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Through education, MC student makes love for kids a vocation

BY NANCY THORNE
 Public Information Office

Though Andrews native Angela Kennedy lived in the Dallas Metroplex for the past five years, she's still a West Texas girl at heart. Her recent move to Odessa—to assume a new position as a Speech Language Pathologist with the Permian Basin Rehabilitation Center—has proven a great one and brought much joy to her parents, Randy and Linda Kennedy, who are now just 30 minutes down the road.

"I owe everything I am to Midland College."

—Angela Kennedy

Angela's parents were not able to go to college, but they encouraged her and her two brothers, Greg and Ryan, to pursue higher education. She chose Midland College because several of her closest friends—excellent students with high aspirations—had gone to MC and encouraged Angela to do the same. Now with associate, bachelor's and master's degrees under her belt, Angela is one of the many "first generation" success stories for which Midland College is widely known. Angela's time at MC epitomized what many students dream of for their college experiences. She loved living in the dorms for two years; she was involved in numerous organizations, such as Students in Philanthropy, Phi Theta Kappa and the Ambassadors; she was employed on campus as a work study under MC's Executive Vice President, Dr. Richard Jolly; and she was an excellent student, graduating with a near-perfect 3.9 GPA. "It was important to me that I get the most out of my education," Angela said. "My classes at MC were just as hard, if not harder, than the university classes I took," she continued. She liked the smaller learning environment at MC and found her professors—who are still among her favorites—to be "challenging but accessible."

After graduating from MC in 2003 with her Associate of General Studies degree, she was awarded the Abell-Hanger Education Continuance Scholarship, which allowed her to transfer to the University of North Texas, in Denton. There she earned both her Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees in Speech Language Pathology.

These educational credentials were necessary for her new job at the Permian Basin Rehabilitation Center, a nonprofit organization of which she thinks very highly, and in

which she is very happy. "They try to meet the needs of everyone that comes through the door," she said.

Angela treats children with speech and feeding problems. Some children have "articulation disorders," difficulty pronouncing certain sounds, while others may have "behavioral feeding disorders," and refuse to eat certain types of food, posing a nutritional threat. With games, toys, pictures, puppets and computers, she engages her patients with interactive exercises, helping them overcome impairments during these critical years of language acquisition and expression, which takes place between two and five years. "By three, if a child is not talking, there's a problem and they need to see someone," she said.

"My favorite thing is to see these kids improve," she said. She notices progress on a daily basis, but also enormous improvements over time. One of her patients at Our Children's House in Dallas—a rehabilitation center where she worked for the past two years—was a four-year-old boy with an articulation disorder so frustrating that the child was throwing tantrums. Not even his parents could understand him. Angela worked with the child, helped him retrain his mouth—so that "wabbit" would finally come out as "rabbit"—and after two years, he was completely intelligible, his speech finally on par with his peers.

Angela loves children and has made helping them her life's work, a dream made possible through her education. To those still struggling with the college question, Angela echoes the message her parents gave her: "You are capable of doing anything you put your mind to." For Angela, and many others, MC provided the perfect place to apply her mind ... she received a great education and developed the confidence to attend a four-year university. "My years at Midland College were the best two years of my life!" she added.



Speech Language Pathologist Angela Kennedy plays with Brendan Shellenberger at the Permian Basin Rehabilitation Center

Photo by Nancy Thorne

Fantastic, fun and free ... at MC!

Aviation Fly-In

Join us for the Aviation Department's fourth annual "Fly-In Breakfast" on Saturday, April 18, 2009, 7:00 - 11:00 a.m., Hangar H, at Midland Airpark, 901 Veterans Airpark Lane. This year's Fly-In is hosted by the Professional Pilot and Aviation Maintenance programs, which train pilots and aviation mechanics for the airline industry. Those interested in the aviation industry, pilots and the public are invited to come out, enjoy free breakfast burritos, see our aircraft, and talk with faculty and staff for both programs. Discovery flights are available to the public for \$50. For more information, call Karen Harris at (432) 685-4799.

