

First Commencement at DMACC (Area XI)

Compiled by Judith Vogel

Information and photos taken from an original DMACC Commencement program

Area XI Community College, now known as Des Moines Area Community College, held its first Commencement program on Thursday, February 22, 1968. The college was under the direction of Superintendent Paul Lowery. Students had taken classes in a former West Des Moines grocery store. The administration offices were in the old Ankeny Post Office. The ceremony began with a Processional. Following the Invocation by the Reverend Leonard Lee, Minister of the East Ankeny Baptist Church, Superintendent Lowery introduced Mr. James Maggert, President of the Board of Directors for Area XI Community College, for the main address.

Graduates were awarded degrees in four areas:

Clerical –	Miss Patricia Louise Greig, West Des Moines
Secretarial –	Miss Marcia Lynn May, Grimes
	Mrs. Jeanne A. Davis, Des Moines
	Mrs. Rachel Theresa Caruthers, Des Moines
Medical Assistant –	Mrs. Carole F. Janes, Carlisle
	Miss Mary Joanne Mitchell, Des Moines
Electrical Drafting -	Mr. James C. Brockey, Des Moines
	Mr. Patrick Harrison, Des Moines
	Mr. Neville B. Mangra, Des Moines
	Mr. Francis M. McLey, Woodward
	Mr. Paul Wicks, Adel
	Mr. Thomas J. Trunnel, Prairie City

After the presentation of the diplomas, Rev. Lee gave the benediction. A reception for the graduates, their families and friends, and the faculty and staff of the college followed the Commencement program.

(See photos of the original Area XI Community College Commencement program, a group photo of the first graduates of Area XI College, and a brief bio of one graduate below.)

Area XI Community College



First
Commencement

February 22, 1968

PROGRAM

Processional

*Invocation The Reverend Leonard Lee
Minister
East Ankeny Baptist Church*

*Introduction of Speaker Mr. Paul Lowery
Superintendent
Area XI Community College*

*Address Mr. James Maggert
President
The Board of Directors
Area XI Community College*

Presentation of Diplomas

Benediction The Reverend Leonard Lee

*Reception
immediately following the program*

GRADUATES

CLERICAL

Miss Patricia Louise Greig
2201 Vine Street
West Des Moines, Iowa

SECRETARIAL

Miss Marcia Lynn May
Camp Dodge
Grimes, Iowa

Mrs. Jeanne A. Davis
3421 School Street
Des Moines, Iowa

Mrs. Rachel Theresa Caruthers
17 S. E. Livingston Street
Des Moines, Iowa

MEDICAL ASSISTANT

Mrs. Carole F. Jones
210 North 5th. Street
Carlisle, Iowa

Miss Mary Joanne Mitchell
27^{1/2} Bryon Street
Laurens, Iowa

ELECTRICAL DRAFTING

Mr. James C. Brockey
1444 46th. Street
Des Moines, Iowa

Mr. Patrick Harrison
4812 Hillcrest Drive
Des Moines, Iowa

Mr. Neville B. Mangra
1427 10th. Street
Des Moines, Iowa

Mr. Francis M. Mcley
Rural Route 1
Woodward, Iowa

Mr. Paul Wicks
Rural Route 3
Adel, Iowa

Mr. Thomas J. Trunnel
Prairie City, Iowa



Picture was taken February 22, 1968 and reprinted for the 10th Anniversary of DMACC in 1976. Contributed to this article by the DMACC Library Archives. Original source thought to be an Ankeny local newspaper.

Neville Mangra, one of the first graduates, was originally from British Guyana. After arriving in Des Moines, he attended a school that assisted foreign students. It was a teacher there who recommended that he give this “new college” a try. He decided to attend Area XI and received a degree in electrical drafting. Neville was unable to attend the actual commencement ceremony because he started a job immediately after completing his coursework. His first job was at Pittsburgh Des Moines Steele. He also studied at Iowa State and spent most of his career in the electrical planning and maintenance of nuclear power plants at several locations in the United States. He remembers Iowa’s cold weather after coming from a country where the temperature seldom went below 75 degrees! Neville was asked to speak at the celebration of DMACC’s 50th Anniversary. (Phone interview)