

Anoka-Ramsey Community College Newsletter

Winter 2023 | Issue 10



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ANOKA-RAMSEY
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

A member of Minnesota State

Reflections on a Decade at Anoka-Ramsey from President Kent Hanson

The 2023-2024 academic year will be Anoka-Ramsey Community College President Kent Hanson's tenth in that role; leading both Anoka-Ramsey and its aligned institution Anoka Technical College.

In that decade, Anoka-Ramsey has evolved. It received national recognition for its excellence, strengthened partnerships with surrounding

communities and, through legislative support and investment, transformed physical spaces to support students' evolving needs. Like all organizations, Anoka-Ramsey has also navigated significant shifts brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic and continues its critical work of bringing equity and inclusion into all facets of the college and its work.



Kent Hanson, Ph.D.
President, Anoka-Ramsey Community College

Recently, President Hanson sat down to reflect on the past ten years and to look at what may be ahead for Anoka-Ramsey.

Q: How have you seen students and their needs change over the last ten years?

A: Our student population is getting more diverse. We're certainly going to be more diverse as we move forward. It's a great to have our students learn from each other's experiences and backgrounds and it really contributes to the overall health of the institution.

I think students are coming to us today facing a lot more challenges. Even more so than ten years ago, there is a lot more

going on in their lives. We're seeing more issues with mental health, food insecurity, things like that.

As a result of the pandemic, we have shifted. All of us have shifted the fabric of how we do business and how we learn and how we teach. It's going to take a while for that to land at the new normal. The pandemic has really impacted all of us.

Q: As you look forward what are you most excited about for Anoka-Ramsey?

A: Continuing to enhance our partnerships, doing the great work that we do. Embarking on a new strategic plan. Figuring out what Anoka-Ramsey looks like in a post-pandemic world. I think it's exciting, it's a little challenging but I think that's really exciting. There are more opportunities to enhance our facilities.

I think there's more opportunities with the alignment (of Anoka-Ramsey and Anoka Technical College). I think as we move forward, figuring out that balance a little bit better between

Anoka-Ramsey and Anoka Tech while still protecting their missions. We've got great leadership at both institutions, and I think that's one thing that can be exciting for us.

Continuing our work with music, theater, sports, providing more avenues for engagement. Our work on diversity, equity and inclusion is exciting to me. That's going to be moving to the forefront of our work moving forward.

Q: Reflecting on the last decade at Anoka-Ramsey, are there moments or memories that stand out as highlights?

A: One moment that really was a highlight was Anoka-Ramsey being named one of the Aspen Institute's Top 10 Community Colleges in the country. That's really quite an honor. It's not something I did alone, it's something we all did together. I think it represents the quality of college we have here with our collaborative environment and how we work together.

One thing I'm most proud of would be our results on the PACE survey. It's a measure of our culture and climate as compared to other institutions. When I got here, we were in the 15th percentile. Three years later, we were in the 85th. Again, that's something we worked on together. We worked to make sure folks have a say in the direction of the college and they feel comfortable working here and giving their opinions.

Another accomplishment, and challenge, is the (completion of renovations to the) Business and Nursing building on the Coon Rapids Campus. That was on the books for years before I got here, they were working on that. We had to go back to the drawing board a number of times in that seven-year process. We finally dialed in the right approach that got the state funding.

Our partnerships with our local school districts are amazing. We have such great relationships, working through our PSEO and Concurrent Enrollment programs. We've saved students and families \$7 million in tuition and fees. That's a pretty big accomplishment. We've continued to grow concurrent enrollment and PSEO populations. You don't just do that by happenstance. That takes hard work and building relationships and working together.

Read more from this question-and-answer session at AnokaRamsey.edu/Hanson-10

College Welcomes Vice President of Equity and Inclusion, Launches Building BRIDGES Plan

Anoka-Ramsey Community College and aligned college Anoka Technical College welcomed Brandyn Woodard as their Vice President of Equity and Inclusion in the spring of 2021. In the new position for the colleges, Woodard provides strategic leadership for the institutions in the advancement and implementation of college-wide goals to create diverse, equitable, and inclusive learning and work environments.

Woodard says he believes the success of that work will come from a collaborative community effort.

“I want folks to know that I want to be in partnership with them. I want to collaborate with them,” he said. “I, single-handedly, will not fix anything. We, collectively and individually, can.”

