earning a Phlebotomy Certificate and

doing an internship to get experience in a medical lab, and to also complete as many general education courses as possible while she waited for the program to be up and running.

When the program rolled out in the fall of 2020, Deanna was in it, and she's now in her last semester of the two-year program. She has completed an internship at Graham Hospital, and is currently completing an internship at Galesburg OSF. She is on track to graduate in May with an Associate in Applied Science, Medical Laboratory Technician, making her eligible to take the national certification examination.

The road to that degree was paved with challenges, including a pandemic. "The 2021 spring semester was tough. It's not an easy program, and I was taking some challenging classes and dealing with personal issues. I didn't think I would make it through," Deanna said.

When she found herself becoming overwhelmed while taking courses, she gave herself a pep talk. "I made the choice to do this, so I needed to stop making excuses. There are always obstacles, and I just needed to keep pushing through them and do what I needed to do."

She took a deep breath and also took advantage of the support services available to students, including the enhanced resources offered to her as a member of the TRIO Student Support Services program. "There is always someone here to help when needed. Always."

Besides TRIO, Deanna is also a member of the HEAL (Healthcare Enthusiast and Leaders) Student Association, which is advised by Miller. "I haven't been as involved lately in either group just because I'm busier, but I always try to help when I can in return for all they have done for me. Melissa still reaches out and checks on me regularly."



The MLT classroom continues to grow and expand their instruments and equipment. These Binocular LED Microscopes provide superb optical clarity for the students to get a real medical laboratory experience.

Despite the challenges, Deanna's willingness to work hard and ask for help when needed has kept her on the academic honors list, and while she is looking forward to completing the degree, she is already planning the next one. "I'd like to transfer to either Bradley or ISU for a bachelor's degree in medical laboratory science."

Miller isn't surprised by Deanna's academic success or that she wants to continue her education. "She came to me wanting career and educational advice but also had a lot of questions, which told me how serious she was about her education. I knew from our first meeting that she was ambitious, confident, and determined. After she completed the phlebotomy internship at Graham Health Systems, the lab director and supervising staff had only wonderful things to say about her work ethic, skills, and abilities."

And while Deanna enjoyed the exposure to the lab during her phlebotomy internship, plus had previously job shadowed a radiographer, she said it was the MLT program that "just felt right." She is confident she has found her niche in the healthcare field. Her massage clients can rest easy though; she intends to keep her business going and has even hired a second therapist. Fun fact: Deanna loves giving massages, but hates getting them. "It's too hard for me to relax!"

Deanna's advice to prospective MLT students? "Get as many of those gen eds out of the way as you can. It's too intense otherwise. And get involved! Make those connections that will benefit you once you graduate."



EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Our future teachers.

Teachers. It took a pandemic for their worth to be fully realized.

There are currently more than 4,000 open positions for educators across Illinois, with rural communities particularly in need.

At Spoon River College, Education instructor Beth Van Tine is doing her part to prepare future teachers. She says her current students, some of whom are quoted below, “are super-awesome, and I feel all of them have the potential to be the kind of teachers that are greatly needed in the classroom.”

Tara McCausland found her passion after previously working in a local school district. “I absolutely love working with children, and I’m motivated by the need for the youth of today to know they matter. I hope to teach junior high—I enjoy the conversations and all the learning that happens at these ages. I also hope they won’t wear me out as much as the ‘littles’ do. As a mother of four children (ages 11, 9, 7, and 6), I need some energy left at the end of the day!”

Mallory Jackson will be her family’s third generation of teachers. “I’ve seen the joy my family members get from teaching as well as the joy they give students, and I want to experience that same joy.”

Grace Stuffelbeam is also following in her family’s footsteps and wants to teach grade school or junior high. “My mom is a teacher, and I’ve enjoyed the times I’ve helped her in her class. I’m also a summer camp counselor. I love working with kids!”

Jake Allgeyer and Zach Petrinis are on the teacher track with an additional goal; these two SRC baseball players aspire to be coaches when not in the classroom.



