



IMAGE: MCC Student Annaleis Sloan

Student Spotlight: Annaleis Sloan Finds Her Path to Nursing at MCC

MILES CITY, MT: For Annaleis Sloan, pursuing a career in nursing was never just about choosing a profession—it was about living out values that have always guided her life.

Sloan is the first student currently participating in MCC's Student Success Pathway, a program introduced last year to help promising high school seniors prepare for the demands of nursing school. The pathway provides early mentorship, hands-on exposure to simulations, and a reserved seat in the MCC Nursing Program once prerequisites and entrance requirements are completed.

Originally from Miles City and a graduate of Custer County District High School, Sloan is now a freshman at Miles Community College completing her nursing prerequisites. While most students spend their first year completing required general courses before applying to the competitive MCC Nursing Program, Sloan has already secured a pre-accepted seat through the Student Success Pathway, pending successful completion of her prerequisites and the Kaplan entrance exam.

The opportunity has helped Sloan begin her journey toward becoming a nurse with confidence, support, and hands-on exposure to the profession.

"I've always been a natural caretaker," Sloan said. "A lot of my personal beliefs align with what nurses do every day—empathy, compassion, and service. Those are the three pillars that really led me toward nursing."

Her interest in healthcare deepened during her junior year of high school after suffering an ACL injury that required nearly a year of recovery and rehabilitation.

"I spent about twelve months in and out of healthcare settings during my recovery," Sloan said. "I loved the physical therapy side of things, but I realized I wanted to do more than just rehabilitation. Nursing offers so many different pathways, and it's a great foundation for building a career in healthcare."

Discovering the Student Success Pathway

Sloan first learned about MCC's Student Success Pathway while attending a job fair in Miles City during her senior year of high school. There, she met MCC Director of Nursing Dani Hudson, who introduced her to the program and encouraged her to consider applying.

As the application deadline approached, Sloan received additional encouragement from MCC Nursing and Allied Health Programs Advisor Jill Olson, who helped guide her through the process.

"I wasn't completely sure where I wanted to go to college or which direction I wanted to take," Sloan said. "Jill reached out to me right before the deadline and helped me through the entire application. She was so supportive and gracious, and that made a huge difference."

When Sloan learned she had been selected for the highly competitive program, she felt both excitement and gratitude.

"I was so grateful and honestly a little shocked," she said. "It was such an amazing opportunity that I knew I couldn't pass it up. It really helped solidify my decision to pursue nursing at MCC."

Mentorship and Hands-On Learning

One of the biggest benefits of the Student Success Pathway is mentorship from experienced faculty. Sloan meets monthly with Nurse Coach and MCC Nursing Instructor deAmbra Coleman, who helps guide her through both academic and personal challenges.

"She helps me create study plans, work through anxiety, and find resources if I'm struggling with something," Sloan said. "She's incredibly kind and helpful, and she really wants to see us succeed."

The program also allows Sloan to observe nursing simulations alongside current nursing students—something that has made a strong impression on her.

"I get to sit in on simulations and see how they work before I'm officially in the program," Sloan said. "Watching those hands-on scenarios makes everything feel real. It makes me excited and a little less nervous for next year."

For Sloan, these experiences have been key in helping her visualize her future as a nurse. Observing real-world scenarios and clinical decision-making during simulations has made the path toward entering the nursing program feel more tangible and within reach.

Preparing for the Future

In addition to mentorship and early exposure to nursing education, Sloan says the pathway program has helped her prepare for the demanding coursework ahead.

“Nursing school is a heavy academic load, and the staff really works hard to help students avoid burnout,” Sloan said. “They help with my class schedules, time management, and are really just setting me up for success.”

Outside of school, Sloan is already gaining valuable experience in healthcare. She currently works as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) in the Residential Living department at Holy Rosary Hospital in Miles City, where she interacts closely with patients.

“I love building personal connections with the people I care for,” Sloan said. “Making patients feel comfortable and supported is so important to me. Those connections between patients and their caregivers can make all the difference.”

Advice for Future Students

Looking back, Sloan encourages high school students interested in healthcare to explore MCC’s Student Success Pathway and connect with the college early. She says the support and guidance she has received from MCC faculty and staff made a significant difference in her experience.

For Sloan, the program has not only helped prepare her academically but has also reinforced her confidence that MCC was the right place to begin her nursing journey.

“I’m really proud to be part of the MCC Nursing program,” she said. “Growing up in Miles City, it means a lot to continue my education here. Everything feels personal and supportive—you’re not just a number. That connection and support make MCC a really special place to learn.”

As Sloan continues working toward her goal of becoming a nurse, the Student Success Pathway has already helped set her on a strong and meaningful path—one built on compassion, dedication, and a commitment to serving her community.