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Dr. Steve Thomas

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Dear Friends,

We are very pleased to share the Summer/Fall 2021 edition of the Clarion for a number of reasons. Obviously, we are happy and relieved to report that we came through the COVID pandemic relatively unscathed. While we did have some students and employees contract the coronavirus, the numbers were few and their symptoms were not life threatening. The main reasons for sharing this issue of the Clarion are the people, services and programs that are highlighted in this publication.

As you read about the accomplishments of our students and faculty, the generous support of donors and friends, vital partnerships and community involvement, it is clear that Midland College plays an integral role in our community. From Kids’ College for our youth to College Classics for the young at heart and all in between, MC offers so much to provide a quality education for students and to enrich our community. As your community college, we too are enriched by your sustained support for nearly 50 years.

I am very excited about the fall semester and finally having the majority of our students back on campus. As you can see, we have a number of excellent programs planned for the upcoming year, and we are anxious to get started. I look forward to seeing you.

Steve Thomas, Ph.D.
President
WHAT'S INSIDE

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ALBERT SHERMAN
Albert Sherman moved to Midland in 1990 with his wife Kelli Sherman. Albert and Kelli have been married 32 years and have three adult children. Albert has been an oil and gas transaction and title attorney for 31 years. He is a shareholder at Cotton, Bledsoe, Tighe & Dawson in Midland, where he has spent his entire legal career.

Albert previously served on the board of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Midland, including a portion of time as president. Albert also participated as a Big Brother in the program. He has been an elder, trustee and deacon at First Presbyterian Church of Midland.

In addition, Albert was part of a group that established the first full-time staff position for the Permian Basin Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA), and he served on the Permian Basin FCA board for a number of years. He currently serves on the FCA West Texas Advisory Board, which is responsible for supporting the multi-area director for West Texas who supports FCA staff serving 100 counties in West Texas.

During his spare time, Albert enjoys playing golf or planning his next golf trip. He received his education from Angelo State University and Texas Tech School of Law.

JOHN NORWOOD
John Norwood is co-founder and president of the Anthem Companies and has been active in the oil and gas business since the early 1990s. A native Midlander, Norwood is a graduate of Texas Tech University where he met his wife D’Ann. They began their life together in Midland and are the parents of three grown boys.

He is an active member of the Midland community and has served in leadership roles on numerous boards and committees. Current and past organizations include the Board of Trustees for Midland Memorial Hospital, The Church Council of the First Baptist Church in Midland, President of Midland Crimestoppers, Inc., Board of the Petroleum Club of Midland, YMCA Indian Guides and the Board of Governors for the Museum of the Southwest. John and D’Ann are involved in Family Legacy, an organization dedicated to the welfare and education of approximately 15,000 children in Zambia.

John’s hobbies include spending time with his family, reading, cycling, hiking and other outdoor activities.
MC FOUNDATION RECEIVES PICTURES OF "OLD MIDLAND"

Longtime Midlanders Marthann and Jack Nobles were very generous to Midland College. The college proudly continues to award a scholarship that the couple endowed several years ago. After Jack passed away, Marthann and her sister Vangie Lindsey were “regulars” at various Midland College events, including those sponsored by the Phyllis and Bob Cowan Performing Arts Series and the Davidson Distinguished Lecture Series.

When Marthann passed away in September 2019, her daughter Fredi Nobles Seeker and son Philip Nobles donated four prints from their mother’s estate that depict scenes of Midland from 1912-1959. These prints are displayed on the wall near Midland College Foundation staff offices in the Pevehouse Administration Building.
MC BOARD CHAIRPERSON
INDUCTED INTO PETROLEUM HALL OF FAME
Paul L. Morris, current chairperson of the MC Board of Trustees, was inducted into the Petroleum Hall of Fame on April 29, 2021 at the Bush Convention Center in downtown Midland. The Petroleum Hall of Fame is dedicated to those who cherished the freedom to dare and whose work and service helped build the Permian Basin.

Since 1968, when the late Frank T. Pickrell of El Paso, Texas was elected as the initial honoree, 148 individuals have been inducted into the nationally recognized Petroleum Hall of Fame. Each of the honorees have distinguished themselves with their accomplishments and their leadership. They have served as worthy examples to those in both their community and the petroleum industry.

Mr. Morris grew up in West Virginia where energy deposits have been identified since the late 1700’s. He graduated from the University of Cincinnati with a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering in 1964. He is also a graduate of the Executive Management Program in the College of Business Administration of Penn State University.

After college graduation, Morris moved to Columbus, Ohio and went to work for Columbia Gas System Service Corporation. He served Columbia in various capacities and locations, eventually ending his service with Columbia as vice president of Exploration and Production.

Morris arrived in Midland during the boom of 1981 when he became president and CEO of Banner Energy, Inc. He was responsible for directing exploration and production staffs in Denver and Houston. During his time at Banner, three major discoveries were made in Louisiana, Wyoming and North Dakota.

In 1988, Mr. Morris became manager of Oil and Gas at Wagner and Brown, Ltd. and then CEO in 1994 overseeing 200 employees in domestic and international exploration and production, natural gas gathering and marketing, crude oil purchasing and reselling, gas pipeline development and a compressed natural gas refueling business. Under his leadership, Wagner and Brown completed nearly 600 wells across Oklahoma, Texas, the UK and Australia.

In 2013, Morris launched Elk River Resources with partner Ed Jones successfully drilling 25 horizontal wells in the Spraberry and Wolfcamp formations. He was part-owner, chairman and CEO until 2019, when he stepped down to become a senior advisor to the board of directors.

Besides serving as a member of the MC Board of Trustees since January 2016, Morris has also been a member of the Board of Governors of Midland Memorial Hospital. Other community organization board participation consists of the Midland Chamber of Commerce and the United Way of Midland. In addition, Morris is a past-president of The Petroleum Museum and of the Permian Basin Petroleum Association. His prior responsibilities in the education arena include his service on the board of the Rawls College of Business at Texas Tech University.

“I have enjoyed working with Paul in his capacity as a member of the Midland College Board of Trustees and value his leadership as the current chairperson,” MC President Dr. Steve Thomas said. “I congratulate him on this well-deserved honor as a 2021 Petroleum Hall of Fame inductee.”
On Thursday, January 21, The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) announced that Midland College’s Adult Education and Literacy program was named a “Best in Class” award winner for program year 2019-2020. The award was presented in a virtual session on February 10 during the Texas Association of Literacy and Adult Education (TALAE) state conference.

“I am so proud of our entire Adult Education and Literacy staff and teachers who work tirelessly to deliver quality services to our Permian Basin students,” Jennifer Myers, MC associate vice president of Workforce Education, said. “The COVID pandemic caused Program Year 2019-2020 to be an especially hard year for everyone, and I thank the TWC’s Office of Adult Education and Literacy for their support and guidance throughout the year.”

The “Best in Class” award is a performance-driven, quality award focusing on meeting targeted measures, such as skills gained, credentials achieved and enrollment goals met. The Midland College Adult Education and Literacy program is one of only six throughout the state receiving this award. The award recognizes the accomplishments of the program from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020.

The MC Adult and Education Literacy program encompasses high equivalency preparation (GED®) classes and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes.

“For almost 50 years, the adult education program at Midland College has played a significant role in educating the populace of the Permian Basin,” Dr. Damon Kennedy, MC vice president of Instructional Services, said. “Each year, MC Adult Education and Literacy classes serve more than 1,000 Midland residents and help them acquire the skills needed to earn a high school diploma and succeed in college and the workforce. Students in these classes are usually those who are considered nontraditional college students; however, their passion for learning is as strong as those who have taken more traditional college paths. This passion, coupled with a drive to excel, is a direct result of the excellent instruction they had in Adult Education and Literacy classes.”
On Monday, April 5, United Way of Midland presented Midland College with the 2020 Paul C. Rea Live United Award. United Way of Midland staff presented the award to Leslie Shoemaker, MC executive assistant to the president & board of trustees, and Rita Brady, secretary to the vice president of Student Services. Shoemaker coordinates MC’s annual United Way employee giving campaign and Brady assisted during the 2020 campaign.

A letter from Kari Hennagin, president & CEO of United Way of Midland, stated that MC was given the award because of the employees’ loyal support. The award recognizes the company whose employees have shown sustained excellence in giving, advocating and volunteering with the United Way of Midland.

“In addition to donating annually to United Way, Midland College employees also volunteer throughout the community for many of United Way partner agencies,” MC President Dr. Steve Thomas said. “We are honored to receive this award, and we are proud to help community organizations like United Way meet the needs of the Midland community.”
On Monday, June 7, Dr. Steve Thomas, Midland College president, and Brad Remley, Archrock Services vice president – Permian, announced the donation of a fully contained portable gas lift compression package with updated Centurion and EICS controls to MC Diesel Technology and Energy Technology programs.