Back row, left to right: Instructor Beth Van Tine, Clara Walton, Mallory Jackson, Taylor Purdy, Mackenzie Stiewe. Front row, left to right: Grace Stuffelbeam, Jake Allgeyer, Zach Petrinis

Tara McCausland was on the video feed (pictured below).

Clara Walton admits her first career choice was nursing but realized it wasn’t for her when she almost passed out after witnessing a family member’s medical procedure. Teaching was her next go-to. “My mom teaches pre-school, and I have always enjoyed the times I’ve helped her in the classroom.”



Van Tine says, “Those who have an interest in helping people should consider a career in education. Introduction to Education (ED 201) is a great course to start with, and many education courses include time spent in schools observing teachers in action. There are also other education-related careers besides teaching including school counselor, child psychologist, and curriculum developer. Either way, taking an education course can help with making that decision.”

There is currently a great need for all healthcare professionals, and Miller said that the demand for MLTs in particular surpasses the number of trained technicians available. Who are good candidates for the program?

“Those who enjoy science and have lots of curiosity!” said Miller, adding that they should also be detail oriented, critical thinkers, effective communicators and problem solvers, and able to compile facts and figures. “Anyone going into the healthcare field needs to be a ‘good student.’ The field is always changing and evolving, and workers need to continually learn and evolve also.”

“If the healthcare field interests you but you don’t want a lot of patient contact, a career as a medical lab technician is perfect, as they work behind the scenes to assist in the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of diseases and illnesses.”

“As for Deanna, I cannot wait to see where this career path takes her!”

MLT Program Director and Instructor Anna Weisbruch shows Deanna how to read specimen slides.



AGRICULTURE BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Growing Your Way Back Home

Spoon River College's Ag program gives students hands-on experience and work-based learning. Take a closer look at SRC Ag through the eyes of a new instructor and a new student, both of whom are finding their way back home through SRC Ag.

Coming Home to the Career She's Always Wanted: Ag Instructor Allyson Smith

When Allyson Smith of Canton was in her last semester of earning a master's degree, her academic advisor told her it was time to start thinking about what she wanted to do and to apply for jobs. She asked Allyson, "What do you want to do?"

"Go back to my hometown and teach Ag at Spoon River College," was Allyson's reply.

In January, Allyson's dream job became reality as she joined the faculty at Spoon River College as a full-time Ag teacher.

Allyson didn't grow up on a big working farm, but living in a rural area with chickens, ducks, and an assortment of pets was enough to give her the Ag bug. She joined FFA when she was a freshman at Canton High School, and if there was a contest—Soils, Agronomy, Horticulture, Electricity, Poultry, Ag Business, Parliamentary Procedure, Public Speaking, Forestry—Allyson was competing. (Fun fact: she broke her left hand at a soils contest while down in a pit!). She also served as both vice-president and president of her chapter.

"FFA is so much more than corn, soybeans, and cows," said Allyson. "And it's often at a contest that a student finds what their interest really is." For Allyson, that interest was agronomy.

After graduating high school in 2015, Allyson enrolled at WIU for Ag Education where she was a member of the Weed Science team, a student recruiter for the School of Ag, and also worked on the university farm under Dr. Mark Bernards. It was there she added researching to the list of things she liked doing, so she switched up her major and graduated with a Bachelor's of Science in Agriculture and a minor in Agronomy in 2018.

Allyson's next move was to Michigan State University to work on a master's degree. There, she participated in extension events and had the opportunity to teach an Introduction to Weed Science lab, where she discovered yet another passion. "I knew deep down that teaching was what I was meant to do."

By 2020, Allyson had her Master of Science in Crop and Soil Sciences with a focus on Agronomy and Weed Science. She accepted a position with the University of Missouri as a research specialist. "I was basically waiting for my dream job to open up. I am excited to be back in my hometown and to have the oppor-

tunity to share my knowledge and education with the future of agriculture."

Allyson and husband Dalton have settled into their new home in Canton that they share with their adopted dogs Bailey, Cricket, and Roscoe. When not at home, they are most likely out fishing, camping, and taking pictures.

