

## Honors Program

In the fall of 2013, DMACC launched the first 20-credit Honors Program at a community college in the state of Iowa. The program is designed for degree-seeking students to expand their boundaries and better prepare them to enter the workforce or continue to an honors program at a four-year college or university. The mission is to provide quality, affordable, student-centered education and training opportunities that challenge and stimulate high-ability students with high academic standards.

In 2012, Jan LaVille, professor of English and journalism on the Boone Campus, was asked by Kim Linduska, Chief Academic Officer, to create an Honors Program at DMACC. For over 40 years, DMACC had supported under-prepared students in their efforts to achieve two-year degrees, and the college believed that with more and more high achievers coming through the doors on all campuses, it was time to target this group of students by offering them additional challenges and, in addition, scholarships based on acceptance into the Program, rather than based solely on need.

With over 100 students applying to the Program, around 70 students were selected in the first semester. Students coming from high school were required to have a 3.5 cumulative GPA with an ACT score of 25 or better. Students who were already DMACC students and wanting to be part of the Program were required to have completed a college-level math and English course, as well as have maintained a 3.5 cumulative GPA.

As of fall 2014, there are again around 70 students in the Program; more than 40 students have graduated from the Honors Program while at the same time graduating from DMACC. Students who transfer to a 4-year college or university find they are positioned for better scholarships, with increased opportunities for seamlessly entry into the 4-year school's honors programs.

With additional challenges from their four, 1-credit Honors Seminars, and with completing projects in all discipline classes that go beyond the regular classroom assignments, students have embraced the challenges offered by semester-long projects and mentorships by Honors faculty. Honors faculty, approved by Kim Linduska, number over 150.

In the second year of the Program, the students began presenting their research at regional conferences in 2013, such as the Upper Midwest Regional Honors Conference and the Winchell Undergraduate Research Symposium.

Upon LaVille's retirement, Sarah Waddle (former English professor from West Campus) was appointed the Director of Honors. The Director's office is on the Boone Campus in the recently constructed Honors Residence Hall (1309 Hancock Drive), one of the five residence halls now owned and operated by the Boone Campus.