

May 18, 2018

CONTACT: Jess Ruppert  
ruppertj@alpenacc.edu  
(989) 358-7276

*For immediate release:*

### **ALPENA COMMUNITY COLLEGE GRADUATES FIRST STUDENTS FROM THE BACHELOR'S DEGREE PROGRAM**

ALPENA, MICH. — Mary Myers and Jason Bradley have made history at Alpena Community College as the first students to graduate from the Electrical Systems Technology Bachelor's Degree program. The Bachelor of Science degree was made possible through Act No. 495, the Michigan Community College Act, which allows community colleges to offer bachelor degree programs in cement technology, maritime technology, energy production technology, and culinary arts.

Myers had nothing but praise for the quality of the program and the instruction that she received. "You couldn't ask for any better instructors," she said. "You could go to a four year university and have instructors that wouldn't know you, but the instructors here get to know you on a personal level. You gain a bond with them that will never go away." Myers had job interviews with multiple companies around the state prior to graduation and is currently working as a contractor for Consumers Energy.

Bradley also spoke highly of the access to instructors at ACC. "I went to a bigger school before, I was never able to ask an instructor a question. [Instructor] Steve Lewis went above and beyond to help us; the access to instructors was more than I could have ever imagined." Bradley is currently working in Controls Engineering and Project Management at Nova-Tron Controls and is optimistic about his employment opportunities in the future. "A lot of these companies know who ACC is, especially when it comes to the electrical trades."

ACC Instructor Steve Lewis is the lead instructor and advisor for the program. During the first two years of the program he encountered difficulties in teaching the new program. "It was extremely challenging keeping up with the demands of building the courses and trying to recruit new students." Despite the challenges, Lewis worked very closely with the students to help them succeed. "That's the most exciting part for me, I saw a lot of growth in Mary and Jason in their understanding."

Both Bradley and Myers are optimistic about the future of the Electrical Systems Technology program. "I've seen a lot of positive changes in the years that I've been at ACC, and I see a lot of them on the horizon," said Bradley. Myers is grateful that she was able to help lead the way for this program. "It's good to know that I'm opening doors for other people. I am making a path, I'm breaking barriers for other people," said Myers. Lewis has been actively recruiting for the second cohort of the advanced classes set to begin this fall and said that there has been some momentum in regards to applications for the program.

– END –