Archrock is the leading provider of midstream natural gas contract compression services in the U.S. Headquartered in Houston, Texas, Archrock has approximately 1,700 employees and operates in every major oil and gas producing region in the United States, including the Permian Basin. The donation to Midland College, worth approximately $200,000, represents the company’s commitment to support education and career development in the West Texas region.

“We are extremely grateful to Archrock for this very generous donation,” Pete Avalos, MC program chair of Automotive, Diesel and Energy, said. “This new equipment will enable students in our Diesel Technology and Energy Technology programs to receive hands-on training using this gas compression system, which will be a valuable tool in helping them experience ‘real-world,’ simulated skills.”

MC’s Diesel Technology and Energy Technology programs prepare students for careers that benefit industries within the Permian Basin. MC offers students the chance to obtain associate degrees and industry certifications in both programs.
On Thursday, March 18, the Fort Stockton Rotary Club dedicated its newly constructed student plaza to MC’s branch campus in Fort Stockton, the Williams Regional Technical Training Center (WRTTC). The plaza was part of the Rotary Club’s yearly community service project, where the club identifies a need and donates time, money and “sweat equity” to deliver.

The new plaza provides an outdoor area for students to visit with one another and relax between classes. The plaza contains several picnic tables and seating, along with a concrete walkway and a rock art piece with the Rotary symbol. The plaza also contains a special piece of metal artwork built by local artist Juan Vasquez, in memory of Lindsey Horton, a young lady who went through the nursing program at Midland College, became an RN in Andrews and passed away suddenly seven months ago from a heart condition. Her father Jim Horton, Rankin Hospital CEO, attended the dedication, as well as Pecos County Judge Joe Shuster and Midland College President Dr. Steve Thomas.

“The new plaza is a beautiful area,” Thomas commented. “It is fitting that it is dedicated to an MC graduate who received her nurse training and education at the WRTTC and who gave back to her community as a dedicated and skilled nurse. Now, current and future WRTTC students will be able to enjoy the plaza that the Fort Stockton Rotary Club so generously donated as a tribute to Lindsey.”

During the dedication of the plaza, Fort Stockton Rotary Club President Pam Palileo presented a check for $5,000 to Midland College as part of the Rotary’s annual donation to Scholars’ Dollars, which provides scholarships to WRTTC students.

Photo 1: Lindsey Horton right before she graduated from Midland College with an Associate of Applied Science degree in Nursing.

Photos 2 and 3: New student plaza at Midland College WRTTC in Fort Stockton donated by Fort Stockton Rotary Club in memory of Lindsey Horton.
On Thursday, May 13, alumni of the MC Williams Regional Technical Training Center (WRTTC) held a “happy hour” fundraiser at the Grey Mule Saloon in Fort Stockton, TX to support the WRTTC scholarship known as Scholars’ Dollars. The scholarship, which is administered by staff at the WRTTC with oversight by a community advisory board, is awarded to students residing in Pecos County who take classes at the WRTTC, Midland College’s branch campus. Led by WRTTC Alumni President Ethny Valenzuela, the group raised over $7,000 during the event.

“I love the Fort Stockton community,” Rebecca Bell, executive director of the Midland College Foundation, said. “All members of the community truly value education, as evidenced by their generous support of the WRTTC and investment in the future of Pecos County through the Scholars’ Dollars program. Midland College is proud to have a campus in Fort Stockton. Many thanks to the WRTTC Alumni Club, the Scholars’ Dollars Advisory Board, Pecos County Judge Joe Schuster and others in the community for advancing higher education in West Texas!”

**About the Grey Mule Saloon**

Originally built in the 1880’s the Grey Mule Saloon served Texas Rangers, cowboys passing through the area and the U.S. Army troops stationed in Fort Stockton to provide protection for the settlers and for the San Antonio-El Paso road. Today, it is a historical landmark located in downtown Fort Stockton across the street from the Annie Riggs Hotel and Museum built in 1899. The saloon now serves as the tasting room for Mesa Vineyards Winery.
Scholars' Dollars Donations
January 6-June 25, 2021

Anonymous/Unknown
Sandra & Dennis Braden
Idemia Identity & Security USA
1st Community Federal Credit Union
Fort Stockton Rotary Club
Oscar Franco
Fraternal Order of Eagles #6220 - Ladies Auxiliary Social Foundation
Bentley King
McGary Regan Foundation
Laura & Houston McKenzie
Shashwat Kumar Patel
Sawyer & Associates
Susan & Clyde Sawyer
Debbie Teich
Wayne and Joann Moore Charitable Foundation
Modesta Williams
Ernest Woodward

Joe Blumentritt
*In Memory of*
Mickey Blakeney

Dr. Carmen & Jim Edwards
*In Memory of*
Juan Antonio Esquivel

Kathey & Cecil George
*In Memory of*
Lou Ann McKenzie

Adrienne & Jim Horton
*In Memory of*
Lindsey Horton

Elizabeth & Larry Lara
*In Memory of*
Lindsey Horton

Laura & Houston McKenzie
*In Memory of*
Kendon Gossett
Lindsey Horton
Alvaro Mandujano

Linda & Honorable Joe Shuster
*In Memory of*
Lindsey Horton

Toni & Matt Tarpley
*In Memory of*
Lindsey Horton

Joan Ann & Armando Villesca
*In Memory of*
Lorena Ramirez

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Laura Gonzales, Diane Pass and Michelle Salazar

Sash and Niv Patel with children

Veronica, Miguel, Janie and Jesus Ureste
Automotive and diesel technicians and collision repair specialists are in high demand, and Midland College and Midland ISD are helping fill the need by offering high school students certifications in these areas.

"The demand here locally is really high," Pete Avalos, Midland College Auto/Diesel program chair, said. "The expected growth is about 15 percent over the next five years in our region alone, despite a downturn in the oil and gas industry. And considering the average age of a technician here is about 45 years old, the need for new techs in the industry is great."

High school students study auto tech and collision repair at Midland College's Advanced Technology Center (ATC) and learn about diesel tech at MC's Cogdell Technology Center. All concentrations offer industry credentials, such as the National Institute of Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certifications, that enable students to enter the workforce straight out of high school. The opportunities for students aren’t limited to working on engines or popping dents, however.

"The market is broad, and not all people turn a wrench in these careers," Avalos said, himself a
two-decade veteran of tech work at dealerships and in the oil and gas industry. “Students might find opportunities as service writers, managers, specialists or even as administrators.”

Students don’t have to be mechanically inclined to participate in these programs. All students start by learning the nuts and bolts — literally — and how to properly use tools like a hammer, “which most people use incorrectly,” Avalos said. Students learn the fundamental technical and problem-solving skills they need to succeed after graduation. There are also dual-credit opportunities, which offer a head start on receiving college-level certifications.

“The more opportunities we offer our students to train them in vocational tech, the better,” Mickala Harper, Midland ISD director of Career and Technological Education (CTE), said. “Programs like this keep a lot of kids in school because they can take courses based on a hobby or an outright career plan. Ultimately, courses like auto and diesel tech and collision repair put kids on the path for success straight out of school.”
SCHOLARSHIPS
COMPLETE YOUR DREAM AND WORK HARD
NEW SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES
FOR MARTIN COUNTY RESIDENTS AND STANTON ISD STUDENTS

The Mashburn Legacy Scholarship, a component fund of Permian Basin Area Foundation, is now available to Martin County residents and dual credit Stanton ISD students.

Midland College will award the new scholarship to students who have recently graduated from high school and nontraditional students who live in Martin County and are retraining or upgrading existing skills for career advancement. In addition, scholarship funds will be awarded to Stanton ISD students who are enrolled in MC’s new Public Service College & Careers Dual Credit Academy. The academy is a partnership among Midland College (MC), various school districts and the City of Midland. The new academy will provide students with hands-on firefighter skills training at Harris Field Fire Training Facility, which is operated by the City of Midland. In subsequent years, the Public Service Academy will expand to include law enforcement training and cybersecurity.

“We are delighted to have this scholarship that is specifically for our students from neighboring Martin County,” Rebecca Bell, Midland College Foundation executive director, said. “Those of us at MC certainly thank Permian Basin Area Foundation and the Mashburn Legacy Scholarship benefactors for helping Martin County students have opportunities to achieve their higher education goals and career dreams.”

"THE NEW MASHBURN LEGACY SCHOLARSHIP WILL PROVIDE FUNDS FOR STANTON ISD STUDENTS TO RECEIVE DUAL CREDIT AS PART OF MC’S NEW FIREFIGHTER PUBLIC SERVICE COLLEGE & CAREERS ACADEMY."
ROTARY CLUB INVESTS IN STUDENTS

During the 2020-2021 academic year, the Midland West Rotary Club awarded three scholarships to Midland College Applied Technology students. Students receiving the scholarship were Alyssa Hernandez, Automotive Technology scholarship recipient; Billy Wiggins, Diesel Technology scholarship recipient; and Jaguar Saucedo, Aviation Maintenance scholarship recipient.

