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# MAQUOKETA SENTINEL-PRESS

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# Doors open to new CCC facility

By KELLY GERLACH

When dreams become reality, the experience can be surreal.

"I had a conceptual drawing of the center that I looked at every day, but I couldn't believe it was real until I opened the door to the building and walked inside," explained Penny Plautz, continuing education specialist for Clinton Community College.

When dreams become reality, people celebrate.

Join the latest such celebration Monday, Aug. 3, as the Maquoketa Center of Clinton Community College opens to the public. The special open house will be held from 4 to 6 p.m. at the new college facility, located at 501 W. Washington St., Maquoketa. The building is on the northeast side of the Maquoketa Community High School campus.

A ribbon cutting is scheduled for 3 p.m., with a public open house one hour later. Guest speakers will include Dr. Karen Vickers, CCC president; Dr. Pat Kier, Eastern Iowa Community College District chancellor; Kim Huckstadt, Maquoketa Community School District superintendent; and Kendra Beck, EICCD trustee and daughter of John Fagerland.

At 4 p.m. people will be able to tour the \$1.6 million facility, ask questions, receive course information and meet the staff.

The 11,000 square foot facility includes four classrooms, a meeting room, two computer labs, a student resource area, career and technology education lab. It also holds the offices of not only Clinton



Clinton Community College Maquoketa Center opens to the public Monday, Aug. 3, during an open house from 4 to 6 p.m. Take a tour, meet staff, obtain course information and enjoy refreshments in the newly constructed \$1.6 million college facility, located at 501 W. Washington St.

Community College but Iow@ Work and Workforce Development.

"The community has been just so supportive of us. There's been a lot of interest in this project, with people driving past to watch, and now it's our time to show it off," Vickers said.

### Concept to creation

"It seems like it's been a long path to here," Vickers explained.

For about 25 years, area high school students have been able to take college courses through Clinton Community College - some via the Iowa Communications Network video feeds, others in various buildings in the early morning or evening. The courses offer high school students the opportunity to earn college credit while still in high school. The school district pays for the courses and the student gets both high school and college credit.

Traditional and non-traditional students have also been to take courses here, perhaps saving the students one or two days of driving to the main campus in Clinton.

Maquoketa's classes were often held in the Maquoketa Community Center, Cardinal, Briggs and the high school.

"Jackson County has always been important to us and Maquoketa quite a hub for the county," Vickers explained. "We often wondered things like 'just

think about what we could do if...,' 'think how we'd be better able to serve if...' and 'we could serve the high school and community better if...'. The sentences always ended with 'if we had a facility in Maquoketa.'"

John Fagerland shared that vision. The longtime Maquoketa businessman, philanthropist and governing board member for the EICCD strongly advocated the need for a more permanent, visible community college presence in Maquoketa. He believed that area residents would greatly benefit from a CCC campus in Maquoketa.

The only difficulty - funding. The college did not have money readily available to either construct a new facility or refurbish an existing one.

Fagerland so fervently believed in such a project that, upon his death in 2006, he bequeathed \$250,000 to the community college with the express purpose that it be used to build a college center in Maquoketa. The bequest carried with it the stipulation that a \$33 million bond referendum initiated by EICCD must meet voter approval.

Voters approved the referendum in September of 2007.

"The 2007 capital bond referendum gave us, well, the capital to build," Vickers said.

The college immediately began making construction plans.

### Partnerships

With funding in place, location became the next issue.

That longstanding partnership with the Maquoketa Community School District proved invaluable. Maquoketa school board members approved the sale of 1.9 acres to the EICCD. Purchase price - \$1. The land is located on the northeast side of the high school campus, beyond the new gymnasium addition.

"The school district donating the land made it possible for us to put all our resources into building so we didn't have to purchase or rehabilitate an old building," Vickers said.

The Maquoketa school district realized many potential gains when it entered into this new partnership. The obvious benefit - high school students would be able to take classes in a college atmosphere, better preparing them for the future.

"It's the doors of opportunity being opened for our students. (The center) will touch the lives of generations for years to come," the school superintendent said the day the college broke ground on the project.

The Maquoketa school district itself has an average of 60 to 80 students enrolled in CCC courses each year.

"High school students in their junior and senior year are ready for more challenges. Receiving college and high credit for classes is great for the students and they get to see the expectations put on them by college. It's that intangible feeling of being in a college setting," Plautz said.

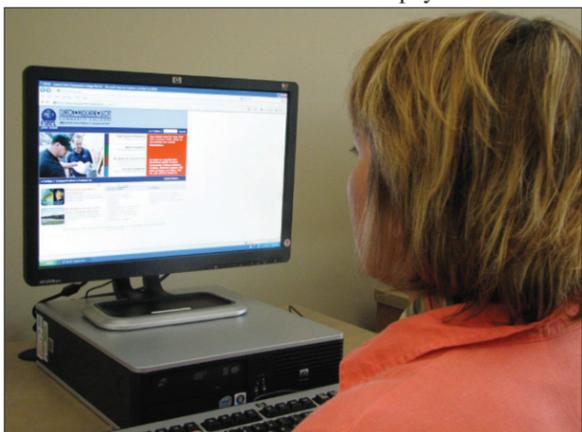
That, and a permanent facility would offer students a wider selection of courses and aid networking skills by taking classes with peers as well as non-traditional students.

The school district also saw possible gains in parking. The CCC Maquoketa Center includes two parking lots at the north and south entrances. If it does not interfere with college courses, the district hopes to use those lots for additional off-hours parking for high school events.

The school district will provide janitorial, grounds maintenance and emergency technology services for CCC starting this fall. The two parties approved the service agreement earlier this year. The college will pay the Maquoketa school district specified amounts of money for each of the services and both parties will review the agreement at the end of the school 2009-10 school year.

District and community officials also believed the Maquoketa Center

■ COLLEGE,  
Please turn to page 3



Penny Plautz, CCC continuing education director, sits at a computer in the smaller of Maquoketa Center's two computer labs.