One last fun fact about Allyson: she became an FAA Licensed Unmanned Drone Pilot at her last job, where they were used to apply pesticides and spread seeds. How cool is that?!

Welcome home, Allyson! We're glad your road brought you back to Canton and to Spoon River College.



Ag instructor Allyson Smith leads her students through an experiment evaluating different soil types and their rate of capillary rise.



Spoon River College Ag instructor Allyson Smith and her husband, Dalton, on vacation in Wyoming.

Spoon River College Ag student Laurel Keyt poses with her replica of a 50-head feedlot shipping and sorting pen layout for her Animal Science class taught by Jeff Bash.

The assignment? Create a farm-related structure using a design by Temple Grandin, a well-known animal behaviorist (and autism activist) who has set the standard for designing humane livestock handling facilities that aid in keeping the animals calm as they pass through the chutes.



A Return to College with a Brand New Focus: Ag Student Laurel Keyt

“One of the joys of being an agriculture teacher is helping students figure out what their future career looks like,” said Jeff Bash, Ag instructor at Spoon River College.

Laurel Keyt of Hanna City is one of those students. Keyt currently works full-time at the Jubilee Café in Kickapoo and enjoys the job, but her heart is leading her back to her roots. That led her back to Spoon River College, this time with a clear vision of her future career.

“Laurel came to SRC out of high school but wasn’t able to determine what her future looked like. She stepped back, took a few years off, and then returned, very determined to become a high school agriculture teacher,” said Bash.

After graduating from SRC this spring, Laurel will transfer to WIU to major in Ag education, and she’s excited for the day when she’ll be the teacher in the classroom. “I anticipate teaching at the high school level but would also like the opportunity to reach out to students not yet in high school. Early exposure to ag education is a great way to build up high school ag programs. The earlier you get them excited, the better.”

Laurel will be focusing on a bachelor’s degree when she enrolls at WIU and currently doesn’t have a desire to teach at the college level, but earning a master’s degree one day is on her list “just because I’m a believer in life-long learning.”

This summer she’ll be one of only eight applicants who were chosen to get a unique learning opportunity... a 9-week internship consisting of five weeks of a cohort group and four weeks of individualized workplace experiences, designed to recruit and retain agriculture educators by developing key technical skills of pre-service teachers through work-based learning experiences.

“I’m excited for the opportunity to learn more about what ag educators spend the summer doing to help prepare themselves to be the best teachers they can be, and I’m also excited to improve my skills in the areas of agriculture that I’m not as skilled in, such as Small Engines, so I can better teach every student that one day walks through my classroom door. I also look forward to spending my summer working with other people who, like me, have a passion for ag education.”

Besides a new career, Laurel’s heart is leading her back to her roots in another way. “My parents still operate the farm where I was raised, and now my husband Justin and I are currently in the process of joining my late great-grandpa’s farm partnership and taking on a major role with it.”

Laurel noted that her grandmother and great-uncle were ready to hand over the physical labor required in a farming operation. “At one time, the farm had livestock. While we currently rent our pasture out, we would eventually like to run our own cattle again on the family land.”

The excitement Laurel feels for both her future career and for getting back to the land is obvious, even though she’s aware of the hard work ahead. “It can be overwhelming to think about the labor required for the farm as well as attending school, but I know it will work out and will be worth all the hard work.”

For Bash, it’s not just a joy to help a student find her future, it’s part of his job. “That’s what we do here in the agriculture program at Spoon River College.”



“

My hours were cut at one of my jobs due to COVID-19, and that made it very difficult for me to pay my bills. But if I put my education on hold, I would have had to retake two courses I already got an ‘A’ in the first time. I took on working a third part-time job, but I still didn’t earn enough to pay for everything, and the next class was integral to my degree.

Donors of the SRC Foundation made it possible to stay enrolled, stay on track, and get even closer to serving my community in the medical field.