In addition, on March 19, proceeds from the club’s “Shoot for the Future” clay shoot at Windwalker Farms in Stanton benefitted scholarships for students in MC’s Applied Technology programs.

“Students like Jimmy have a sense of calling,” Curt Pervier, MC dean of Applied Technology, said. “They truly enjoy working hands-on. They not only become proficient in a skill that enables them to provide for themselves and their families, but also they build self-confidence and leadership skills by using their unique gifts and talents. We look forward to continuing this beneficial partnership with Midland West Rotary Club.”

“In addition, on March 19, proceeds from the club’s “Shoot for the Future” clay shoot at Windwalker Farms in Stanton benefitted scholarships for students in MC’s Applied Technology programs.

“The Midland West Rotary Club recognizes that these students are often overlooked,” Tom Jones, Midland West Rotary Club clay shoot coordinator, said. “Yet, they are vital to the success of the Permian Basin.”

Jimmy Espinoza is just one of many MC students who are pursuing certificates and degrees in Applied Technology programs, ranging from Welding, Auto Technology, Energy Technology and various hands-on programs in the Information Technology field.

“I learned a long time ago that nothing is easy in this world,” Espinoza said. “If you want something bad enough, you have to work hard for it and give everything you do 100 percent! I decided to start the Diesel Technology program because it will open a lot of doors for my career. I’m learning how to work on more than just gasoline-powered vehicles. I’m receiving hands-on training in heavy equipment, 18-wheelers, rigs and pumps. The instructors are awesome because they all have hands-on experience in the diesel industry.”

“Students like Jimmy have a sense of calling,” Curt Pervier, MC dean of Applied Technology, said. “They truly enjoy working hands-on. They not only become proficient in a skill that enables them to provide for themselves and their families, but also they build self-confidence and leadership skills by using their unique gifts and talents. We look forward to continuing this beneficial partnership with Midland West Rotary Club.”

Photo 1: Students learn hands-on skills in MC’s Diesel Technology and other Applied Technology programs.

Photo 2: (left to right) Ed Anderson, Midland West Rotary Club member; Pete Avalos, MC Energy Technology program chair; Michael Canon, Midland West Rotary Club president; Alyssa Hernandez, Automotive Technology scholarship recipient; Billy Wiggins, Diesel Technology scholarship recipient; Tommy Branon, MC Aviation Maintenance Technology program chair; Jaguar Saucedo, Aviation Maintenance scholarship recipient; and Erin Casey-Richardson, MC Scholarships director.
The Dollie Ruth Neal Education Fund, a component fund of Permian Basin Area Foundation, provides scholarships to single mothers enrolled in MC’s Certified Nurse Aide, Phlebotomy Technician and Pharmacy Technician programs. These scholarships provide financial assistance to women earning certifications that lead to increased salaries, job stability and rewarding careers. With careers in healthcare in high demand, the Dollie Ruth Neal Education Fund gives single mothers excellent opportunities to make changes in their lives and families.

On June 10, the Midland College Foundation Office received the 2021-2022 Dollie Ruth Neal Education Fund grant award of $15,000 from Permian Basin Area Foundation. Kimberly Daw, advisor/coordinator in the MC Health Sciences Continuing Education Office, administers the scholarship and said that the scholarship makes a tremendous impact on accessibility of MC’s entry-level health sciences programs.

“Common barriers students face to complete these programs include lack of financial resources, lack of affordable childcare and unreliable transportation,” Daw said. “Scholarships like this help to alleviate these issues. Students who obtain these certifications acquire much higher paying jobs than what they previously had. This, in turn, allows these single mothers and their children to have a much more stable environment. These programs also help set students on a pathway to further their education through programs such as Vocational Nursing and Registered Nursing.”

Isabel Flores graduated from Midland College in May with an Associate of Applied Science degree in Nursing. Before obtaining her degree, however, she was a single mother living in an RV with her young son.

“I didn’t know anyone and could not find a job,” Flores explained.

She began taking English classes at the Midland College (MC) Cogdell Learning Center. The center also helped her apply for United States citizenship, which she received in 2019. It was the first step toward her dream. She then completed MC’s Certified Nurse Aid (CNA) program. Immediately after obtaining her nurse aide certification, she started working at Manor Park in its assisted living and skilled nursing units; she has been working there for the last seven years.

MC Associate Professor of Nursing Janette Gilbert has enjoyed teaching Flores and believes she will be a great nurse.

“It was my great pleasure to be a part of Isabel’s nursing educational journey,” Gilbert said. “Her smile lights up the room; her positive attitude is contagious; and her compassion for patients is evident in all that she does. She will be a wonderful nurse and will definitely change lives.”

“When you have a dream, and you want to complete your dream, you work hard,” Flores said. “Working hard is the only way I know to achieve that goal. Hard work and the support of scholarships at Midland College have made my dream of being a nurse come true!”

Isabel Flores, single mother who completed MC’s Certified Nurse Aide program and then went on to graduate with an Associate of Applied Science degree in Nursing.
OXY PETROLEUM AWARDS SCHOLARSHIPS TO STUDENTS

For the past several years, Oxy Petroleum has awarded scholarships to specific Midland College students. This past spring was no exception. In January Oxy presented two $2,500 scholarships to Midland College (MC) to help students who are pursuing associate of applied science degrees in Diesel Technology and Energy Technology. The students who received the spring semester scholarships are Jesus Bejarano, Energy Technology, and Cristina Vasquez, Diesel Technology.

"Scholarships like the ones donated by Oxy Petroleum are life-changing to our students," said Erin Casey-Richardson, MC director of Scholarships. "We are continually grateful to Oxy who, despite the ups and downs of the energy industry, consistently donates funds for scholarships to MC students. Many of our students struggle financially, and donations from companies like Oxy Petroleum make a real impact in their lives and in our community."

Thanks to the generosity of individual donors, private foundations and Permian Basin companies, Midland College awarded over $1.4 million in scholarships during the 2020-2021 academic year.
SCHOLARSHIPS

Felipe Morales
Doris Shatzer
Edgardo Valle
Rev. Robert Walter
Patricia & William Kern
In Memory of
Donald James

Early College High School
@ Midland College
Abell-Hanger Foundation
Scharbauer Foundation
Wayne and Joann Moore
Charitable Foundation

Vicki & Dr. Steve Thomas
In Memory of
Cristin Moreno

Energy Technology Scholarship
Occidental Petroleum Corporation

Fasken Foundation Scholarship
The Fasken Foundation

General Scholarship
McGary Regan Scholarship
Midland West Rotary Club
Julia & Eric Vickery
Travis Woodward

Rebecca Bell
In Memory of
Cristin Moreno
Patty & Bruce Brady
In Memory of
Kirk Mathew Brady

Rita Brady
In Memory of
Cristin Moreno
Sylvia Brown
In Memory of
Cristin Moreno
Angelina Dolaptchieva
In Memory of
Cristin Moreno

Bahola & Tim Edwards
In Memory of
Cristin Moreno
Dr. Carmen & Jim Edwards
In Memory of
Henry B. Melancon
Kay Floyd
In Memory of
Cristin Moreno
Dr. Pamela Howell
In Memory of
Cristin Moreno
Jan Johnston
In Memory of
Cristin Moreno
April & Gary Kennedy
In Memory of
Cristin Moreno
Karen Lanier
In Memory of
Cristin Moreno
Mike Makowsky
In Memory of
Cristin Moreno
Dr. Andrea J. Zabel
In Memory of
Cristin Moreno
Kathryn Zimmerhanzel
In Memory of
Cristin Moreno

Geology Scholarship
Barbara & Jack Cartwright
In Memory of
Will Green
Sharon & Robert Floyd
In Memory of
Will Green
The Exchange Club of Midland
In Memory of
Will Green

Cookie & Fred Wetendorf
In Memory of
Will Green
Karen & Roy Williamson
In Memory of
Will Green

Glen Richardson Memorial Scholarship
Joy & John Anderson

IME-BECAS Scholarship
Consulado de Mexico

James Bradford Memorial Scholarship
Dr. Terry & Bruce Gilmour

John W. Foster, Sr., M.D. Memorial Scholarship
Iris & Dr. John Foster, Jr.
In Memory of
Jane Williams
Joann Foster
In Memory of
Jane Williams

Legacy Scholarship
Scharbauer Foundation

Mark and Violet Singh Endowed Scholarship
Violet & Mark Singh

Mary Ruth Thomas Endowed Scholarship
Vicki & Dr. Steve Thomas
In Memory of
Sam Guyton
Zena Kay Morse

Mary Spannaus Medical Education/Nursing Memorial Scholarship
Permian Basin Area Foundation

Mashburn Legacy Scholarship
Permian Basin Area Foundation

Norma & Joseph Wolfe Endowed Science Scholarship
Cynthia Wolfe

PEO Memorial Scholarship
Chapter DD of PEO Sisterhood

Sergeant Mike Naylor Criminal Justice Endowed Scholarship
Crime Stoppers of Midland Inc.

