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From High School To Healthcare: DMACC Perry VanKirk Career Academy Helps Panorama Students Get A Head Start



From left to right: Almiranda Burnett, Elah Molloy, MACC The Bear, and Jady Lawrence pose for a photo. Burnett, Molloy, and Lawrence, along with Panorama's Ava Thompson, recently received their CNA pins from the Des Moines Area Community College.

By Dustin Teays
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Recently, four Panorama Panthers students were pinned as certified nursing assistants (CNA) thanks to a program with the Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) in Perry.

This group included Almiranda Burnett, Ava Thompson, Elah Molloy, and Jady Lawrence. Eddie Diaz, Director of the DMACC Perry VanKirk Career Academy, explains how Panorama students can begin their healthcare careers while still in high school.

"These students registered out of Panorama, and then they go to the center in Perry, and they take coursework throughout the semester. They do labs, and then they do clinicals where they get placed at long-term care facilities. At the conclusion of their coursework, they graduate with a CNA certificate. They then take a state test, and if all goes well, they become CNAs that can work in rural Iowa, here in Panorama, Guthrie Center, you name it," Diaz said.

All three of Molloy, Burnett, and Lawrence shared the same sentiment that they chose to go this direction because of a desire to help people, something that is an outstanding quality in a healthcare worker.

"I just want to help people and my sister is with nurses a lot and I just want to be there to help people like her," Burnett said.

Lawrence shares a bit more about her reasons for this career field.

"I wanted to do this because I want to go into nursing in my future, and I felt like it would be a good step," Lawrence said.

One major benefit of this program? These students have become CNAs before graduating from high school. Molloy, Thompson, and Burnett will graduate this year, and Lawrence is just a junior. For Molloy, having this part done is a huge benefit.

"I would say it is very efficient to be able to do this because it takes a big step into my future and it allows me to start working in healthcare earlier," Molloy said.

For Molloy, Burnett, and Lawrence, becoming a CNA is just the beginning; all three plan to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, and this

gives them a head start on graduation.

While the CNA program is a major offering at DMACC, there are other areas local students can explore through career exploration, and some of those careers have places in their own hometowns that are in need of hard workers.

"Your communities need you. They need you, especially in rural Iowa. So, any of these things from welding, which we have welding shops here in town that are desperate for employees. We have long-term care facilities, we have hospitals. If you go and start exploring now, it's much better for you to be able to come back, if you decide to come back to your community," Diaz added.

When talking about getting a portion of your college career done before you leave the walls of your high school, there are plenty of positives. Some schools have admission requirements, some fields are competitive, and this allows students to see what they might be interested in before committing to a college after high school.

"The best thing about it is you don't have to pay anything. Your community, in this case Panorama, is paying the bill for you to take college credits and hopefully find your passion," Diaz concluded.

For now, Thompson, Molloy, Lawrence, and Burnett will continue to focus on earning their high school diplomas, but all four have a strong foundation for their future careers before they leave the walls of Panorama High School.

- Dustin Teays

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Guthrie Center Elementary Rolls Out Teacher Of The Month Program

By Dustin Teays
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Soon, people will be able to show their appreciation for teachers in the Guthrie Center Elementary building.

Recently, Guthrie Center Elementary announced a new Teacher of the Month initiative to recognize teachers for their hard work. Often, the hard work and time teachers put in go unrecognized, which is something the school wants to change.

"Teachers don't get enough credit and praise for their work, in my opinion. Probably from myself as well. I'm guilty of it, too. I think this is a small recognition 'program' for the amazing and extraordinary things our teachers do on a daily basis. I want to recognize them for that. That's one area of growth that I wanted to focus on for this year. I want to focus on recognizing positivity and greatness in our staff and students. The more that comes out, the more positive our culture and community is," Guthrie Center Elementary Principal Tandem Eischeid said.

This program will allow parents the ability to nominate teachers for the Teacher of the Month award. This isn't the only initiative the school has for those who share the building during the school year.

"At the elementary, we're celebrating the Chargers of the Week for students just to hopefully create and have students make better choices, and to celebrate the friends that always make great choices! I have personally done something like this in my previous experiences in Waukee for the teachers, and I always liked it. Students and Parents can nominate teachers," Eischeid added.

For now, you, those parents, and students in the building can vote for their pick of Teacher of the Month, and the school will recognize those hardworking and dedicated teachers.

City of Panora Receives A \$24,960 Check



Recently, Chris Arganbright (Bryton Insurance Agency) left, gave a check to Panora City Administrator Lisa Grossman, right, in the amount of \$24,960. It was explained that this check was an Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities (IAMU) safety group dividend paid back by participating in the EMC Insurance Companies insurance program for Cities. This program pays money back to members for safety efforts and reducing losses. - Submitted Photo

Guthrie County Sheriff's Office Handles Three Accidents Last Week

By Taylor Teays
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The Guthrie County Sheriff's Office responded to three accidents in the last week, luckily, none resulting in injuries.

On Tuesday, Jan. 6, at approximately 12:35 p.m., Deputy Sheriff Blake Michelsen responded to a reported fender bender in the courthouse parking lot. The accident occurred around 9:30 a.m.

The registered owner of a 2021 Chevy Blazer reported the accident, with a witness stating they observed a 2022 Chrysler Voyager LX, driven by Charlie Walker, 27, of Menlo, back out of a parking space and strike the legally parked Blazer.

Walker was cited for no insurance, with her vehicle receiving an estimated \$500 in minor damage. The Blazer received an estimated \$1,500 in minor damage.

Later the same day, at approximately 2:45 p.m., Deputy Sheriff Kent Gries responded to an accident at State Street and Highway 44. Deanna Arends, 61, of Bayard, was stopped, waiting to turn north onto 7th Street, facing east-bound in a 2018 Chevrolet Traverse. Ali Alhussaini, 39, of Ankeny, was also east-bound, in a 2006 Ford F150.

Alhussaini failed to see Ahrends, rear-ending her. No injuries were reported. The Ahrends vehicle received an estimated \$8,000 in functional damage. Alhussaini was cited

for failure to reduce speed and the pickup truck received an estimated \$5,000 in severe damage.

On Thursday, Jan. 8, just before midnight, Deputy Sheriff Shane Martinson was notified of a car versus deer accident on Highway 141 just outside of Coon Rapids.

Upon arrival, Martinson observed a white Nissan Juke, driven by Rachael Tenk, 36, of Manning, sitting stationary on the right shoulder. There was significant damage to the front of the vehicle due to a deer running out of the left side ditch, crossing in front of the car. The driver's side airbag deployed in the crash. The vehicle was disabled and would not start, a tow was privately arranged for the vehicle.



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