Renda

Emergency Hardship Grant Recipient



“

I work at a hospital, but due to illnesses in the family, I was off work for nearly six months. My vehicle blew its engine, and while I was able to get a ‘beater,’ it needed work. I’m a single mom of a child with multiple ongoing medical needs, and I don’t qualify for food stamps. Making the decision to get groceries, medicines, car repairs, or pay bills has been very stressful. I know that finishing nursing school is only going to make a better future for my daughter, but my financial situation has made it difficult to focus on school and made me consider dropping out of school to pick up more hours at work.

The Foundation grant, **funded by people like you**, helped me get a new tire and an oil change, pay the electric bill to keep the lights on, and get a few groceries and some gasoline. Hopefully, I can pick up a few more hours to try and give my daughter a late Christmas and her birthday, but it’s definitely helped relieve some stress. Knowing that we are starting to move back up the right path is a wonderful feeling, and knowing that the power won’t be turned off today or tomorrow is a huge relief.

Tiffany

Emergency Hardship Grant Recipient





Though nursing is my third career, I always knew it was what I wanted to do. I left a full-time, good-paying job for a part-time job so I could enroll. Even though my husband had a good job, it was still a struggle with a daughter in college. Nursing school is hard, and as a non-traditional student, I faced additional challenges.

The scholarships I received made a difference, and I can't thank enough **the donors who made them possible**. Not having to worry as much about finances allows you to focus on your studies and gives you a boost of confidence you often need. But other aspiring nurses at SRC need your help so we can end this pandemic once and for all.

Ann

Foundation Scholarship Recipient



You can't spell "education" without U.

Despite the obstacles in their path, students just like Renda, Ann, and Tiffany have remained on track for their goal of obtaining higher education—thanks in part to gifts to the SRC Foundation from generous people like YOU.

But student need remains higher than we've ever seen, and we receive multiple requests for funding each week. They need your help.

At the SRC Foundation, it's our mission to provide the best educational opportunities possible, but without you, for some, higher education will be out of reach. That goes double as the rising costs of gasoline and inflation, which we all feel, impact community college students at disproportionate rates.

No matter the size of your gift or how you want it to be used, your impact makes all the difference.

Thank you for your support of SRC and our students.

Colin Davis
Executive Director
Spoon River College Foundation



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ALUMNI PROFILE

Jeremy Welker

Nursing Program graduate, 2015



It's estimated that 85% of the jobs that will be available in 2030 (just eight years away!) haven't been created yet.

How can one prepare for a job that offers long-term security? A job that may not even be real yet?

"Returning to college is one of the best decisions I ever made. I would encourage others who may be considering a change to jump right in and don't be scared. You really are never too old to learn and do something different."

Solid advice from Jeremy Welker of Farmington, who returned to SRC in 2013 and enrolled in the nursing program, 24 years after already completing an associate degree and after an 18-year career in law enforcement.

"My years in law enforcement led to many interactions with emergency room doctors and nurses, and it sparked an interest," said Jeremy. "When I knew it was time to do something different, I decided on the nursing program."

Jeremy excelled in nursing classes—he was chosen by his peers to be the recipient of the Florence Nightingale Award in 2014 and 2015—and his goal was to work in an emergency room setting. After graduating, he obtained a position in the ER of Pekin Hospital, now Unity Point, where he had also completed an internship.

Four years later, Jeremy made another change; he took his nursing skills and experience on the road, working as a travel ER nurse. He invested in an RV, and he and wife Brooke and their dog Scout embraced the travel life.

"One of the things I've loved most about travel nursing is getting to see our country," said Jeremy. "We have been on both coasts as well as the Gulf, have been to several National Parks, and have had lots of amazing adventures."

Jeremy is now preparing for a step up in his career; he's working on a Master's degree in Nursing Administration and Management through Aspen University and hopes to have it completed in May. His new goal is "to find employment with an organization that is large enough for continued growth, and then go from there," Jeremy said.

As for the travel life?

"We're starting to think about settling down, but haven't decided exactly where that will be yet. Brooke and I have collected some amazing souvenirs from all the places we've been, and it would be nice to have a house to put them in!"



