

Omega Electric & Sign Company, Inc. Awarded 2019 Michigan Top 50 Companies to Watch

For 15 years the Michigan Celebrates Small Business (MCSB) organization has been recognizing businesses that are making a big impact in the Great Lakes State. In May 2019 small business owners convened in Lansing where 50 were presented with the Michigan Top 50 Companies to Watch award. This award recognizes 50 Michigan companies that are up-and-coming with high potential for the future. Award criteria requirements include annual revenue between \$750,000 and \$50 million, between 6 and 99 full-time employees, and demonstrated substantial growth and a sustainable competitive advantage. Out of 550 nominations, Omega Electric & Sign Company, Inc., owned by ACC alumni Ryan and Rhea Fairchild, was one of 50 to receive the award.

Ryan Fairchild, a 2001 ACC graduate, earned his Associate in Electrical Maintenance. He further distinguished himself by earning a master electrician license and electrical contractor license. In 2006 Ryan put his ACC education to work when he decided to start his own business, Omega Electric. Late nights, weekends, and hard work are just a few of the things that helped Ryan grow his business from the humble beginnings of operating out of his garage to having 22 employees today. "I'm just a north-side boy, we didn't have much growing up," Ryan said. "I didn't thrive in the traditional education system, but while attending ACES Academy, they let me take classes at ACC like drafting and electrical wiring classes, and that got me excited."

Looking back to how his career started, Ryan attributes his interest and success in the electrical industry to ACC faculty member Todd Artley. When Artley moved from adjunct faculty to full-time at ACC, he recruited Ryan to take his place teaching in the program that provided the foundation

for his success. Ryan will begin his 15th year teaching classes such as AC and DC Fundamentals and National Electrical Code Applications.

While Ryan embraced the risks of a startup business, his wife Rhea, a 1998 ACC graduate, provided stability for their family with her job in materials management at Alpena Regional Medical Center. Accepting a job at the hospital while she was a student at ACC, she worked there for 18 years. "I don't remember a lot about the time period when we started Omega Electric, it is all kind of a blur," said Rhea. "We had two young children, and I just did what I needed to support my husband." As their business continued to grow, Rhea decided to shift her focus. A few years ago she left her job at the hospital and now manages the business alongside Ryan. Their sons Griffin, age 16, and Alec, age 13, also occasionally put in a few hours, truly making it a family business.



*Omega Electric & Sign Company, Inc.
owners Ryan and Rhea Fairchild.*

Over the last five years, the Fairchild's business has doubled in size, currently employing 19 full-time and three part-time staff. Although the business started out as a state licensed and insured electrical contractor providing commercial, industrial and residential services, they have broadened their scope of service significantly.

In addition to electrical services, they offer awnings, business signage, banners, flags and poles, murals, stickers, t-shirts and vehicle decals and wraps. They are able to install data and communication cabling, fiber optic cabling and CATV security camera systems in homes and businesses. The Fairchilds attribute their success to not only their hard work and determination, but also to a committed staff and supportive community.

President's Message



Dr. Don MacMaster
ACC President

In his 1989 bestseller, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, groundbreaking business author Stephen Covey distilled a set of principles as foundational to personal and group effectiveness, namely:

- Be proactive
- Begin with an end in mind
- Put first things first
- Think win-win
- Seek first to understand, then to be understood
- Synergize
- Sharpen the saw

As we progress toward a fall 2019 groundbreaking on the Van Lare Hall renovation project, it occurred to me recently that Covey's principles apply to the \$8.7 million Healthy Futures Start Here capital campaign. In October 2016, for example, we began with the end in mind — a concept that would create expanded space and modern simulation technology for our Nursing program along with much-needed upgrades of Van Lare Hall, ACC's legacy building on campus — that we presented to the Joint Capital Outlay Subcommittee (JCOS) of the Michigan legislature. Proactive lobbying with members of the JCOS was rewarded in May 2018 when ACC's project was included as a \$3.35 million line item in an appropriations bill signed by Michigan Governor Rick Snyder.