“I am grateful for all the people who have been at the institutions who’ve been doing the work prior to my arrival who laid the foundation for this moment to be happening and I’m really excited to continue working with them and continue moving forward.”

Building BRIDGES

A key way this work will come to life is through the colleges’ strategic diversity plan, structured around a framework tied to themes of Belongingness, Restoration, Inclusion, Diversity, Growth, Equity and Sustainability (BRIDGES). This plan is the result of many listening sessions, feedback from faculty and staff and 17 virtually-held workshops with employees at Anoka-Ramsey and Anoka Tech during the spring 2022 semester.

Throughout the 2022-2023 academic year, faculty and staff have focused on deepening their collective understanding of the impact belongingness has on our community.

The sense of belonging is the degree to which students, employees, and community members feel connected to the institutions via our intentional and unintentional everyday behaviors, policies and culture. It is the experience of mattering or feeling cared about, accepted, respected, valued and important to the campus community, and it is critical for retaining all students, employees and community members—particularly those

from BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) and other historically underserved communities.

The connection between a sense of belongingness and success for students and employees alike is well-documented. Through workshops and in conversations, large and small, members of the Anoka-Ramsey community are working toward creating an environment that invites all to feel welcomed, valued and accepted.



Brandyn Woodard
Vice President of Equity and Inclusion

Building Belongingness at Anoka-Ramsey

Alumni and members of the broader Anoka-Ramsey community are key stakeholders in the college’s BRIDGES work. We invite you to learn more about our work at AnokaRamsey.edu/BRIDGES.



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MAJOR RENOVATION

to Business and Building Completion

Updated spaces usher in new era in learning on Coon Rapids

Anoka-Ramsey Community College re-opened its modernized and renovated Business and Nursing facilities on the Coon Rapids Campus in time to welcome students back for fall 2022 semester. The 31,150 square-foot renovation provides a state-of-the-art home for our business program, addresses unique learning

needs for our nursing program and provides our broader campus community contemporary academic and social spaces.

“This space will be transformative for our students for many years to come,” Anoka-Ramsey Vice President of Administration and Finance Don Lewis said at a ribbon-cutting ceremony in August 2022.

The \$16.3 million renovation project was funded through Minnesota State’s 2020 legislative session bonding request providing impact beyond Anoka-Ramsey’s campus. This project would not be possible without the support of local legislators and strength of partnership with Minnesota State.

“This is an exciting day for Anoka-Ramsey, the



This new space will allow us to provide our students the education they need to become leaders of the future in their industries



- President Hanson

Twin Cities community and the state of Minnesota. This new space will allow us to provide our students the education they need to become leaders of the future in their industries,” said Kent Hanson, president of Anoka-Ramsey Community College. “We’re thrilled to open our doors and get to work.”

In addition to supporting Anoka-Ramsey’s commitment to student success, the project aligns with the college’s commitment to sustainability. Throughout construction, 90 percent of construction waste was diverted from landfills. In addition, it met Minnesota’s B3 energy efficiency building standards and exceeds SB 2030 energy goals.

Spaces to Learn and Connect

After learning in virtual and makeshift environments, nursing student Jean





Updated Nursing Complete NS Campus

Updated Classrooms

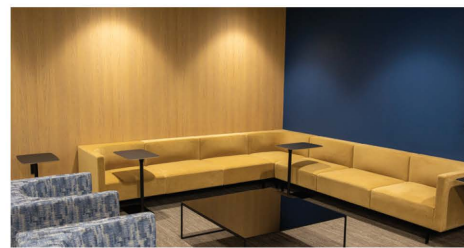
Spaces give numerous campus departments access to technology-rich, flexible classrooms. Renovated classrooms facilitate active learning and provide faculty and students with intuitive access to distance and hybrid learning options.



Updated Classroom

Open Study Spaces and Common Areas

The Anoka-Ramsey community will find spaces throughout the renovated Business and Nursing Building to gather and study, socialize or just relax. Spaces are designed to maximize flexibility and connectivity.