Being a travel nurse has offered Jeremy a unique learning experience, and he is grateful for the opportunities that his nursing degree afforded him. "For me, nursing was an excellent choice, and I've come to realize that when it comes to nursing jobs, the possibilities are endless."

Is there a doctorate degree in his future?

"I'm not ruling it out..." said Jeremy.

Stay tuned!



Welker accepts the Florence Nightingale Award from Nursing Director Tamatha Schleich.

Spoon River College Community Outreach

Cannabis Horticulture: A Budding Industry

Last fall, the Office of Community Outreach at Spoon River College offered free cannabis industry workshops at all four Spoon River College locations. The workshops covered the history of the cannabis plant, basic cultivation and harvesting techniques, the difference between CBD and THC, benefits of using CBD products, and professions available in the fast-growing cannabis industry.

There were 75 participants who attended. When asked, “What were the most positive aspects of this course for you?” participants said:

- “Very knowledgeable instructor.”
- “I believe this class will add new perspective for individualized areas of the cannabis industry.”
- “Good insight to how the industry works.”
- “Information on the history and industry itself was highly appreciated. The localization of this type of industry in more rural areas and being able to attend and perhaps be a part of it in the future is a wonderful thing.”



Nature's Grace and Wellness greenhouse.

The workshops were sponsored by Nature's Grace and Wellness, LLC, and are a prelude to a bigger venture between the College and the local licensed cannabis cultivator. The family-owned business has invested \$100,000 to assist with the development of a cannabis curriculum at Spoon River College.

“Nature's Grace is committed to not only furthering education regarding the blossoming cannabis industry within our community, but also assisting SRC with preparing students for a multitude of employment opportunities within this fast-growing segment,” said Tim O'Hern, who is one of the owners and serves as the chief operating officer and general counsel for the business. Their cultivation and production facility, located near Vermont, Illinois, currently employs over 180 individuals across a wide variety of skill sets and disciplines.

In February of 2022, Spoon River College Office of Community Outreach began offering a new class called Cannabis Horticulture. There are 12 students currently enrolled in this 12-week program.

Cannabis Horticulture covers the basic botany of the cannabis plant, soil science, fertigation, integrated pest management, and cannabinoid testing. Students will receive training online but will also receive hands-on experience through lab exercises.

The workshops held last fall and the current Cannabis Horticulture class are instructed by Thomas Vogel, SRC biology faculty member, who specializes in plant anatomy and physiology, propagation, genetics and evolution, Cannabis sativa, and science education.

In the current Cannabis Horticulture class, lectures are being held online while labs are being held at locations including Nature's Grace & Wellness near Vermont, Stoney Branch Ag Ventures near Rushville, and Spoon River College Outreach Center in Macomb. Having the opportunity to work hands on with the plant is a great opportunity for students in this program.



From left to right: Tom Vogel, SRC instructor; Justin Ward, Stoney Branch; Anna Ward, Stoney Branch; and Geoff Butler, Nature's Grace.

Cannabis Horticulture is part of a new certificate program being offered by Spoon River College Community Outreach. The next class, Cannabis Harvesting & Production, will be offered in the fall of 2022.

Cannabis industry workshops are sponsored by Nature's Grace and Wellness, LLC, allowing the College to offer the classes at a reduced cost to participants.

“The SRC Office of Community Outreach is excited about the opportunity to provide training for such a growing industry,” said Velvet Powell, director of Community Outreach at Spoon River College. “We look forward to working with Nature's Grace and other local cannabis producers and businesses.”

For more information about upcoming classes offered by SRC Community Outreach, you can visit our online registration site at <https://src.augusoft.net> or find us on Facebook @srccommunityoutreach.

FACULTY AWARDS

2021 H. Truman Standard Award Winner

Sarah Strode

Nursing educator Sarah Strode was the 2021 recipient of the H. Truman Standard Award for teaching excellence. In the healthcare field since 2002, she joined the SRC nursing staff in 2018, bringing a wide-range of nursing experiences and a natural ability to teach.

Students who nominated her for the award repeatedly used the words advocate, respect, supportive, honest, and humorous to describe her. Read on to find out more about Sarah in her own words.

