


# Path

“A career in  
the health field  
just seemed  
like a natural  
path to me.”

– James Joyce

 Montcalm  
Community College  
NURSING STUDENT



# ways to healing

## Opportunities range from nursing to office administration

James Joyce is surrounded by positive influences in the health care field.

The 29-year-old former infantry Marine, who served in both Iraq and Afghanistan, grew up observing his father, Robert, devote his life to being a surgeon and emergency room doctor; his mother, Jayne, and brother, Tim, both work as a registered nurses; and his uncle, Pat, transition from a registered nurse to a nurse anesthetist.

“Virtually all of my aunts and uncles on both sides of the family are in medicine, too,” he said.

“A career in the health field just seemed like a natural path to me,” said Joyce, who is a second-semester student in Montcalm Community College’s nursing program. “Seeing them work in positions from Hospice nurses to management positions like quality improvement, and as nurses and doctors in the emergency room, obstetrics and elsewhere, really gave me a lot of insight into all of the possibilities a career in health care offers.

“The one that really stood out to me is my uncle,” he added. “I see the pleasure he gets from going to his job every day as a nurse anesthetist, and his schedule still affords him the opportunity to spend time with his family.”

Joyce expects to complete his Associate Degree in Nursing in December 2018, at which time he will be eligible to take his National Council Licensure Exam (NCLEX) to become a Registered Nurse (RN).

“My goal after this next semester is to become an LPN and work in a VA hospital by December,” Joyce said. “Ultimately, I would like to get a job in the intensive care unit (ICU) as soon as possible so I can pursue the nurse anesthetist route. I’ll need at least two years of ICU experience before I can even apply to anesthesia school and then it’s an additional two years of training to become a nurse anesthetist.”

In the meantime, Joyce is finding fulfillment through his education.

“In nursing school, I’ve had the benefit of helping a couple of veterans, one of which I helped find out was entitled to more benefits than he realized. That literally gave me goosebumps to find out that he would be less stressed because his benefits would help him better provide for his family,” Joyce said.

### Health careers are in high demand

The health care industry is growing at an unprecedented rate. The demand for more highly-educated nurses and office personnel is being driven by a booming aging population, increased public awareness of health care concerns, technological developments and major changes in health promotion and disease prevention. Global employment opportunities in the health care industry include jobs in acute, extended, industrial, community and educational facilities.

*continued on page 7*





“After explaining that I am interested in anesthesia, I was given more opportunities to job shadow by going to the operating room and working with more certified registered nurse anesthetists. They talk with me and tell me about their experiences, and I get to be part of the process.”

– James Joyce



According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the job outlook for RNs is expected to increase by 16 percent by 2024 – much faster than average – with a median pay rate of \$32.91 per hour or \$68,450 annually. The job outlook for medical assistants (MA) is projected to increase by 23 percent, with a median pay rate of \$15.17 per hour or \$31,540 annually and growth in the certified nursing assistant (CNA) profession is projected to grow by 17 percent during this time, with a median pay rate of \$12.78 per hour or \$26,590 annually.

The outlook is equally promising for those wishing to work in health-related careers in the office setting. According to the BLS, employment of medical records and health information technicians is projected to grow by 15 percent by 2024, much faster than the average for all occupations. The 2016 median pay for these positions was \$18.29 per hour or \$38,040 annually. While smaller in comparison, the outlook for medical transcriptionists is projected to increase by 3 percent during the same timeframe, with a median pay rate of \$17.17 per hour or \$35,720 annually.

## There are many pathways

To provide options to reflect the variety of educational paths available to future nursing professionals, MCC offers an Associate of Applied Science in Nursing, a Medical Office Administration associate degree, a Medical Assistant certificate and a Long-Term Care Nurse Assistant job training program. In addition, the college has several articulation agreements that offer seamless transfer into a variety of advanced-degree programs that include bachelor's degrees in nursing with institutions such as Bellevue University, Chamberlain College of Nursing, Ferris State University, Kaplan University, Saginaw Valley State University and Western Governors University, which offer seamless transfer into a variety of advanced-degree programs. Further, MCC offers a concurrent program option in partnership with Davenport University, where students may complete degrees at both institutions at the same time.

MCC Dean of Nursing & Health Careers Danielle Anderson said MCC's offerings are aimed at meeting all student needs – from degrees and certificates to individual coursework to gain skills in a particular area.

“Sometimes students are just looking for a course – maybe their employer wants them to gain specific skills and is sending them for additional training – or we have other options for them if they want to continue on to one of our programs,” Anderson said. “They can take a phlebotomy course and get a job, and then come back for further education to build upon their experience.”

Amy Eady, MCC's Dean of Occupations & Program Assessment, said courses are set up to be a “pathway that prepares students for the next level of training, if that is their desire. Some students choose to become a medical assistant or certified nursing assistant, and then decide they want to continue their education and apply for our nursing program. They have a credential that allows them to work in the health care industry, while pursuing another degree.”

According to Anderson, changes in the application for MCC's nursing program also gives credit to students for having taken classes at MCC, for being an MA or a CNA, or for work experience.

“In the past, they did not get credit during MCC's admissions process for those experiences,” she said. “We're recognizing the value of them having that direct-care experience, either from MCC or from another institution.”

## MCC has proven success rates

Anderson said MCC's curriculum is changing to keep up with the fast-paced changes in the health care industry, and the results are positive, with the college experiencing high success rates for students taking their licensure exams.

Current pass rates for MCC's students are 98 percent for practical nursing, CNA and MA programs, and 90 percent for registered nursing. In addition, the college strives to deliver top-quality instruction from highly-qualified individuals in well-equipped, current facilities.

“Most of our instructors are practicing nurses or professionals in other health-related careers,” Anderson said. “They're obviously up to date with their experience, and they're sharing what's really going on out there in the workforce.”

Joyce said his experience at MCC “has been nothing but positive so far,” and the challenges he has encountered have been “pleasant challenges.”

In addition, he said he appreciates the support of his instructors.

“During clinicals we have the pleasure of working with different nurses in different fields,” he said. “After explaining that I am interested in anesthesia, I was given more opportunities to job shadow by going to the operating room and working with more certified registered nurse anesthetists. They talk with me and tell me about their experiences, and I get to be part of the process.”

### For more information:

Visit [www.montcalm.edu/health-careers](http://www.montcalm.edu/health-careers)  
Email [daniellea@montcalm.edu](mailto:daniellea@montcalm.edu)  
Call (989) 328-1217

See page 24 for brief descriptions of MCC's Long-Term Care Nurse Assistant job training program, Medical Assistant certificate, Medical Office Administration Associate of Applied Science degree and Nursing Associate of Applied Science degree.