Common Area

Nursing Simulation Labs

Four simulation lab spaces give nursing students the hands-on opportunity to navigate medical scenarios controlled in real-time by instructors. Spaces are equipped with high-fidelity simulation mannequins, medical equipment, headwall access and simulated medical gas. Specialty rooms for unique care situations, including maternity, restroom transfer, long-term and home care provide opportunity to delve deeper into specific care scenarios. Rooms also include integrated video and audio capture to enable footage review and debrief after simulations are complete.



Simulation Lab

Open Nursing Lab

An updated open lab provides nursing students and faculty space for collaborative learning, practice and training. The space is designed to maximize flexibility and includes four hospital beds with complete headwall and computer access.



Open Nursing Lab

Updated Office Spaces

Modernized office suites give a contemporary home to faculty and Anoka-Ramsey's Business Department. In addition, these new spaces provide space to better facilitate four-year university partnerships. Since 2011, the Business Department at Anoka-Ramsey has awarded 1,395 degrees and certificates, including 81 associate of applied science degrees, associate of science degrees and occupational certificates in 2021.



Office Spaces

Nursing Skills Lab and Lecture Space

Renovated skills labs offer Anoka-Ramsey nursing students fully-functional patient-care stations, including hospital beds, simulated medical gas, computers and headwalls. These training and lecture spaces are also equipped with audio-visual technology to enable instructors to capture footage of training sessions and later review it with students to enhance learning and understanding. Since 2011, the Nursing program has awarded 1,987 associate of science degrees and, in FY2020, graduates enjoyed a 89.8 percent job placement rate.



Nursing Skills Lab and Lecture Space

Cambridge Campus Renovations

Changes are underway on Anoka-Ramsey's Cambridge Campus as well. Renovations were made to classrooms to accommodate nursing learning spaces with beds and headwalls—a feature of hospital rooms that, when replicated in learning spaces, gives students a hands-on opportunity to interact with electrical and gas functions they would encounter in hospital or other medical settings.

Additional updates are expected soon as Anoka-Ramsey works to deliver an extraordinary learning experience for all its students.

“Sony” Revolte says new spaces improve students’ experiences as they gather, learn and connect. Prior to the completion of the renovated spaces, nursing students sometimes found themselves practicing skills in spaces that were less than ideal for the tasks at hand.

“The lab was by the performance gym. It’s terribly loud. We’re practicing checking vitals. To do that, we have to listen to someone’s heart, check a pulse. It might be hard to hear that over the sounds of the gym,” he says. “Plus, these rooms were full. There were a ton of us in there and when people get together, they talk and get loud.”

Updated learning spaces resolve many of those issues.

“You can not only learn together but from each other,” he says. “And in spaces that are designed for this type of learning.”

Community Connection Drums up Unique Donation for Music Department

As freelance musicians in and around the Twin Cities metro, bassist and pianist Ann Marie McIntire and drummer Dave Schmalenberger have collaborated on stage. Their newest collaboration is bringing equipment and resources to Anoka-Ramsey's Music Department.

In early 2022, McIntire approached Schmalenberger at a concert with an interesting question. She was looking for a home for her father's collection of percussion instruments after his death in 2020.

"I'm setting up my drums, and she came up and said, 'Do you happen to know any place where I might store or donate some instruments?'" Schmalenberger says.

Schmalenberger, a member of Anoka-Ramsey's Music faculty, put in a good word for Anoka-Ramsey's Music program. McIntire visited campus, toured the department's facilities, and met with faculty. "I was humbled by the fact that



Anoka-Ramsey would be a great place for this stuff to live.



- Dave Schmalenberger
Anoka-Ramsey
Music Faculty



she thought of me and then very humbled that (after seeing Anoka-Ramsey's Music Department) she said, "Yeah. Anoka-Ramsey would be a great place for this stuff to live," Schmalenberger says.

The meticulously maintained collection, including a glockenspiel, snare drum and vibraphone—once owned by Miss America 1948 BeBe Shopp—adds diversity and flexibility to what the department can offer students and visiting musicians. Adding more than 100 pieces of equipment and accessories expands practice and performance access.

Students like Andrew Green are already getting hands-on experience with the equipment.

"I use the donated congas in the practice room all the time," Green says. "It's been beneficial to have these instruments to play. It just makes everything easier."

Ensuring the instruments are used and well cared for is a fitting tribute to John McIntire, Ann Marie's father.

An avid musician alongside his career as a health care administrator, Ann Marie says John's care for his instruments was rivaled only by his conviction that they are used and enjoyed.