Veterans & Dependents Scholarship
Magna Charta Dames & Barons – TX Division
Susanne & Dr. Damon Kennedy
Rebecca Bell
In Memory of
Henry B. Melancon
Kay Floyd
In Memory of
Henry B. Melancon

Maryspanaas Medical Education/Nursing Memorial Scholarship
Permian Basin Area Foundation

Young Professionals in Energy Scholarship
Young Professionals in Energy
On Thursday evening, June 17, Midland College (MC), Midland ISD, and the General Tommy Franks Leadership Institute and Museum held the annual Midland Young Leaders Challenge with General Tommy Franks awards ceremony. The ceremony was the culmination of two days of an intensive leadership workshop for students entering the 12th grade.

The Star Leadership winner Shelby Stephens, Midland High School, received a $3,000 scholarship and will advance to the Four Star Leadership program at Oklahoma Christian University. The national program brings together 70 of the top high school students in the United States to have a face-to-face experience with national and international leaders.

Midland College hosted the June 16-17, 2021 Midland County program sponsored by The Henry Foundation and Warren Charitable Foundation. Students participated in presentations and discussion with community leaders including Midland Mayor Patrick Payton, MC President Dr. Steve Thomas, MISD Superintendent Dr. Angelica Ramsey, Midland County Commissioner Luis Sanchez, Midland Drug Court Magistrate Judge Elizabeth Rainey, SHK Advertising Firm President Jessica Rule and Midland County Adult Probation Director Allen Bell. MC Professors Betty Clements, Debbie Hightower and Doug Johnson coached students to prepare speeches.

The Thursday evening awards ceremony included a keynote presentation by Major General (ret) Anthony Cucolo. He is currently president and chief executive officer of Professional Contract Services, Inc., a nationwide non-profit that helps people with disabilities and veterans find meaningful work and lifetime careers.

First place speech winner and recipient of a $2,000 scholarship was Ryan Smith, Legacy High School; second place and a $1,000 scholarship went to Katherine Cook, also a Legacy High School student. The essay winner Adalyn Bowcutt, Trinity High School, received a $1,000 scholarship. Kaitlin Geric, Greenwood High School, won “Most Improved” and a $500 scholarship donated by Cucolo.

Each year, MC and MISD partner with the General Tommy Franks Leadership Institute and Museum to conduct the workshop available to students who have just completed the 11th grade.

$7,500 IN SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED TO MIDLAND COUNTY STUDENTS
Joan Ann Villesca grew up in Sweetwater, TX and was raised by her grandmother, who could neither read nor write. In 1980, when Villesca was 17, she dropped out of high school, got married and moved to Fort Stockton, TX, her husband Armando’s hometown. By 1983, the couple had two children, and Joan Ann decided to go back to school in order to obtain her high school diploma.

“My grandmother had always told me that education was important,” Villesca said. “I knew that I needed to have a high school diploma, and I wanted to make my grandmother proud. So, even though I had two young children, I went back to school and graduated from Fort Stockton High School in 1984. My grandmother was right there cheering for me. At the time of my high school graduation, I was pregnant with my third child”

Eventually, Villesca obtained a job working for a doctor's office in Fort Stockton.

“The job I had with Dr. Prasert Thammasithiboon (Dr. Boon), who was a general surgeon, and Dr. Jessadapagorn Napaporn Thammasithiboon (Dr. Napaporn), who was a pediatrician, was such a blessing,” she said. “I’m not even sure why they hired me. I knew nothing about medical offices or office work, in general. However, for some reason, they liked my personality and had faith that I could help their office. I eventually became the office receptionist and then when the lady who handled billing and coding resigned, I took on her responsibilities. I found that I really enjoyed being in a medical environment; I loved interacting with and helping the patients. So, in 1991, I decided to enroll in the Certified Nurse Aide program at the Midland College Williams Regional Technical Training Center (WRTTC) in Fort Stockton.”

Villesca said that she was employed as a nurse aide for several years, but also kept working as a coder/biller. She then decided that she wanted to become a nurse, so in August 2006, she graduated from the Vocational Nursing program at the WRTTC. Between 2006 and 2009, Villesca worked as a Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN) in various hospitals in towns where Armando’s energy industry career took the family—Midland, Fort Worth and Carlsbad, NM.

“One of the nice things about being a nurse is that there are always job opportunities in every town, no matter how small or large,” Villesca said.

Villesca said that she has always enjoyed working and credits her grandmother for her strong work ethic.

“My grandmother worked as a housekeeper and nanny for a very long time, well into her 60s,” she said. “She died at the age of 97. She and my aunt are my inspirations. My aunt is 83 and still cleans three houses and an office building every week. So, at 58, I guess I’m destined to keep on working for another 25 or 30 years, and that’s great because I love being a nurse!”
While working for Millwood Hospital in Fort Worth, Villesca decided to pursue becoming a Registered Nurse (RN). So, she began taking prerequisite courses at Tarrant County College while also continuing with her full-time job at Millwood.

“When I finished my prerequisites, I guess I could have enrolled in the Associate Degree Nursing program at Tarrant County College, but I wanted to go to Midland College,” she said. “The nursing program at Midland College has a great reputation, and the professors are great teachers and nurses.”

By this time, Villesca’s children were grown and living in Midland, so while Armando stayed in Fort Worth, Joan Ann took a job at Midland Memorial Hospital and enrolled in the Associate Degree Nursing program at Midland College. In 2010, at the age of 47, she graduated from Midland College with an Associate of Applied Science degree in Nursing and passed the RN licensure exam.

“I was the first grandchild on my grandmother’s side of the family to get a college degree,” Villesca said. “My grandmother has never missed one of my graduations, and she cried tears of joy at each one!”

Villesca moved back to Fort Worth and worked as an RN in a nursing home and rehabilitation center. In 2011, Villesca went to work for John Peter Smith (JPS) Hospital, a Level 1 Trauma Center located in downtown Fort Worth. At JPS, she worked on a women’s health floor and dealt with patients who were high risk ante- and post-partum, as well as females who were oncology patients.

While at JPS, Villesca won numerous awards including the Rookie Nurse of the Year award, the Golden Stethoscope Award for going above and beyond based on patient evaluations and the Daisy Award, a nationwide program that recognizes nursing excellence. She also served on a team with other nurses who were instrumental in fundraising with the American Cancer Society for women’s oncology services.

In April 2016, Armando’s job took the couple back to Midland and Joan Ann began working as a floor nurse for Encompass Health Rehabilitation Hospital. Within three months, she was promoted to house supervisor. She also worked for a short time as a hospital educator and health coach but missed the patient interaction, so she went back to her position as house supervisor.

Currently, Villesca is working as community liaison with Interim Healthcare. As such, she cares for hospice patients and counsels with them and their families. She also is involved in the Teepa Snow Alzheimers Education program. Approximately five to six days each month, Villesca works PRN as a house supervisor at Encompass and is a trainer in the hospital’s STOP program, where she works with other hospital employees to explain how to safely transfer patients.

In her spare time, Villesca enjoys being with her family.

“Our oldest son Armando, Jr. lives in Richmond, TX, and our other two children live in Midland with their families, so we are fortunate that we get to see them and our grandchildren often,” she said. “Armando and I love spoiling our four grandchildren who range in ages from 1 to 9.”

Like their mother, Armando, Jr., David and Kresa are all extremely dedicated to their careers. Armando, Jr. is an entrepreneur and has a small company that specializes in soaps and lotions.

Following in his mother’s footsteps, David graduated from the Vocational Nursing Program at the Midland College WRTTC in 2005. He served as a combat medic with the U.S. Army 82nd Airborne and spent time in Iraq.

After being discharged, he then obtained a bachelor’s degree in molecular biology. He is currently pursuing a second bachelor’s degree in Nursing at the University of Texas Permian Basin and is working as a nurse intern at Medical Center Hospital in Odessa.

Kresa has two associate degrees from Midland College, one in Paralegal Studies.

Joan Ann is also considering going back to school once again—this time to obtain a bachelor’s degree in Midland College’s Health Services Management program.