Favorite thing to do: Attend sporting events. My daughters play basketball and enjoy volleyball. We can usually be found in a gym attending a game as avid Little Giant and Snapper fans or playing a game in the driveway.

Team sports were a big part of my childhood and helped shape me as a nurse and teammate, so I share this connection with my girls.



Sarah with her daughters, Payton and Natalie, outside the 2021 commencement ceremony for nursing students.



Favorite humans: It isn't easy to name one, but my daughters Natalie and Payton, of course. I like to keep my circles small, but I have many favorite humans all for different reasons.

Best advice you've been given about teaching: Don't be afraid to admit or apologize when you are wrong or have made a mistake. I believe transparency in nursing and nursing education is a very important concept. Transparency allows for more authentic relationships to be developed. If students trust and respect their peers and instructor, they will unite more quickly, allowing concepts and problems to be solved more effectively. I'm not perfect, and there is no such thing as a perfect nurse. Honesty is crucial within the healthcare system, especially among healthcare team members and providers. We need to take ownership of mistakes so others can learn from them, even if the mistakes are mine.

Your best advice to students: Don't compare yourself to others, and give yourself some grace. Students don't become nurses overnight. Everyone struggles at some point in school and their career. There is enormous strength

in learning from past struggles and mistakes. Keep moving ahead one class, one clinical, and one exam at a time.

Fun fact about you: I have a really hard time being a nurse and caring for dental emergencies. While being a new nurse in surgery, this became quite the joke. My team used to love to assign all dental cases to me, just to see me turn green. Lol!

What's something you would like to learn to do: I've been considering learning to be an accreditation site visitor for ACEN. We'll see what the next year or two of SRC Nursing brings first.

One of your favorite/weirdest moments in class: I love to witness the moments in class or clinical when a student really and truly understands a concept or skill and the "I got it" look happens. Never gets old!

Nursing education can certainly be weird and awkward. We teach students to be aware of their nonverbal communication at all times, and, luckily, the masks we wear due to COVID actually help hide some of those awkward facial expressions. Skills labs are a great place for awkward moments as students try to learn and understand the steps of a nursing skill. Yep, we have lots of those moments, and we just have to laugh it off and move on.

Favorite SRC event: Last year's graduation ceremony. The graduating class of 2021 had their own ceremony for nursing due to COVID regulations. This ceremony was special because it was all about the students, faculty, and their families. Seeing the pride, relief, and pure joy on the faces of our graduating students with their families was extremely heartwarming for all of our nursing staff and faculty. My daughters were also able to see me receive this award at the ceremony as well.



2021 ICCTA Full-Time Faculty Award Nominee Michael Maher

Sociology professor Michael Maher was our 2021 nominee for the Illinois Community College Trustee Association Full-Time Faculty Award for teaching excellence.

Known for his enthusiasm about his subject matter and dynamic teaching style in the classroom, he's had a profound effect on students for the past 25 years. He's been a guest lecturer in the Macomb community, and also offers community education classes through the college's Office of Community Outreach.

A staunch advocate for community colleges, he's been honored with an invitation to deliver the 2022 commencement speech at Highland Community College, where he began his higher education journey and where he found his focus and the path to his career. Dedicated and serious in the classroom, read on for a glimpse of him outside of the classroom.

Favorite weird thing to do: Playing solitaire on my iPad. Not weird? I play the same game repeatedly until I'm able to solve it. Then, and only then, I advance to the next game. Still not weird? I once spent a total of twenty-six hours solving one game. I've solved 535 consecutive games and counting.

Favorite non-weird thing to do: Attend music concerts, especially at small, indoor venues. I also enjoy spending time communing with nature at local state parks, taking long walks, and reading.

Favorite humans: Scholar, educational theorist, and cultural critic Henry Giroux; musicians Brandi Carlile, Dave Grohl, and the late John Prine; and my mom.

Best advice he's been given about teaching: Every teacher must be a history teacher, and "Teachers who do not take their own education seriously, who do not study, who make little effort to keep abreast of events have no moral authority to coordinate the activities of the classroom."
-Paulo Freire.

