



History by the Decade



A Message From The President:

As President of Miles Community College, I am extremely proud of the history of this great institution. Miles Community College has a rich history intertwined with the fabric of our community. It is now 2014, 75 years after courageous men and women of Custer County founded MCC. We are proud of our heritage and truly are higher education “pioneers” in Montana.

Miles Community College was founded in 1939. For almost 20 years, the College, known as Custer County Junior College, operated out of a few rooms in the local public high school. In 1957, the College moved into the former Milwaukee Railroad Depot building and in June 1967, the College moved into a new building that was constructed after passage of a bond issued by county voters. On April 4, 1970, voters of the district elected the first independent Board of Trustees for the College. In December 1971, Miles Community College was granted accreditation by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. The history of Miles Community College is full of many success stories. Most are because the residents of Custer County recognized the benefit of having a community college to serve their educational needs. Success stories are still prevalent today.

Recently, Miles Community College was recognized as one of the top 150 community colleges in the nation because of our outstanding commitment to student success. Our students are retaining and graduating at a higher rate than the national average and 98% of our graduates in career and technical fields are finding jobs. This is something we should all be proud of.

Regarding the future, Miles Community College will remain focused on building a community college that cares about students and their success, meets the needs of our county and region, and provides outstanding workforce training and continuing education. Our goal is to serve you. Our mission is to remain true to the ideals used to form the junior college in 1939 and provide quality higher education for Custer County and eastern Montana. As you think back and remember those who have given relevance to our existence, think of them fondly and celebrate their contributions. As you think back and remember your education, think of those dedicated faculty and staff there to serve you. Always remember MCC---and always remain a Pioneer!



Dr. Stacy Klippenstein

1930s

Custer County Junior College began operating in 1939 out of a few rooms in the Miles City High School (now Custer County District High School). Classes began the first week of September with seventy-one students enrolled. Student officers were chosen and the original Miles Community College colors were roan, pine and silver. George Gloege was the original administrative “pioneer” as Dean of Students reporting to the school district superintendent.

1940s

A faculty of fifteen strong led the way in the early 40's to establish a “pioneer” legacy of higher education during Custer County Junior College's beginning decade. Courses were offered in the math and sciences, composition, and public speaking. Student clubs include men and women's glee clubs, the Cattlecade student newspaper, and the student government association. Night schools were offered during the winter quarter of 1949 in arts, secretarial skills, radio broadcasting, farm shop, homemaking and fitness. At the end of this decade, the accreditation process was already underway with the goal of Northwest Association of Secondary and Higher Schools projecting junior college expansion.

Kenneth Smith became the first dean of Custer County Junior College in 1949 and created a vision which steered the college to what it is today.

1950s

Custer County Junior College was in full swing during the fifties. Student clubs, such as Circle K-Gamma Kappa men's service clubs, were operating post-World War II. Fall term costs started at \$40 per quarter, or \$3 per credit hour, in 1950. Graduation was held on May 31, 1951 with twelve graduates.

Jim Lucas, Miles City attorney, delivered the first lecture in Custer County Junior College's new night course “The Woman and Everyday Law” in Spring 1952. Square dancing classes were very popular and a Square Dance Party was held at the Custer County District High School gymnasium honoring the 106 graduates of the Autumn 1952 Beginner Square Dance Class. The classes were led and called by Hank and Alice Zimmerman of Sheridan, Wyoming.

Classes continued to broaden in new directions in 1954-55 with the addition of Child Psychology and Conversational Spanish. After being housed at the Custer County High School for over fifteen years, the former Milwaukee Railroad Depot Building in Miles City became the second home for Custer County Junior College in 1957.

1960s

The Custer County Junior College Endowment Board was established in the early 60's and given the charge of seeking funding for a more permanent college home and student housing. The Miles Community College Pioneer student monthly newspaper published building progress reports as the new building development plan went forward. Faculty continued to grow to over 24 members to accommodate the growing student body. Two hundred and thirty-seven students were enrolled in Fall quarter of 1965.

During 1965-66, the Flanze Hotel at 319 North 9th Street was remodeled under the direction of Dean Vern Kailey and became the new men's dormitory. Thirty-eight male students moved into Flanze Hall during Fall 1966. The Custer County Junior College name officially changed to Miles Community College in summer of 1966.

Classes began in the new building facility at 2715 Dickinson for the 1967-68 school year. The new building had classrooms, several labs, and room to grow. Students and administrators saw that a reference library and college bookstore were still needed.

New programs were added to the curriculum such as Auto Mechanics and Electronics Technology (1968) and the Associate degree in Registered Nursing (1969).