“Life is very good,” Villesca commented. ‘Thankfully, no one ever told me that the ‘odds were stacked against me.’ From the very beginning, my grandmother and aunt had faith in me that I would graduate from high school, even though I had two babies and another one on the way. Dr. Boon and Napaporn must have seen something in me when they first hired me for that doctor’s office job, and they rewarded my hard work with promotions. Then, when I started taking classes at Midland College, all of my instructors and other staff were right there pushing me to succeed and giving me confidence to pursue my dream of being a nurse. Success in life depends on the people we encounter along our journey, and I am grateful for all the wonderful people with whom I have crossed paths throughout the years.”

Joan Ann is with her grandmother celebrating Joan Ann’s graduation from MC.
“I do not believe you have to die to go to hell, I have lived it during the worst of my drug addiction,” Midland College graduate Juan Contreras said. “Dealing with withdrawals, being homeless, being hungry, having nothing to your name, being the embarrassment of your family—I have been through it all. But if an addict like me can get clean, study Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counseling at MC and graduate, others can also.”

Contreras started using drugs at 14 years old. At 17 he joined the Navy. After 5 years he was kicked out for drinking and drug use.

“Addiction is a serious disease,” Contreras said. “Through assignments I completed in MC’s Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counseling I learned that I have the gene predisposing me to abuse drugs. Yes, my addiction
started with a choice, but after a while I crossed a threshold, and I was using against my will. I wanted to stop so many times.”

Contreras’ probation officer realized he was a veteran and enrolled him in the Veterans’ Treatment Court. Until then he was trying to beat his addiction by himself with sheer willpower. After failing so many times he learned he could not beat addiction by himself. He had to be a part of his own rescue, but he needed help and support. Contreras joined a 12-step program and still attends meetings today. This hard work along with therapy and psych medication allowed him to attend MC, learn and graduate.

When Contreras arrived at MC, he was insecure. His addiction had isolated him for a long time. His family kicked him out. The people he thought where his friends were only there for the good times. Most importantly, he was isolated from himself. A big part of his recovery was finding himself. He needed to learn his purpose independent of drugs and alcohol. MC helped show him he is worthy and put him on a new path.

“I did not think I was ready to go back to school,” Contreras said. “I had a lot of shame and guilt. I kept thinking, ‘I do not deserve an education or a better life.’ But once I met the staff in the Veterans’ Association office at MC they built up my confidence and changed my way of thinking. MC is a great school with caring faculty and staff. There is so much help here. Students can use the library, the English hub, the math lab, the veteran lounge and many other resources to help them succeed.”

Contreras applied his recovery journey to school when he decided to join the Drug Abuse Counseling program. A lot of his new friends in the recovery community expressed interest in becoming counselors. At first Contreras was not convinced. He thought an addict-turned-counselor sounded cliché, but it was the complete opposite.

“All the students in the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counseling program at MC have either been through addiction or know somebody who has been through addiction; it makes for a very compassionate group,” Contreras explained. “No one is there to judge. It is a great program. Even if students in the program do not want to be a counselor, they can learn so much about family and subconscious beliefs.”

Contreras attended MC full-time for two and a half years. One of his most empowering moments was completing his practicum at The Springboard Center, a local substance abuse treatment program.

“My experience at The Springboard Center was very humbling because for the first time I was on the other side,” Contreras said. “I went to treatment 6 different times. Practicum was my first time being in a center where I was not a client. I had finally found my purpose: to help and inspire other people struggling with addiction and to work against addiction’s stigma.”

Contreras is not stopping. He will begin studying social work at the University of Texas Permian Basin in the fall.

“In my family, I am the first to graduate high school; I am the first to join the military; I am the first to graduate college.” Contreras said. “However, I am also the first to get in trouble. I have learned so much, so many important academic lessons and life lessons. One of the most important I learned in my addiction journey: recovery does not exempt us from living through painful situations. Our circumstances may not change but our ability to deal with them does. It is easy to remember all the good times drugs brought me, but it is easy to forget the emotional pain, the rock bottoms. With the help of meetings, family, new friends, my education at MC, I have turned my life around. Today I am living, not just existing.”
AN EVENING WITH VOCTAVE

PRESENTED BY THE PHYLLIS AND BOB COWAN PERFORMING ARTS SERIES

After the long COVID hiatus, Midlanders were FINALLY in for a treat as members of the A Cappella sensation Voctave entertained the audience with a wide of genre of music on Tuesday, May 18.

Prior to the performance, Midland College Friends of the Series and Distinguished Donors enjoyed a reception sponsored by Barbra & Trey Grafa and the Blankinship Foundation.
UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, August 12, 6:30 p.m.

“The Great DuBois”

Back to School Family Celebration!
Fast-paced, all ages variety show with incredible feats of juggling, hula hoops, unicycle, aerial, circus stunts, contortion, magic and audience interaction - all wrapped in a blanket of comedy! Come early, starting at 5:30 p.m., to purchase great food and drink from local food truck vendors to enjoy while you watch the show.

www.midland.edu/dubois

Tuesday, September 7, 7:00 p.m.

Jon Meacham

U.S. Presidential historian and Pulitzer Prize-winning author presents
"The Ultimate Choice: Lessons from the History of Epic Presidential Races"

www.midland.edu/meacham

Thursday, September 23, 7:30 p.m.

“The Silhouettes”

America’s Got Talent winners The Silhouettes® bring “LOVE Happens” to Midland College!
This family-friendly shadow dance story is filled with the love that fills our world and includes the love of friendship, family, a pet, to romantic love, the love of a child, love of music, the painful side of love, love of life—even the love of chocolate! Join us for an emotional journey of laughter, tears and goosebumps that will bring LOVE to your hearts.

www.midland.edu/silhouettes

Thursday, October 7, 7:00 p.m.

An Evening with Dr. Hakeem Oluseyi

Astrophysicist Dr. Oluseyi has led an interesting and inspiring life taking him from New Orleans’ 9th Ward and Houston’s 3rd Ward to post graduate degrees in mathematics and physics.

www.midland.edu/hakeem
EVENTS

UPCOMING EVENTS

Back to School Family Celebration!

Fast-paced, all ages variety show with incredible feats of juggling, hula hoops, unicycle, aerial, circus stunts, contortion, magic and audience interaction - all wrapped in a blanket of comedy! Come early, starting at 5:30 p.m., to purchase great food and drink from local food truck vendors to enjoy while you watch the show.

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This family-friendly shadow dance story is filled with the love that fills our world and includes the love of friendship, family, a pet, to romantic love, the love of a child, love of music, the painful side of love, love of life–even the love of chocolate! Join us for an emotional journey of laughter, tears and goosebumps that will bring LOVE to your hearts.

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"The Great Dubois"

www.midland.edu/dubois

Thursday, September 23, 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, September 7, 7:00 p.m.

Jon Meacham

"The Silhouettes"

www.midland.edu/silhouettes

www.midland.edu/meacham

Thursday, October 7, 7:00 p.m.

"The Great DuBois"

"The Silhouettes"

These FREE events are hosted by the Midland College Foundation

Courtesy of the Phyllis and Bob Cowan Performing Arts Series and the Davidson Distinguished Lecture Series

Event Location

Midland College main campus, Ai G. Langford Chaparral Center

Tickets

Tickets are not required for general admission seating.

Preferred seating is available for Midland College Friends of the Series and Distinguished Donors.

For more information about events and preferred seating opportunities, please call 432.685.4526 or email foundation@midland.edu
Once again in 2021, the Midland College art department participated in the West Texas Food Bank’s annual Empty Bowls event. MC art students created hand-made ceramic bowls for the fundraiser, which were sold for $15. The bowls were displayed throughout the new West Texas Food Bank Innovative Gardens located at 1601 Westcliff Dr. in Midland. All proceeds from the sale of the bowls went to the West Texas Food Bank.

“I think this event is so important because it is a real-world way that artists can give back to the community,” MC Associate Professor of Art Michael Richardson said. “It helps people in the community who are really in need. Every one dollar raised provides four meals. The real spirit of the event is communal and community-based.”

MC has participated in Empty Bowls for the last eight years. The event is part of a world wide grassroots movement created by artists and craftspeople in cities and towns worldwide to care for and feed the hungry in their communities.

"During the Empty Bowls event, people were able to see firsthand the art pieces and know that their purchase went toward feeding those in need in our community" MC art student Jesse Trejo said. "I am proud to say that Midland College has been a very active participant in the Empty Bowls project for many years."

Photo: Midland College art students creating bowls for West Texas Food Bank’s “Empty Bowls” fundraiser.
Each year, the Midland Medical Alliance sponsors Midland College scholarships for students who are enrolled in Midland College’s healthcare programs through the annual Doctors’ Day Campaign. The special Valentine’s Day fundraiser sends a message of thanks and appreciation to current and retired medical professionals and/or a memorial for those who have passed.

Your generosity helps to make higher education goals and career dreams possible for students like Peter Abraham.

