

May 11, 2017

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**PLEASE NOTE: THIS INFORMATION IS ONLY TO BE
RELEASED AFTER 8:00 P.M. ON THURSDAY, MAY 11.**

For immediate release:

2017 ACC COMMENCEMENT RESULTS

Alpena Community College's 66th Commencement was held at 7 p.m. on Thursday, May 11, in Park Arena. Highlights include:

This year ACC has 334 candidates (down from 413 last year) for graduation. Approximately 130 are expected to march in the Commencement ceremony.

Jesse & Anna Besser Awards - The Besser Awards are the highest recognition of academic achievement given at Alpena Community College, and this is the 43rd year they have been presented. The Besser Awards are awarded to two students, usually one male and one female, who have made outstanding contributions to the life of the College through scholarship, leadership, and expression of responsibility in solving social problems. The Besser Company includes a \$500 stipend along with a framed certificate. These students also have their names engraved on the Besser Award plaque. This year's Besser Award winners were Morgan K. Esch and John Nevin McHarg.

Fellow of the College - Each year the College recognizes someone who, through a sense of purpose, community concern and leadership, has enriched the educational, cultural and/or economic lives of the citizens of Northeast Michigan. This year's recipient is Joyce McCoy, who has been instrumental in organizing and managing Alpena Early College, a cooperative venture between ACC and Alpena Public Schools, which will have its first "graduation" ceremony on May 16.

Distinguished Alumni - Another yearly Commencement activity is the presentation of the Distinguished Alumni Award, which is bestowed upon an ACC alumnus/ae who has impacted the world in their realm of expertise. This year's recipient is Frank McCourt.

After 23 seasons at Alpena Community College, Frank McCourt, longtime coach and influential figure in collegiate athletics, has stepped aside. Coach McCourt concluded his 50-year coaching career at the end of the 2016-17 basketball season. While he has retired from coaching basketball, McCourt will focus on his role as the College's Athletics Director.

Coach McCourt has received numerous accolades and awards throughout his career including Junior College Coach of the Year and Athletic Director of the Year from the Basketball Coaches Association of Michigan.

A native of Ossineke, Michigan, Coach McCourt graduated from Alpena High School in 1960 and from ACC in 1962. He continued his education at Michigan State University where he obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in History in 1964 and a Master of Arts degree in Guidance and Counseling in 1966. His first teaching assignment was at Madison Junior High School in Pontiac, Michigan where he later served as the head of the guidance and counseling department.

In 1968, Coach McCourt returned to Alpena and to his alma matter to teach economics as well as to assist students in guidance and counseling. He married Judy Kinsel, who was employed at ACC as Dean Jack Petoskey's secretary, in June of 1968. The couple has two adult sons, Steve and Michael, and three grandchildren.

During his tenure at the College, Coach McCourt has held various positions and titles including Director of the Wilson Dormitory, Counselor, Director of Career Planning and Placement, Coordinator of Athletics, and Head Coach of the men's and women's basketball teams.

New for this year: ACC provided an overflow room for viewing Commencement via streaming video. This was introduced to provide late arrivers a comfortable place to sit and experience the event. ACC also provided a link from its home page to a live stream of the event for those who were not in attendance but wished to watch the ceremony.

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