His best advice to students: Read a book, fiction or non-fiction, written by someone respected and taken seriously within the academic community. Also, the general education portion of your coursework is the most important part of your education. The primary purpose of your education is not simply to help you get a career and improve your earn-

ing potential but to improve the skills of citizenship by gaining scientific, historical, and civic literacy, sharpening critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and developing communication skills.

Fun fact: My dad was my elementary school principal. Think about that. All my teachers from kindergarten through fifth grade were under his supervision, and every student in the school had to report to him for misbehavior. It was a bizarre experience. Yes, I was once sent to the principal's office. I did not enjoy it.

What's something you would like to learn to do? Play the guitar. I can play the chords, but I can't make music.

(continued on page 14)



What it looks like when a Sociology teacher hangs out with a Diesel and Power Systems Technology teacher (Todd Thompson) on a Friday morning...

"I don't understand anything about diesel mechanics. I've always been interested in operating a piece of heavy equipment but probably wouldn't even know how to start it. It made me realize I had no idea what Todd knows. If we expect our students to learn to appreciate and understand the various perspectives, skills, and knowledge base in our respective disciplines and career fields, then I would like to suggest that perhaps we model that appreciation of one another in our role as faculty." -Michael Maher

(continued from page 13)

One of your favorite/weirdest moments in class: One day I was lecturing, and I realized that while I was attempting to convey a sense of urgency about the material that many students appeared to not be paying attention. I continued lecturing without hesitation while stepping onto a chair and then on top of a table at the front of the room. The entire class looked up at me. I got their attention.

Favorite SRC memory (so far!): In the spring of 2002, my cultural anthropology class buried a time capsule. This class will reunite in May 2022 to dig it up. I'm looking forward to seeing some former students and colleagues.



Time Capsule Project 2022

If you were a student in the Cultural Anthropology class taught by Michael Maher in the spring of 2002... it's time to complete this project! Email michael.maher@src.edu or send a message through the SRC Facebook page.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Illinois Community College System

According to a new study issued by the Illinois Community College Board, Spoon River College and the other 47 community colleges in Illinois boost regional economies and are important sources of revenue and employment for the community and regions they serve.

\$3.5 BILLION
economic
output on
the Illinois
economy



43,000

jobs
throughout
the state



“ Spoon River College is proud to be a productive partner in the economic viability of the communities we serve and within the State of Illinois. The output from SRC totals over \$12 million, and an additional \$7.5 million is created from the College's activities.

Beyond the effects of direct spending and employment, Spoon River College also strengthens the regional economy by addressing employers' workforce needs. Our mission at Spoon River College is to provide innovative learning opportunities that enhance the quality of life in the communities we serve. ”

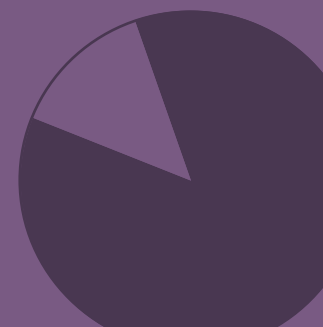
- President Curt Oldfield

To review the full report, visit
<https://bit.ly/iccbEIS>
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English
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Geography

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History
Mathematics
Philosophy
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Physical Science
Physics
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Pre-Engineering
Pre-Exercise Science
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Associate in General Studies

General Studies



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Nursing

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Agricultural Precision Technology
Agricultural Production

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Basic Commercial Driving
Commercial Driver Training

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Computer Forensics
Computer Information Technology
Computer and Network Technician
Computer User Support Specialist
Cyber Security
Enterprise Computer Network Specialist
Server Administrator

Diesel & Power Systems Technology

Locomotive Mechanical
Preventive Maintenance

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Early Childhood Education

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Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)

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Medical Coding
Medical Insurance/Billing
Medical Records
Medical Transcription
Medical Unit Secretary
Phlebotomy Technician

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Truck Driver Training

Nursing

Nursing Assistant
Practical Nursing

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