Peter graduated from Midland College (MC) with an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Nursing, passed the registered nurse licensure exam and was immediately hired to be an Emergency Room (ER) nurse at Midland Memorial Hospital.

He eventually received bachelor’s and master’s degrees in nursing and is now a nurse practitioner, still working in the ER at Midland Memorial Hospital. As such, he is on the front lines of diagnosing and treating the Midland community.

Thank you for your gifts to the 2021 Doctors’ Day Scholarship,” Rebecca Bell, MC Foundation executive director, said. “This year, with the help of Giré Dragun and the Midland Medical Alliance team, we raised $22,145 for student scholarships. Ultimately, Midland residents are the beneficiaries of these scholarships because students trained in these programs will become the professionals who administer healthcare to all of us.”

Peter Abraham, MC nursing graduate and Doctors’ Day Scholarship recipient
In Honor of
Greg Adkins, DVM
Lynda & Carty Beal
Charlotte & William Christy
Dr. Deana Savage

In Honor of
Sudhi Agrawal, MD
Veronica & Kirk Fritschen

In Honor of
Russell Akin, MD
Spencer Blocker
Leann & Harold Brenner
Mary de Compiengne
Evalyn Halvorsen
Nita & Charlie Harris
Ann & Ted Johnson
Juandelle Lacy Roberts
Robert Thames
H. A. Tuck

In Honor of
Scott Akin, MD
Fran Dawson

In Honor of
Alan Alderson, DVM
Barbara Nichols

In Honor of
Casey Angell, PA
Betsy Haney

In Honor of
Asif Ansari, MD
Cece & A. J. Brune
Rebecca Watson

In Honor of
Marcy Askins, DNP
Ann & Dr. James Gilbert
Robert Thames
H. A. Tuck

In Honor of
Bhuvana Balasekaran, MD
Heidi South

In Honor of
James Barnett, MD
Spencer Blocker
Fran Dawson
Nita & Charlie Harris
Paula & Jim Henry
Ann & Ted Johnson
Marion & John Kimberly
Bonny & Dr. David Power
Ralph Way

In Honor of
Gregory Bartha, MD
Kay Bird
Frances Brown
Martha Kallus

In Honor of
Vincent Bash, DDS
Lynda & Carty Beal
Audrey & Mike Curry
Cindy & Dr. David Deshan
Gire & Dr. Michael Dragoon
Robert Landreth
Beth Mitchell
Eleanor Morse
Darol Ramey

In Honor of
Terry Beck, MD
Macky & John Pitts

In Honor of
Roger Belizaire, MD
Claudette & Dr. Tulsi Singh

In Honor of
Randell Bell, DDS
Cece & A. J. Brune

In Honor of
Timothy Benton, MD
Arlen Edgar

In Honor of
Ronald Boren, MD
Lois & Richard Folger
Veronica & Kirk Fritschen
Eleanor & Steve Harper
Dale & Jon Stasney

In Honor of
Ravi Borra, MD
Lesa Hale

In Honor of
Mark Brinker, MD
Suzanne Hinterlong

In Honor of
Craig Brown, DVM
JoAnne & Don McClurg
Beth Mitchell

In Honor of
Morgan Brown, DDS
Lynda & Carty Beal
Charlotte & William Christy
Dr. Deana Savage

In Honor of
Colby Brownlee, MD
Lynda & Carty Beal
Ver Nelle Fidler
Jean Jones
Marion & John Kimberly

In Honor of
Michael Caglia, MD
Brenda & Donald McClure
Barbara Nichols
Claudette & Dr. Tulsi Singh

In Honor of
Thomas Caputo, DDS
Fran Dawson

In Honor of
James Carrell, DDS
Fran Dawson

In Memory of
Pete Carter, MD
Robert Landreth
James Welsh, MD

In Honor of
Roberta Case, MD
Carolyn Beall
Lois & Richard Folger

In Honor of
Dianne Cassanova, MD
Carmen Lopez
& Tom Wurster

In Honor of
Rosanna Catalasan, MD
Dale & Jon Stasney

In Honor of
Rachel Chandler, MD
Lynda & Carty Beal
Lana & John Cooper
Cindy & Dr. David Deshan
Lois & Richard Folger
Veronica & Kirk Fritschen
Nita & Charlie Harris
Jean Jones
Claudette & Dr. Tulsi Singh
Robert Thames

In Honor of
Robert Chappell, MD
Alison & Bruce Peeler
Ken Peeler

Celebrating Doctors' Day 2021
In Honor of
Sapna Chilka, MD
Robert Landreth
Barbara Nichols

In Honor of
Anand Cholia, MD
Lynda & Carty Beal
Carol Jo Blake
Nancy Gibson
Elizabeth Greaves
Robert Landreth
Barbara Nichols
Claudette & Dr. Tulsi Singh
Karen & Roy Williamson
Carmen Lopez
& Tom Wurster

In Honor of
Robert Christensen, DDS
Jeanne Beach
Rita Nell Diffie
Ver Nelle Fidler
Mary Harrison
Kaye Horchler

In Honor of
Wade Clay, DDS
Lisa & Mike Stevens

In Memory of
Jerry Cochran, MD
Harris Kerr

In Honor of
Douglas Colson, MD
Audrey & Mike Curry
Barbara Nichols
Betty & Hugh Shaffer

In Honor of
Donald Cotton, MD
Rabon Bewley

In Honor of
Coulon Dental
Marion & John Kimberly

In Honor of
Jonathan Coulon, DDS
Macky & John Pitts

In Honor of
Michael Courter, DDS
Spencer Blocker

In Honor of
Mark Cox, DDS
H. A. Tuck

In Honor of
John M. Crawford, MD
Ann Curtis

In Honor of
Donald Crockett, MD
Dale & Jon Stasney

In Honor of
Richard Culbert, MD
Lois & Richard Folger
Karen & Roy Williamson

In Honor of
Carl D’Agostino, MD
James Welsh, MD

In Honor of
Mark Davis, MD
Ann Curtis
Ann Gett
Nita & Charlie Harris
Suzanne Hinterlong

In Honor of
John Dean, MD
Nancy & Barry Beal
Carol Jo Blake
Ver Nelle Fidler
Lois & Richard Folger
Lesa Hale
Ann & Ted Johnson
Modesta Williams

In Honor of
David Deshan, MD
Lynda & Carty Beal
Carol Jo Blake
Rita Nell Diffie
Lois & Richard Folger
Dr. Pamela Howell
Marion & John Kimberly

In Honor of
Jessie Dickens, MD
Leann & Harold Brenner
Janis Chapman
Dr. Pamela Howell
Bonny & Dr. David Power
Peggy Redman

In Honor of
Manish Dimri, MD
Sherry & Phillip Bell
Ver Nelle Fidler
Lois & Richard Folger
Dr. Pamela Howell
Barbara & Jim Leeton
Beverly Muire
James Welsh, MD

In Honor of
Ben Doke, MD
Cindy & Dr. David Deshan
Ann & Dr. James Gilbert
Juandelle Lacy Roberts

In Honor of
Michael Dragun, MD
Mary & Barry Beck
Sherry & Phillip Bell
Leann & Harold Brenner
Lana & John Cooper
Anthony, Carmen
& Vivienne Dragun
Lois & Richard Folger
Veronica & Kirk Fritschen
Dale & Jon Stasney

In Honor of
Evbu Enakpene, MD
Mary & Barry Beck
Evalyn Halvorsen
Kaye Horchler
Jean Jones
Mary & Dr. Sam Macferran
Alison & Bruce Peeler
Ken Peeler
James Welsh, MD

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Helaman Erickson, MD
Lois & Richard Folger

In Honor of
Gerardo Escobedo, MD
Darol Ramey

In Honor of
Ken Etheredge, DDS
Bill Musar

In Honor of
Phillip Everett, DDS
Betsy Casselman-Porter
Lana & John Cooper
Nancy Hart
Jeff Smith

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Lynda & Carty Beal
Nancy & Barry Beal
Mary & Barry Beck
Janis Chapman
Mary de Compiegne
Paula & Jim Henry
Robert Landreth
Claudette & Dr. Tulsi Singh

In Honor of
John Foster, Jr., MD
Martha Kallus
Robert Landreth
Barbara & Jim Leeton
Beth Mitchell
Alison & Bruce Peeler
Ken Peeler

In Memory of
John Foster, Sr., MD
Ruth Bell

In Honor of
Robert Fuentes, DDS
Eleanor Morse

In Honor of
Heather Fuentes, MD
Eleanor Morse

In Honor of
Shylesh Ganta, MD
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Nancy & Barry Beal
Mary de Compiegne
Arien Edgar
Eleanor & Steve Harper
Ann & Ted Johnson
Martha Kallus
Marion & John Kimberly
Robert Landreth
Carmen Lopez
& Tom Wurster
Brenda & Donald McClure
Dee & Paul Morris
Alison & Bruce Peeler
Ken Peeler
Juandelle Lacy Roberts
Kay & George Smith
Ralph Way