1970s

A resolution passed in January 1970 to establish a Custer County District and called for an election of a Miles Community College Board of Trustees. Dean Ken Smith retired in June 1970 and Vern Kailey became president through the remainder of the decade. Miles Community College received full accreditation by the Northwest Association of Colleges and Universities in 1971.

Agri-Business classes were offered during the fall quarter and the college continued to expand its grounds and buildings to match the student body needs.

The new Student Union Building was dedicated and opened for the 1972-73 academic year. Completion of this building provided a cafeteria for student food service, student lounge and game room, and space for drama and music productions. An all-weather track and field complex was completed in 1974 and additional land adjacent to the track was purchased in 1976.

The Associate Degree Nursing program continued to flourish under Mildred Hom's leadership and the class of 1974 graduated 22 nurses with a nursing faculty of five.

This decade of facilities development concluded with the addition of a new library. The business/vocational buildings were completed to accommodate student resource learning and the vocational training trends of the time.

Jud Flower, Vice President of Instructional Services, was inaugurated as Miles Community College president to succeed President Vern Kailey, Fall 1979. Trustees felt Flower's reputation as a state, regional and national leader, excellence as resource developer, and knowledge of Miles Community College qualified him for the presidency.

1980s

The fundraising and beginning construction of a community recreation building included community donations and a \$200,000 fund raising goal. The new recreation building, known as the Centra, was dedicated in November 1980.

Building programs and new course curriculum moved rapidly during the decade. New dormitories were completed in 1981 that would house approximately 50 students and the Data Processing and Power Plant Technology Associate of Applied Science programs were established in 1983.

Technology became a module for registration and instruction in the late 1980s when the automation of student and institutional records was completed and equipment was installed and instructors trained for telecommunications delivery. The Winter 90 quarter enrollment was 445 full-time students.

1990s

During Fall 1990, Frank Williams became the new Dean of Instruction, Miles Community College changed from a quarter to semester system, and the new school colors were blue and silver.

The automation of the Miles Community College library was completed in 1990 and the extension of the Miles Community College Registered Nursing program to Glendive and Sidney began in Fall 1991. This expanded the nursing student enrollment to seventy-six student nurses.

Montana Senator Conrad Burns helped dedicate the Miles Community College distance-learning program made possible through interactive television in 1992.

A new student-housing complex was built during 1996-97 and increased student housing occupancy to 48 additional students in three buildings with four apartments each and a commons building.

With two student dormitories, quad style housing, vocational-technical buildings, community athletic center, and main buildings complete with classrooms, labs, library, and bookstore, Miles Community College had achieved a true campus style community image.

Frank Williams was inaugurated as president in 1995 and was followed in administration by Robert Bennett in 1998 to end one decade and begin the twenty-first century.

2000s

Darrel Hammon was inaugurated the sixth president of Miles Community College in Fall 2001.

The Miles Community College Center for Technology and Learning evolved in 2002 from community continuing education to include servicing distance-learning students. This has included interactive television, on-line classes, and sending mobile classrooms into rural high schools where technology training is needed and requested by community citizens.

Miles Community College began a major building program in February 2003 with the groundbreaking and construction of a 133-bed student housing facility to replace the former 50 bed Big Sky dormitories. Students beginning in Fall 2003 became the first occupants of the new dormitory facilities.

Stefani Gray Hicswa became the seventh president and first woman president of Miles Community College in Summer 2006.

Robin Gerber, the Social Science and Humanities Instructor, was recognized as the 2006 Montana State Professor of the Year by the U.S. Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE). Sponsored by The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and administered CASE, this prestigious award recognizes professors for their influence on teaching and their outstanding commitment to teaching undergraduate students.

In October 2006, MCC introduced the Heavy Equipment Program. The purpose of this program is to provide students with practical skills for enhanced employment opportunities in heavy equipment operations, such as mining, construction, oil fields, etc. Areas of study include safety, orientation to the trade, earth moving, finishing and grading, and excavating.

The nursing program was awarded full accreditation through 2014 with no recommendations from the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission, Inc. The college received a federal appropriation for the first time in the amount of \$332,000 for health care program development.

Rob Bishop was named the 2006 American Baseball Coaches Association Regional Coach of the Year for NJCCA Division II. The Pioneer Baseball team clinched its first ever Northwest District Championship, as well as a berth to the NJCCA Division II World Series in the spring of 2007

August 2007 was the beginning of the Equine Studies Program at MCC. This two-year degree is designed to give students a foundation in natural horsemanship and how to apply that knowledge in a practical manner. Graduates will be prepared for a career in equine business and management, colt training, assistant trainer and facilities management.