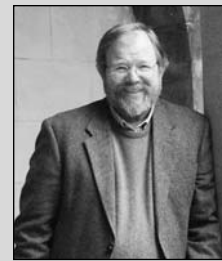


Greathouse Children's Center Open House



The public is invited to the Open House of the new Helen L. Greathouse Children's Center (HLGCC) on Wednesday, April 8 at 10:30 a.m. The HLGCC is relocating to a new, larger facility just west of the Physical Education building. The new facility will accommodate 125 children from four months through five years. It is designed with five, age-appropriate classrooms for infants, toddlers, twos, threes, and fours/fives. Please call (432) 685-4574 for details.

Bill Bryson



The Davidson Distinguished Lecture Series presents best-selling author Bill Bryson, who will be at the Al G. Langford Chaparral Center on Thursday, April 16, at 7:30 p.m. His lecture, "Notes from All Over," will represent this writer's great wit and vast travel experience. Among his many bestselling books are *Lost Continent*, *A Walk in the Woods*, *I'm A Stranger Here Myself*, and *A Short History of Nearly Everything*. His latest book, *The Life and Times of the Thunderbolt Kid*, was published in 2007.



Briefly

Veterinary Technology program hosting Pet Easter Basket fundraiser

The Veterinary Technology program is hosting a Pet Easter Basket fundraiser from now until April 6. Each basket will cost \$8 and contain treats and a toy for your four-legged friend. All profits will help Vet Tech students pay for their National and State Board Exams. Please visit our website at www.midland.edu/vettech to place your order, then click on the Student Organization link. Please contact Missy Schenkman at (432) 685-6496 or mschenkman@midland.edu for more information.

New course, Online Networking: Are they Following You?, offered in April

Geared towards professionals seeking to build their online reputation, this hands-on course takes the confusion out of online networking by demonstrating how to make Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Plaxo work for you in 15 minutes a day! The course costs \$69 and meets 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 1 and Friday, April 3 at MC's Advanced Technology Center (ATC), 3200 W. Cuthbert.

Online registration is available at www.midland.edu/workforce or contact Sara Lyons at slyons@midland.edu or (432) 681-6326.

Workforce Continuing Education offers Balancing Home and Career

This new course helps make balance a reality by defining what balance means, exploring how to prioritize at home and at work, and examining personal and professional expectations. The course costs \$115 and meets 7:00 - 8:45 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays, April 7 - 16 at the ATC. Online registration is at www.midland.edu/workforce or contact Sara Lyons at slyons@midland.edu or (432) 681-6326.

Radiography program to host orientation

Students interested in the Radiography program are invited to an orientation in which faculty and advisors will be available to discuss the program, degree plans and financial aid. The orientation will be held on Monday, April 20, at 7:00 p.m. in the lecture hall of the Davidson Family Health Sciences Building. Please call (432) 685-4601 for details.

34th Annual Creative Writing Contest Awards ceremony to be held Tuesday

The awards ceremony for Midland College's 34th annual Creative Writing Contest will be held at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, March 31 in the Wagner & Brown Auditorium of the Allison Fine Arts Building. MC students who entered the contest will be reading from their original work in several genres, including poetry, essays and short stories. MC's English faculty will also be in attendance. A reception will follow the readings and awards presentation. This event is free and open to the public. For more information, please call Dr. Mary Williams at (432) 685-4631.

Selected writings from the contest will be published in *Tableau*, an annual student publication produced cooperatively through the Departments of Journalism and English.

Gentle Yoga begins April 2

Gentle Yoga is designed to improve circulation and encourage healing, especially in those suffering from rheumatoid arthritis, fibromyalgia and osteoarthritis, or anyone needing stretching and tension release. Options and modifications for all levels—including the use of chairs, straps, blocks, and blankets—will be taught. These poses and methods will allow anyone to increase muscular strength, endurance, flexibility, stamina and overall wellness. Two classes, at \$25 each, are available:



- 1) April 3 - May 29, Monday and Friday mornings from 11:05 - 11:50 a.m.
 - 2) April 2 - May 28, Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, from 2:30 - 3:15 p.m.
- Please visit our website, www.midland.edu/cpce, or call (432) 685-4518.

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