Putting first things first, the Alpena Community College Foundation swung into action, raising \$3 million in local donations to date. Thinking win-win, the College matched that with \$1.7 million on hand to commit to the project. Synergizing with state and federal sources for the remainder is ongoing with a \$500,000 grant from the United States Department of Agriculture Distance Learning and Telemedicine program the most recent addition. In our work with donors, we see how important it is to understand their motivation for giving to this project. Each story is unique and every story is powerful. It's not too late to donate. We still need your support.

As for sharpening the saw, Covey framed this transitional principle as maintaining the proper work-life balance to avoid burnout — in other words, seeking rejuvenation before launching into the next project. There's certainly wisdom in mindfully attending to this habit. However, as someone who has run a chainsaw since I was 15 years old, my take on Covey's directive is to sharpen the saw and get busy trimming back the underbrush along the riverbank overlooking Lake Besser behind Van Lare Hall, freeing up the beautiful view of the river in both directions so that the next generation of ACC students and staff might be inspired to create their own cycle of seven habits of highly effective people.

Thank you for your continued support of Alpena Community College.

HAPPY RETIREMENT!

As the 2018-19 academic year ends, the ACC Foundation sends best wishes for an enjoyable retirement to four Alpena Community College faculty and staff members who have collectively provided 92 years of educational service to students at ACC.



**CAROL
PUTKAMER**

has worked as an instructor in ACC's Medical Assistant program for the past 20 years. There is no doubt that she

has seen several advancements in the industry. When asked what she plans to do after retirement, Carol responded, "Garden, swim and sleep in!"



**BEST
WISHES!**



**BARBARA
SZCZESNIAK**

joined ACC in 2009 as the Executive Assistant for the ACC Foundation. Three years later she added the responsibilities of Secretary to the President. She has been a valuable asset

to both the College and the Foundation for the past 10 years. True to Barb's need to stay busy, when asked what she planned to do after retirement Barb responded, "Find a job!"

ACC Endowed Teaching Chair Award Announced

The late Lucas E. and Janet G. Pfeiffenberger established the Russell H. and Fromilda Y. Wilson Endowed Teaching Chair Fund in 2005 with the creation of an endowment fund with the ACC Foundation. Their generous gift now provides a \$5,000 annual award to a faculty member who has been selected by the Endowed Teaching Chair Selection Committee.

The Endowed Teaching Chair program recognizes and promotes academic excellence at ACC. The program honors noteworthy faculty members and provides resources for improving instruction, academic programs, and professional development.

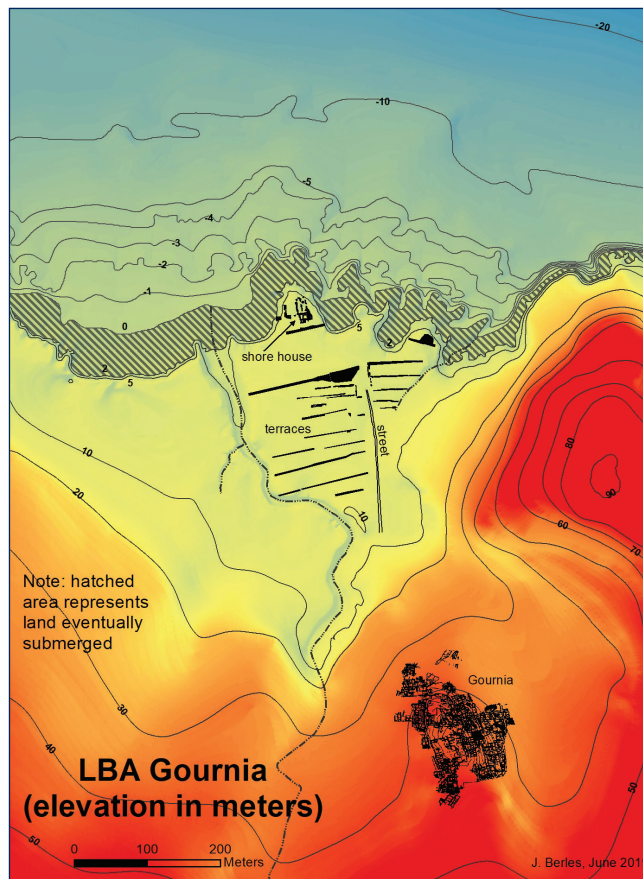
James Berles, a Math, Engineering, and GIS instructor and Matthew Duncel, a Geography, Anthropology, and History instructor collaborated to produce an interdisciplinary project that earned them the 2019 award. Berles and Duncel developed an Endowed Teaching