In 2008 the women's basketball team, led by Region IX Coach of the Year Dwight Gunnare, won the Mon-Dak Conference and ranked 12th in the nation.

James P. Lucas of Miles City, former Miles Community College Board of Trustee and founder and member of the MCC Endowment Board, was honored at the ACCT (Association of Community College Trustees) 39th Annual Community College Leadership Congress as the 2008 ACCT Regional Trustee Leadership Award Recipient for the Western region.

New Century Scholars are the highest-scoring student, for each state, in the All-USA Academic Team competition. Students receiving this honor acquire a \$2,000 scholarship funded by the Coca-Cola Foundation and the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation and are recognized in a national ceremony. The New Century Scholars program is sponsored annually by the American Association of Community Colleges, The Coca-Cola Foundation, the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation, and Phi Theta Kappa. Miles Community College has had several students chosen as the New Century Scholar: Andrea Nichols, 2003; Breanna Bartz, 2006; Spur Watson, 2008; Rick Abbott, 2009; Kristina Murnin, 2010; and Jackcee Idland.

In Sept 2009, the Commons Building was named the Nibs and Edna Allen Common in recognition of Nibs and Edna Allen's generous contributions to Miles Community College.

In January 2010, the Administration Building was named the James P. Lucas Hall in honor of Mr. Lucas' dedication and extraordinary service to Miles Community College.

The Banner implementation began February 2010. This software will make a more fluid process for reporting budgets and actual information to the Board of Regents. It includes the Business Office, Human Resource, Student Services, Financial Aid and Academic Affairs.

A new Science Lab was constructed with HRSA Appropriations and funds from a local donor. The lab will assist in the development of more science classes and a Med-Lab Tech program.

2011-12 MCC Men's Basketball team was the Region 9 North Champions with a 26-7 record.

In July 2013 Miles Community College officially began the Presidential Search for our 8th President.

In January 2014, Dr. Stacy Klippenstein began his service as the 8th President of Miles Community College. A Presidential Inauguration was held in February 2014.

A Capital Campaign in the amount of \$3,000,000 for construction of the Ag Advancement Center kicked off in January 2014. Marilyn Miller was hired by the Endowment as a fundraising consultant for this project.

Governor Steve Bullock was the keynote speaker at our GED graduation on April 26, 2014.

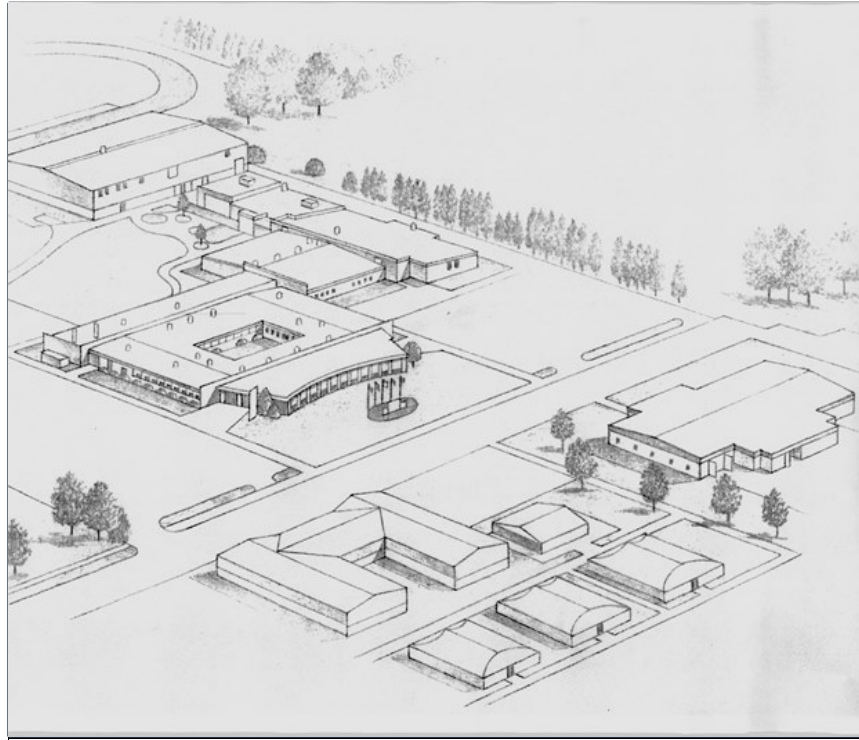
In May 2014, Pioneer Baseball moved to Division I.

Sharon Wilcox retired as a Miles Community College Trustee in April 2014, after 25 years of service.



James P. Lucas

Start Here...



Miles Community College
2014

.. Go Anywhere.