"He wore white gloves when he packed up his instruments. He was that kind of guy," Ann Marie McIntire says. "But he was not about anything sitting around, not being used. He was like, 'Give it to someone if you're not going to use it.'"

She says the choice to share and donate the collection to a school like Anoka-Ramsey was deliberate.

"It needed to go to someone who's going to know these instruments aren't just part of the inventory," she says. "But there was a story. There was a guy."

Plans to commemorate John and his contribution to the Music Department will include a plaque in the band room sharing his dedication to music and the influence he has brought to Anoka-Ramsey students. In memory of John McIntire and his incredible commitment to music, this legacy will inspire many musicians for years and years to come.

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For more information on how to contribute a gift-in-kind to support students at Anoka-Ramsey Community College in their educational experience, call or email the Anoka-Ramsey Community College Foundation to discuss the opportunity.

All in-kind gifts received by June 30, 2023, will be matched by the President's Office.

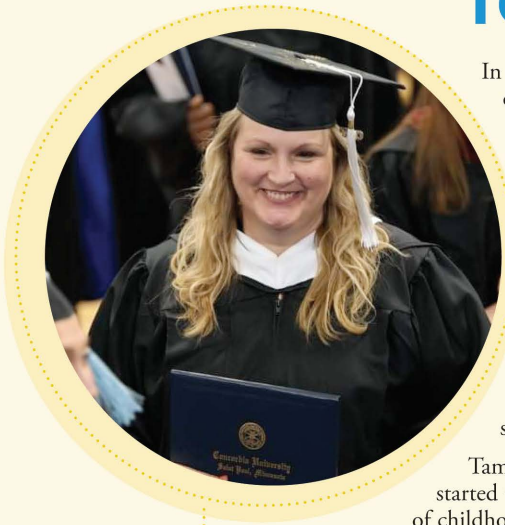
Learn more by contacting Lindsey Schiller at 763-433-1352 or lindsey.schiller@anokaramsey.edu



Alumni CONNECTION

From our first graduates in the class of 1965 to today, Anoka-Ramsey Community College is proud of our alumni and their contributions to our community. Catch up with some of our alumni and share your own story at AnokaRamsey.edu/stories

Tami Allen '20



In 2022, Tami Allen '20 completed her nine-year journey in higher education, earning a master of arts degree in human service from Concordia University, St. Paul. A huge accomplishment for any student, it was a promise fulfilled several times over for Tami.

She planned to enroll at Anoka-Ramsey at the age of 17. When pregnancy changed that plan, she vowed to one day get a degree. At the age of 50, working through a divorce and the departure of her grown/growing children, she started fulfilling that promise to herself and applied at Anoka-Ramsey.

“To be honest when I started college, I didn’t think I would even get accepted or pass a single class,” she says. “I didn’t see myself as educated enough to be accepted to a college. So, when I got accepted, it was beyond.”

“One of my first classes was a communications course. I had to give a speech and I was like, ‘Oh, I can’t do this.’ And I got an A,” she says. “That professor told me, ‘You have something. Don’t be afraid.’”

Tami’s confidence grew from that point forward. She says she felt a shift within herself and started to see that she could achieve her goal of completing a degree. Sharing her own experiences of childhood sexual abuse and trauma in her coursework also helped her connect with a professional calling: a career supporting survivors.

“Because I was a victim of that [abuse] and schools failed me and police officers failed me, I wanted to be a voice for these people who are in this situation and have a hard time getting adults to believe them,” she says. “But I didn’t know what to do with that. People like [Instructor] Kirsten [Dierking] were there to tell me there are places for me to do this.”

“Anoka-Ramsey gave me the strength to believe in myself, to know that my past didn’t define me and that what happened to me was actually going to be a resource for me moving forward.”

Distinguished Faculty Recognized for Contributions

In a ceremony held in August, Anoka-Ramsey Community College celebrated its most recent Distinguished Faculty award recipients: Melissa Mills, Thomas Hanson, Tom McCarthy and Max Malmquist

Conferral of Distinguished Faculty (emeritus) status signifies Anoka-Ramsey’s recognition and appreciation of professional accomplishments and achievements, as well as extraordinary service to the college.

