

By Shelly Springborn

Longtime Montcalm Community College Foundation (MCCF) Board President Martha “Jane” Anderson Beach, of Edmore, recently received a Community Impact Award from Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and the Michigan Community Service Commission for volunteerism and service.

Beach was one of 46 Michigan residents to be chosen as a recipient of the Governor’s Service Awards.

“I was so pleased to be selected,” Beach said. “My first thought was that there are so many worthy people, and it’s an honor to be included with them.”

Beach joined the other recipients for a celebration at the Fox Theater in Detroit.

“There was something about being there and being with people with similar mindsets that made it more special,” she said. “It was a very inspiring evening. You couldn’t leave there without thinking there are a million ways to contribute to your community.”

“Michigan succeeds because of Michiganders who go above and beyond to serve their communities and lift up

other people.”

“Jane is a wonderful example of how someone can show practical kindness and support to others. Her servant leadership has increased many great opportunities for individuals and businesses in our region,” Lund said.

As a retired elementary special education teacher, Beach has worked to help develop and support programs that serve children and adults. She is past chairperson and current board member of the Nita Curtis Foundation in Edmore, which helps to meet the needs of the community, provides scholarships to Montabella school graduates, and contributes to “community betterment” in the local area. She is also an active member of Faith United Methodist Church in Edmore.

Beach has served as a chairperson, board member, and volunteer with many organizations in her area. She currently is vice chair of the Montcalm Area Reading Council, and she is on the leadership team of 100 Women Who Care in Montcalm County, an annual fundraising event which benefits local nonprofits. She also supports RAVE (Relief After Violent Encounter), a Domestic Violence Assistance Program, and Lakeview Community School Projects, such as The Giving Tree which helps families at Christmas. In addition, she has been an election poll worker for several years.

Kristen Kohn, Director of Community Impact at Greenville Area Community Foundation, sums up what Beach means to the community.

“Jane is a gift to our community. She is an encourager, always going the extra mile to support and inspire those around her. She is skilled in making connections, bringing together people and resources for the good of all. Her volunteerism has greatly benefited our community and we are so lucky to have her,” Kohn said.