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Juan Gil, MD
Bonny & Dr. David Power
In Honor of
Mini Gopalan, MD
Robert Thames

In Honor of
Jordan Green, DDS
Barbara & Jack Cartwright
Evalyn Halvorsen

In Honor of
Gary Grey, PT
Bill Musar

In Honor of
Jeff Grigsby, OD
Leann & Harold Brenner
Cece & A. J. Brune
Lana & John Cooper
Dr. Pamela Howell
Rebecca Watson
Karen & Roy Williamson

In Honor of
Manoher Gurru, MD
Claudette & Dr. Tulsi Singh

In Honor of
Steve Hankinson, OD
Evalyn Halvorsen
Betsy Haney

In Honor of
Tiffany Hansen, NP
Jeff Smith

In Honor of
Allison Hartzoge, LPC
Alathea & Jim Blischke

In Honor of
Mac Hibbits, MD
Dr. Pamela Howell
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Bill Musar

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Kris Howard, MD
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Carol Jo Blake
Ver Nelle Fidler
Ann & Dr. James Gilbert
Paula & Jim Henry
Robert Landreth
Beth Mitchell
Kay & George Smith

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Dale & Jon Stasney
James Welsh, MD

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Brent Huckabay, DDS
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Stephanie Huhn, MD
Ann Curtis

In Honor of
Jim Humphreys, MD
JoAnne & Don McClurg

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Ronald Ingram, MD
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Lois & Richard Folger
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Robert Landreth
Beverly Muire
Ralph Way

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Lynda & Carty Beal
Ann Gett
Ann & Ted Johnson
Robert Landreth
Beverly Muire

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Premila Johnson, MD
Carolyn Beall
Mary & Barry Beck
Rabon Bewley
Cece & A. J. Brune
Gire & Dr. Michael Dragun
Ann Gett
Suzanne Hinterlong
Jean Jones
Mary & Dr. Sam Macferran
Eleanor Morse
Dr. Deana Savage
& Glenn Brown
Cecily Shull
Claudette & Dr. Tulsi Singh
James Welsh, MD

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Chip Klunick, MD
Lois & Richard Folger

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Chau Le, MD
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Lana & John Cooper
Anita & George Patton
Darol Ramey
Rebecca Watson

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Wilbur Lineback, MD
Lynda & Carty Beal

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Brady Locke, MD
Macky & John Pitts

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Maurice Lopez, PA
Suzanne Hinterlong
Eleanor Morse
Dr. Deana Savage
& Glenn Brown

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Gary Madden, MD
Leann & Harold Brenner
Cindy & Dr. David Deshan
Lois & Richard Folger
Elizabeth Greaves

In Honor of
David Mallams, MD
Claudette & Dr. Tulsi Singh

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Cindy Marriner, RN-C
Audrey & Mike Curry
Evalyn Halvorsen
Rebecca Watson

In Honor of
John Mathewson, MD
Cece & A. J. Brune
Lisa Hale

In Honor of
Ronica McBrayer, MD
Carolyn Beall
Audrey & Mike Curry
Nita & Charlie Harris
Barbara & Jim Leeton
Betty & Hugh Shaffer
Claudette & Dr. Tulsi Singh

In Memory of
H. Jerry McCabe, MD
Ralph Way

In Honor of
Frank McGehee, MD
Paula & Jim Henry

In Honor of
Robert McGuire, OD
Carol Jo Blake

In Honor of
John McKenna, MD
Fran Dawson
Darol Ramey

In Honor of
Summer Merritt, MD
Karen & Spencer Beal
Kay Bird
Frances Brown
Nancy Gibson
Vicki & Clint Hurt
Judy Rankin
Sally & Buddy Sipes
Modesta Williams

In Honor of
Mark Miller, DVM
JoAnne & Don McClurg

In Honor of
Michael Miller, MD
Lynne Ray
Claudette & Dr. Tulsi Singh

In Honor of
Maria Montero, MD
Ann Curtis
H. A. Tuck
In Honor of Randal Morgan, PA-C  
Macky & John Pitts

In Honor of Casey Mraz, MD  
Nita & Charlie Harris

In Honor of Sandeepa Musunuru, MD  
Claudette & Dr. Tulsi Singh

In Honor of Dan Nelson, MD  
Lois & Richard Folger  
Bill Musar

In Honor of Jonathan Nelson, MD  
Veronica & Kirk Fritschen

In Honor of Curtis Nicholson, DDS  
Betsy Haney

In Honor of Robert Ochsner, DDS  
Arlen Edgar

In Honor of Lyden Odukwu, MD  
Nancy Hart  
Betty & Hugh Shaffer

In Honor of Joseph Oei, MD  
Audrey & Mike Curry

In Honor of Eric Olson, MD  
Eleanor Morse

In Honor of Scotty Ortega, MD  
Claudette & Dr. Tulsi Singh

In Honor of Govind Patel, MD  
Anonymous  
Cindy & Dr. David Deshan  
Veronica & Kirk Fritschen  
Harris Kerr  
Barbara & Jim Leeton  
Ken Peeler  
Betty & Hugh Shaffer  
James Welsh, MD

In Honor of Kirit Patel, MD  
Ann Curtis

In Honor of Mrunal Patel, MD  
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Nancy & Barry Beal  
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Gire & Dr. Michael Dragun

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Nursing students practice skills using state-of-the-art manikins in the F. Marie Hall SimLife Center at Midland College
After taking a year off because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Midland College’s Petroleum Professional Development Center once again hosted the annual Environmental Regulatory Seminar in conjunction with the Permian Basin Petroleum Association. This year’s seminar was held on Thursday, May 20, in the Scharbauer Student Center Carrasco Room on the main MC campus.

During the seminar, PPDC Director Erin Van Evera-Welch presented Diamondback Energy with the Midland College Bruno Hanson Environmental Excellence Award. Joe Niederhofer, Diamondback senior vice president of Midstream Operations, accepted the award for the company’s Bluebonnet water system.

The integrated Bluebonnet water system, established by Diamondback and now partially operated by Rattler Midstream, is comprised of almost 200 miles of water transfer infrastructure. It includes five produced water storage impoundments, five produced water treatment facilities and skim oil recovery sites, over nineteen saltwater disposal wells, several makeup water well fields, trucking ability and many pumps and pressure maintenance facilities.

“The scale of the operation and the system as a whole represents a remarkable step forward in water recycling and management,” Van Evera-Welch said.

The Bruno Hanson award recognizes an organization’s or individual’s exceptional achievements in environmental stewardship. The award is named after the late Bruno Hanson, a pioneer in successfully developing environmentally friendly procedures for the energy industry. The Midland College PPDC staff work closely with community leaders to identify superior environmental practices in the oil and gas industry.

This year’s committee members were Richard Brantley, University Lands; Mark Henkhaus, Permian Regulatory Solutions, PLLC; Mella McEwen, Midland Reporter-Telegram; Debi Moore, Sport Environmental Services; Stephen Robertson, Permian Basin Petroleum Association; Erin Van Evera-Welch, Laurie Lindsey, and Marina Rodriguez, Midland College PPDC; M. L. Hanson, Hanson’s great-niece; and Gretchen Bakke, Hanson’s daughter.

“This is the first time that the Bruno Hanson award has been presented during the Environmental Regulatory Seminar,” Gretchen Bakke said. “My dad would have been thrilled to see it presented during this particular event.”
On Monday and Tuesday, January 11-12, the Midland College Petroleum Professional Development Center (PPDC) provided its continuing education course “Introduction to the Natural Gas Industry” to 28 women from Kosovo who were attending Des Moines Area Community College through a scholarship provided by the Millennium Foundation Kosovo.

Since many of these women will be placed in occupations to develop the gas sector in Kosovo, officials at Des Moines Area Community College contacted Erin Van Evera-Welch, director of the Midland College PPDC, to fill the information gap. The course provided an opportunity for the women to gain a basic knowledge of the gas sector. It was taught by PPDC instructor Yogashri Pradhan, who is a senior reservoir engineer for Endeavor Energy Resources in Midland and is an active member of the Society of Petroleum Engineers.

“The Midland College PPDC has earned an excellent reputation that is far-reaching because of the wonderful courses and instructors that are provided to the oil and gas industry,” said Dale Beikirch, MC dean of Continuing Education. “The PPDC has a long history of providing high-quality training, demonstrated through this collaboration.”