Chair project that centers around geological and geographical research. For three weeks in June 2019 both instructors participated in an archaeological research study at and around the buried Bronze Age city of Gournia, on the island of Crete in Greece and on the island of Chrissi along the southern shore of Crete. They teamed up with Dr. Floyd McCoy, a staff researcher at INSTAP Study Center for East Crete, and Geology, Geophysics and Oceanography professor at the University of Hawaii. Together, they created GIS mapping of the topography of three arch sites as they were in the Bronze Age, along with field and lab work at the Gournia archaeology site and coastal cliffs stratigraphic analysis.

The two instructors are excited to share their gained knowledge and experiences through an enriched curriculum in geography, anthropology, history, GIS, math, and science at ACC beginning this fall.



ACC Instructor James Berles collecting GPS data in Greece.



The GIS topical map of the Late Bronze Age city of Gournia in Greece.



ACC Instructor Matthew Duncel collecting GPS data in Greece.



MARLENE VANDERWYST

retired after 34 years of working at ACC. She began her journey doing word processing in the late 1980's. She spent some time working in the Registrar's office and most recently spent her days as an administrative assistant to the Director of Financial Aid and the Athletics Director. When asked what she plans to do after retirement Marlene responded, "Spend more time with my grandchildren and travel the USA and abroad."



**BEST
WISHES!**



LAURIE WADE

has shared her knowledge of the arts with students for the past 28 years as a Fine Arts faculty member. She has taught courses such as Design, Ceramics, Sculpture, Photography and Computer Generated Images.

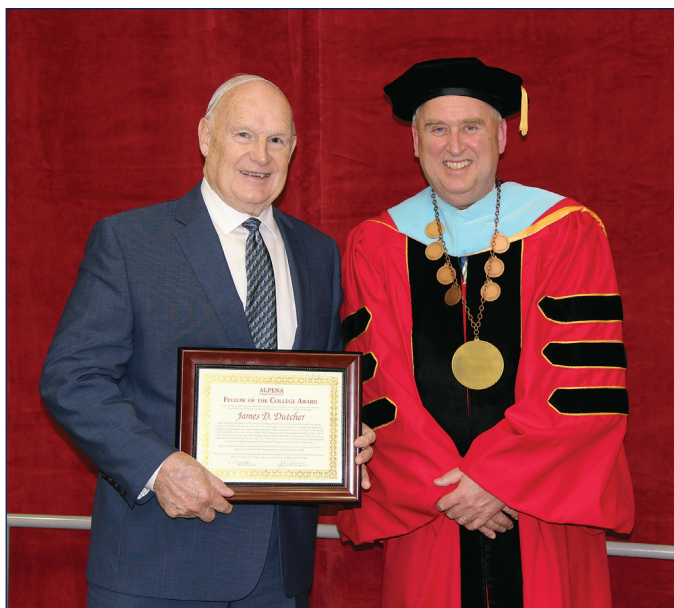
ACC Announces 2019 Fellow of the College

In 1972, ACC President Herbert Stoutenburg instituted the Fellow of the College Award to honor those who make outstanding educational, cultural or economic contributions to Northeast Michigan. Although not necessarily awarded each year, if a Fellow is to be named, the announcement is made at commencement.