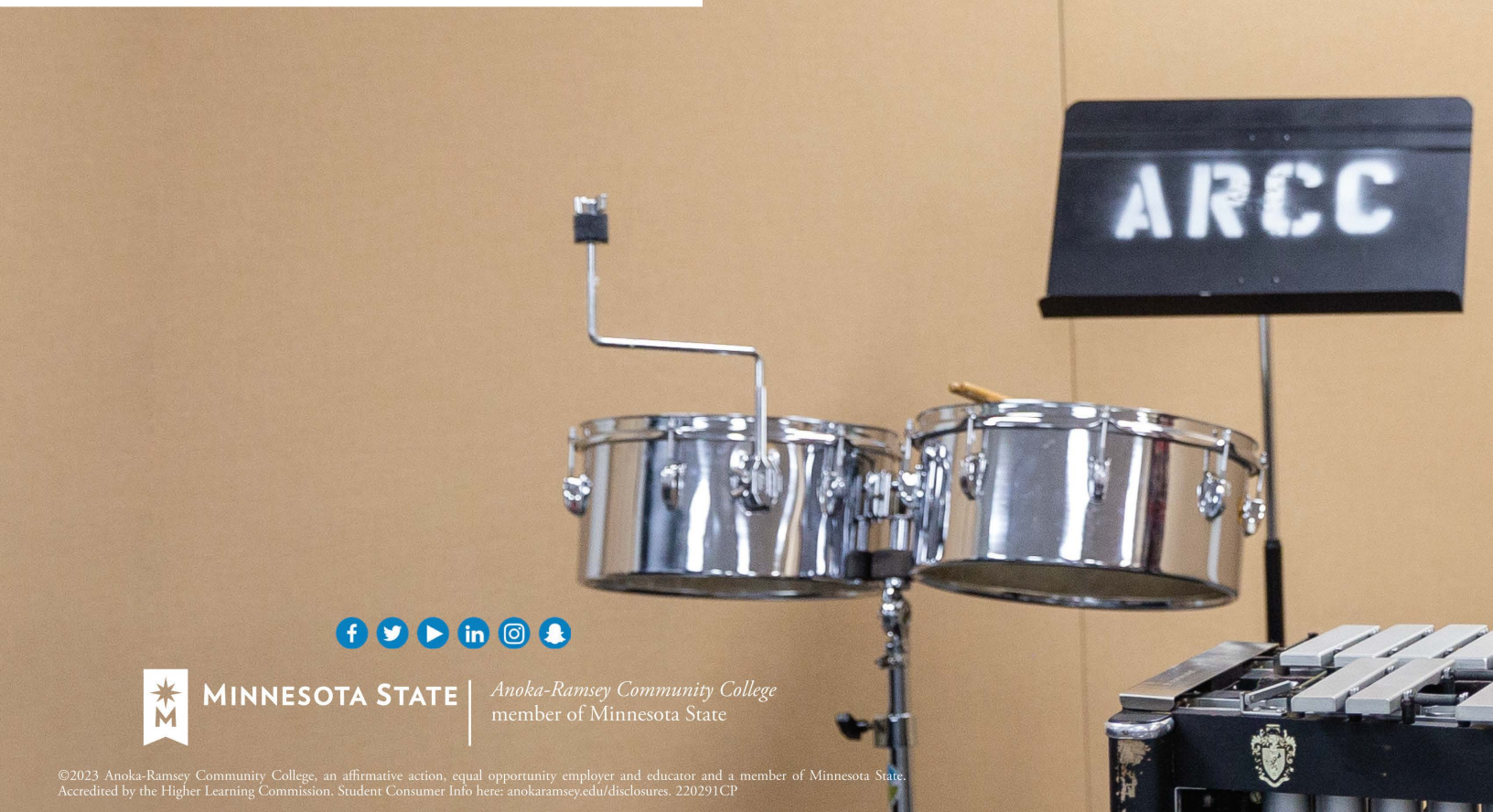
Read more about these honorees: AnokaRamsey.edu/distinguishedfaculty22





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Visit us during our spring 2023 Open House.

Tour campus, learn about our 100+ transferrable programs, meet with Admissions staff and more.

April 12, 2023 in Coon Rapids

April 19, 2023 in Cambridge

Visit AnokaRamsey.edu/OpenHouse to learn more