

Three Lowes, one commencement

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HP Correspondent

BENTON HARBOR — When Edith Lowe went back to school in the fall of 2013, she naturally felt excited — and nervous — about the commitment she was making.

“I was scared, on more than one occasion: ‘Am I going to be able to do this? Is this going to be an easy subject to tackle, or am I going to have a hard time?’” she said.

But those feelings soon disappeared after a successful first semester.

“I just went from there.

Once I set my mind to do something, I’m going to do the steps I can do, to try and accomplish my goal,” she said.

On Sunday, Edith Lowe will join her twin sons, David and Matt, 21, for Lake Michigan College’s 70th commencement ceremony, which is at 2 p.m., in the Mendel Center, 2755 E. Napier Ave., Benton Harbor.

Edith, who works at LMC’s Wellness Center, is graduating with an associate degree in general studies, she said.

Her sons are receiving

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Photo provided

The Lowe family of Benton Harbor will see three of its members graduate Sunday from Lake Michigan College. From left, Rick Lowe, Matt Lowe, Edith Lowe and Rick Lowe. Edith and the twin sons earned degrees.

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associate degrees. Both are music majors who played in LMC's Jazz Ensemble. David and Matt play drums and guitar, respectively, she said.

"I did this for personal accomplishment. It feels good – not only for me, but them, as well," she said.

The Lowes, of Benton Harbor, are among 514 students receiving 526 degrees and certificates for their various academic achievements.

The ceremony represents the first one for LMC's new president, Trevor Kubatzke, who started in mid-April.

He'll join LMC board Chairman Michael Lindley in welcoming students.

"Commencement here is a great time to recognize our students, and the completion of their degrees. The ceremony itself is really about celebration of success," Kubatzke said.

Kubatzke plans to keep his own remarks low-key.

"My philosophy is, it isn't about me. It's about the success of our students, so all of my remarks are going to be congratulatory, as well as encouraging them to continue, not only their education, to be the best success they can be," he said.

Sunday's group will represent 60 high schools, seven states – including California, Florida, Tennessee and Texas, plus Illinois, Indiana and Michigan – and 15 countries, such as Canada, Haiti, Kenya, Malawi, Mexico, Peru and the Philippines, among others.

"The international student population is growing, and really rounds out the experience because we are a global economy now," Kubatzke said. "Our graduates don't have to read about being in a global economy. They are in a global economy."

Lifase Bilima is the student speaker.

Bilima studied early childhood education, and her mother is a registered nurse who received her degree in that field from LMC, the release states.

Edith Lowe said she may return to LMC, if she finds a class that appeals to her – having considered early childhood education before settling on her current path.

"I haven't let the early childhood education thoughts go just yet, now that I'm past this hurdle of actually getting a degree. I haven't made a major decision yet. I'm not in a hurry," she said.

She said she expects music and other creative arts to remain a big part of the family's life.

David fronts his own band, 45 to Argos, while Matt plays with her and husband, Rick, in Second Chance – which is a classic rock, modern rock and country band.

She and Rick play rhythm and lead guitar, respectively. They also sing, and write original Christian songs, too.

"That's something my husband and I have done for a long time," she said.

A third son, Rick Jr., graduated from Grand Valley State University, in 2011, with a bachelor's degree in writing. He likes to write fiction, and hopes to make his own mark in that field, she said.