This spring, ACC named Coach James Dutcher as Alpena Community College's 2019 Fellow of the College. Jim has had an historic basketball coaching career at ACC and several universities including the University of Michigan. He has had great success in that field, including having led the ACC men's basketball team to the Michigan Junior College Conference Championship in 1966. He has left an indelible mark on ACC and is a legend in ACC athletics.

Dutcher was born in Alpena, Michigan, and graduated from Alpena High School in 1951, having earned All-State honors in football and basketball. He attended the University of Michigan where he played football and basketball until a knee injury his sophomore year limited his participation. During his senior year he was the assistant varsity basketball coach at Ann Arbor High School. After earning his master's degree at U of M, he returned to Alpena where he worked as the Athletic Director and Head Basketball Coach at Alpena Community College from 1958 to 1966. His cumulative record at ACC was 105 wins versus 70 losses. Dutcher's 1965-66 ACC team won the Michigan Junior College Conference Championship and finished with a 22-5 record. He was named conference "Coach of the Year" twice during his time at ACC.

Dutcher went on to be head basketball coach for Eastern Michigan University, assistant basketball coach at U of M, and head basketball coach at the University of Minnesota. From 1986 to 1990 he was a Vice President at the brokerage firm of Miller, Johnson & Kuehn. In 1990, he joined the firm of RBC Dain Rauscher where he was employed as Senior Vice President until he retired in 2005.



James Dutcher was selected as ACC's 2019 Fellow of the College. Dutcher was the ACC Athletic Director and head basketball coach from 1958 to 1966.

ACC FELLOWS

1972	Frank J. Kelley & Philip L. Richards
1973	O.B. Eustis & Carola Cohn
1974	Harry H. Whiteley & Dr. Russell H. Wilson
1975	Isadore Isackson
1976	Maynard "Tewey" Cohen
1988	Howard Spencer & Lucas Pfeifferberger
1989	James C. Park & Dr. Dale Parnell
1990	Agnes Filpus & C. Don Hinman
1991	Melvin Matchett & David Zeller
1992	Stephen H. Fletcher & John R. Milroy
1993	Robert M. Granum & Robert Green
1994	James Arbuckle
1995	David R. Pierce, Judi Stillion & Robert J. Parks
1996	David B. Usher
1998	Rosella H. Neumann & Beverly A. Bodem
1999	Russell A. Townsend, Jr.
2000	Robert C. Rohn
2001	Dennis E. Doubek
2002	Dr. George R. Boggs & Maridieth K. Summers, Jr.
2003	Janet Pfeifferberger
2004	Christopher McCoy
2005	Gary Dawley
2006	William Harris
2007	Greg Winter
2008	Bruce "Red" Crittenden
2009	Jim and Cary Rapin
2010	Dave Dziubinski
2011	Bill and Diane Speer
2012	Ann Burton
2013	Jefferson Gray
2014	Kevin Curtis
2015	Craig A. Kus
2016	George and Dorothy LaFleche
2017	Joyce E. McCoy
2018	Ronald W. Winter

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Visit www.alpenacc.edu to access information about programs, admissions and campus events. Or sign up to receive the ACC Foundation's new electronic newsletter delivered to your inbox. Simply send your contact info to hermanb@alpenacc.edu with subject line: Newsletter Subscribe.

It Always Seems Impossible Until It's Done

What if all you had to do to ensure that Alpena Community College can continue to better lives and communities for years to come is to write a simple sentence? Sound impossible?

Ensuring the future of ACC is really as simple as writing one sentence. By including a gift to ACC in your will, you can support future students and programs, leaving a legacy that enriches lives for years to come.

If you are interested in speaking with someone about leaving a gift in your will to ACC, please contact ACC Foundation Executive Director Brenda Herman at 989.358.7297 or hermanb@alpenacc.edu. We are happy to work with you to create a meaningful gift that makes a difference for our students.

