

## LMC dedicates Bertrand Crossing upgrades

By DEBRA HAIGHT  
HP Correspondent

NILES — Lake Michigan College officials gathered at the Bertrand Crossing campus Wednesday to celebrate completion of \$1.8 million worth of improvements they say makes the campus a true "one stop" location.

Students can now get LMC certificates and degrees without going elsewhere.

"There's a big difference in being able to go here and not have to go to (the) Napier (campus)," student Mitchell Turner said at the event. "With the price of gas and the 47-mile round trip to Napier (LMC's main campus in Benton Township), that can also make a difference. I appreciate having this opportunity so close to home and have this here for future generations of students."

The Galien resident will graduate in May with an associate's degree in dental assisting and is serving an internship at the Lakeshore Family Dental in Stevensville.

Turner was an industrial maintenance technician until the Niles company he worked for went out of business. He has a wife and three children and decided to pursue a career in health care because it's a steadier employer.

The new dental assisting lab and new chemistry and biology labs, new general purpose classrooms, new study areas and a Barnes & Noble bookstore were unveiled Wednesday during an open house.

Dental assisting program director Julie Uribe said LMC has the only accredited dental assisting program in Southwest Michigan and northern Indiana. She said the Bertrand Crossing improvements allow the college to offer the same program at Bertrand Crossing as it does at the main campus.

The programs on both campuses are geared toward non-traditional students with their flexible "open entry/open exit" format, which allows students to work at their own pace with their studies and their lab experience. The dental lab allows students to practice newly learned skills on mannequins, she said.

Bertrand Crossing Executive Dean Barbara Craig said the improvements coincide with a record fall enrollment of 587 students at the south county campus, which opened 15 years ago. The college began improvements at Bertrand Crossing more than a year ago when LMC moved its manufacturing, robotics and the Fab Lab to nearby high schools. LMC runs those programs at Niles and Brandywine high schools.