Join the Anna and Jesse Besser Legacy Society

To make a planned gift to Alpena Community College, simply customize the below paragraph and add it to your will:

I give to the Alpena Community College Foundation, a Michigan not-for-profit corporation located in Alpena, Michigan, (choose one)

- *_____ % of my estate or the sum of \$ _____.*
OR
- *The following described property: _____.*
OR
- *All the rest, residue and remainder of my estate to be used where it is needed most.*



Alumnus Keith Wallace was presented the 2019 Distinguished Graduate Award by ACC Foundation Executive Director Brenda Herman and ACC President Dr. Don MacMaster.

Keith Wallace Named 2019 Distinguished Graduate

Keith Wallace was awarded the 2019 Distinguished Graduate Award at the 66th Alpena Community College commencement ceremony on May 9. Established in 1998 by the ACC Foundation, this award honors ACC graduates who have gone on to contribute to society through successful careers. Its recipients are examples of how a solid foundation from ACC can launch a lifetime of achievement.

Wallace is a native of Alpena and earned an Associate in Arts degree from Alpena Community College in 1962. He went on to earn a Bachelor in Arts degree with a secondary teaching certificate from the University of Michigan in 1964. He continued his education at the University of Detroit, receiving a Juris Doctor degree in 1967.

Keith met his wife, Joyce, when they both worked at Lawyers Title Insurance Company located in downtown Detroit. Shortly after Keith graduated from law school, they got married and he moved Joyce to his hometown of Alpena. Keith has been an active practicing attorney for 51 years and is currently a senior member of the law firm Isackson, Wallace and Pfeifer.

Keith has served in leadership roles on a variety of boards and volunteer organizations including the First Federal Savings Board of Directors, Hospice of Northeast Michigan Advisory Board, St. Bernard's Church Pastoral Council, Alpena Jaycees, and Fraternal Order of Police. Most notably, Keith served as the city attorney for the City of Alpena for 39 years where he also received the Michigan Association of Municipal Attorneys Distinguished Service Award. He honorably accepted the role of Public Administrator for the County of Alpena, appointed by the Michigan Attorney General's office. Using his expertise in estate planning, Keith most recently served on Alpena Community College Foundation's Gift Planning Alliance Committee.

Keith and Joyce have one daughter, Courtney, who is married and now resides in Muskegon. The Wallaces enjoy traveling and spending time with their daughter, son-in-law and granddaughters, Katie and Claire.

Do you know someone deserving of ACC's Distinguished Graduate Award? We welcome your suggestions! Send your nominee's name and a brief description of their accomplishments to hermanb@alpenacc.edu with subject line "Distinguished Graduate."

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Student Collaboration Across Programs

Machine Tool Technology Instructor Andrew Paad recognized an opportunity for cost savings that in turn led to an interesting project for students in the Machine Tool Technology, Computer-Aided Design, Welding, and Industrial Technology programs.

It all started with the plastic blocks that the students use in the CNC machines to practice their design skills, make changes, and stay within tolerance. The College was purchasing the blocks and they were quite costly. Paad saw an opportunity for the students to make their own blocks through the process of recycling plastic. Not only would this be a cost savings to the College, it also required the students to collaborate and innovate to design and build their own plastic shredder and extruder.

The journey began by contacting industry professionals at Cadillac Products Automotive to learn about designing a plastic shredder. Students used the knowledge they gained from that meeting as well as design plans from an online source to construct the shredder. From the initial design to the completed project, the students' shredder underwent major changes such as size, blade design, hopper design, motor size and from being belt driven to chain driven.

Students from David Cummin's Team Design Project class took the plastic shredder project one step further by designing and building an extruder which takes the shredded plastic, melts it and extrudes it into one continuous profile. This fall, students will use design elements from the extruder to build a beam extruder for making the plastic blocks needed for CNC machining. They also plan to redesign their shredder to become more efficient and allow for increased production volume.



Students from four ACC programs joined forces to build a plastic shredder and extruder.