Ranging in ages between 18 and 26, the women were all studying various energy-related fields, such as applied engineering technology, renewable energy technology and others. They obtained their associate degrees from Des Moines Area Community College at the end of the spring 2021 term. Some already had college degrees in other areas; however, all are currently pursuing careers in the energy industry. They returned to Kosovo in May as experts and pioneers in their respected fields.

“We are very excited for the opportunity to share petroleum knowledge with others outside of the Permian Basin, and even outside the United States,” Van Evera-Welch said. “To be able to impact such individuals globally is very gratifying in that the Midland College PPDC is having an impact on continuing education and the petroleum industry without geographical limitations. We look forward to assisting Des Moines Area Community College with other such programs in the future.”
Each year, Midland College holds three writing contests—the Rebecca Watson Creative Writing Contest, the Nonfiction Writing Contest and the Hilda Simmons Levitt Poetry Contest. These contests recognize the wonderful writing talent of MC students.

REBECCA T. WATSON CREATIVE WRITING CONTEST
On Wednesday, January 27, the Midland College English department hosted the Rebecca T. Watson Creative Writing Contest Awards Celebration via Zoom video conferencing. Awards were presented in three categories—Essay, Poetry and Short Fiction. Selected writings from the contest were read by students and contest coordinator MC English Professor Dr. William Christopher Brown.

Shaquila Sarapao won first place in both the Essay and Poetry categories with her essay “An Immigrant’s Daughter” and her poem “Anatomy of the Human Body.” Zayne Calley won first place in the Short Fiction category for “Cycle of the Mind.”

Judges for the contest were Dr. Paulett Golden, English professor at American Military University (American Public University System); Dr. Katherine V. Wills, English professor, department director and campus poet at Indiana University.

Shaquila Sarapao

Shaquila Sarapao won first place in both the Essay and Poetry categories with her essay “An Immigrant’s Daughter” and her poem “Anatomy of the Human Body.” Shaquila is a sophomore in the Primary Care Pathway program and will graduate in May 2022. She will then transfer to the University of North Texas for a year before she heads to Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine, where she will obtain a medical degree.
Purdue University-Columbus; and Lisa del Rosso, writer and instructor at New York University.

"Thank you for the opportunity to read your works," Dr. Golden said to the students at the conclusion of the ceremony. "You are really talented writers; keep writing."

MC began the creative writing contest in 1975, and in 2012, the contest was renamed in honor of retired MC English Professor Rebecca Watson. Ms. Watson judged the first contest when she was an adjunct instructor, and then she guided the contest to maturity over many years of teaching creative writing classes and directing the contest.

NONFICTION WRITING CONTEST
On Wednesday, April 28, Midland College held its annual Nonfiction Writing Contest awards ceremony via Zoom videoconferencing. Contest finalists read excerpts from their entries in the categories of Feature Stories, Narrative Nonfiction and Research Essays/Reports.

First place winners were Kiley Wilkins for “Finding My Voice” (Feature Stories), Madison Porter for “Standing Out” (Narrative Nonfiction) and Weston Wilber for “I Can See the End in the Beginning, Michelangelo Buonarroti: The Creator of Every Viewer’s Journey.”

“The judges were very impressed with the quality of work,” Dr. William Christopher Brown, MC co-chair of English and Language Arts and contest coordinator, said. “Many of these winners have just recently discovered their writing talents. Their entries demonstrated the art of nonfiction writing, which is making ideas and information that already exist more interesting and available.”

HILDA SIMMONS LEVITT POETRY CONTEST
Eight Midland College students received honors as outstanding poets in the Hilda Simmons Levitt Poetry Contest.

Thanks to the contest’s benefactor Carol Schwartz, the annual contest awards $1,300 in prize money going to the top four winning poets. Carol’s father Stanley Levitt established the contest in 1988 to honor the memory of his wife Hilda Simmons Levitt.

“We are so grateful to Mrs. Schwartz for her generous contribution and willingness to recognize the creative works of Midland College students,” said MC English Professor Brendan Egan who serves as contest coordinator. “The contest inspires our students and encourages them to continue to write.”

Schwartz now lives in Washington, DC; however, for many years, the Levitt family owned and managed a successful Midland clothing business on Florida Street. From 1979 until her death in 1986, Mrs. Levitt took creative writing classes at Midland College.

Each year, Midland College English students submit poems for consideration for the contest.

Aileen Castaneda, wrote the winning first-place poems, “Grey House” and “Empty Crib.” She received a $600 cash award. Second-place winner and recipient of a $400 cash prize was Richard Frost for his poem “Mama.” Richard Osuamkpe received the third-place award and $200 for “Anchor of Sorrows” and “Beginnings.” Fourth place winner and recipient of a $100 cash prize was awarded to Alecia Gothan for her poem “Coming Out.” Honorable Mention recognition went to Jennifer Maduabuchuku, Kairi Montanez, Allyson Murillo-Rankin and Camila Justus.

"YOU ARE REALLY TALENTED WRITERS"
HEALTH SCIENCES
PINNING CEREMONIES

Midland College health sciences programs celebrate graduating classes.

MC Health Sciences programs have a long-standing tradition of honoring graduates and recognizing their hard work with pinning ceremonies. This past May, the college acknowledged the hard work of students in several programs with ceremonies in both Midland and Fort Stockton. MC hosted several pinning ceremonies this past May that acknowledged students graduating from the Associate Degree Nursing program. MC also held special pinning ceremonies for students completing the Midland College/Midland ISD Health Sciences College & Careers Academy. The month of May concluded with recognition of students completing the Certified Nurse Aide and Pharmacy Technician programs at the Williams Technical Training Center, MC’s branch campus in Fort Stockton.

ASSOCIATE DEGREE NURSING

On Wednesday evening, May 5, during National Nurses Week, Midland College (MC) recognized 16 graduating Associate Degree Nursing students during a pinning and candle lighting ceremony at the Al G. Langford Chaparral Center.

“All of these students are commended for their dedication and perseverance,” Dr. Carmen Edwards, MC dean of Health Sciences, said. “They will make a positive impact on healthcare and the lives of their patients.”

According to Edwards, the students are well prepared to pass the National Council Licensure Exam to become registered nurses and provide healthcare to citizens throughout West Texas.
“We are extremely proud of our graduates,” Dian White, Associate Degree Nursing program chair, said. “Each Midland College graduate set a goal, worked hard, succeeded and is now prepared to enter a rewarding career as a professional nurse.”

During Wednesday evening’s ceremony, MC Associate Degree Nursing faculty presented Diana Ahlstrand, Crystal Rodriguez and Kristina Walker with the Wallace W. and Kathleen Irwin Nursing Scholarship Award for maintaining the highest GPAs in the class.

**MIDLAND COLLEGE/MIDLAND ISD COLLEGE & CAREERS ACADEMY**

On Friday, May 21, MC honored high school students who completed the Pharmacy Technician and Emergency Medical Technician programs through the joint MC/Midland ISD College & Careers Academy.

Then, on Saturday, May 22, high school students graduating from the Patient Care Technician program received their pins, as well as Midland ISD students graduating from the Nurse Aide Practicum program.

“Most of these students have been taking dual credit courses for three years and have survived tremendous obstacles, especially for the past 18 months during the COVID pandemic,” Wendy Wood-Collins, MC Associate Dean of Health Sciences Dual Credit and Continuing Education, said. “They are now completing their industry-based certificate programs and will continue their educations in healthcare and/or work as entry-level healthcare professionals in West Texas hospitals, long-term care facilities and physicians’ offices.”

**WILLIAMS REGIONAL TECHNICAL TRAINING CENTER**

On May 25, students completing Midland College’s Certified Nurse Aide and Pharmacy Technician training at the Williams Regional Technical Training Center (WRTTC) in Ft. Stockton were recognized during a pinning ceremony. Rosalinda Esquivel, WRTTC Health Sciences coordinator and Certified Nurse Aide instructor, and Ethny Valenzuela, WRTTC Pharmacy Technician instructor, presented pins and certificates to 13 Certified Nurse Aide graduates and 6 Pharmacy Technician students.
Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) is the oldest, largest and most prestigious honor society servicing two-year colleges around the world. Membership is based on superior academic achievements and is conferred only by invitation to students who have a minimum 3.5 grade point average. The international organization is composed of over 1,400 chapters.

On Friday, February 19, Phi Theta Kappa announced that MC’s chapter was named a 2021 REACH Chapter and received special recognition in the form of graduation stoles that chapter officers wore during the college’s 2021 commencement ceremony.
“Being a REACH chapter is more important this year than ever before as Phi Theta Kappa worked to support community college students in completely unfamiliar circumstances,” PTK President and CEO Dr. Lynn Tincher-Ladner said. “Racial and political unrest and a global pandemic made 2020 the most challenging year in recent history — one that our students, chapters and partner colleges worked exceptionally hard to overcome. Although this is a chapter award, it demonstrates that students are more focused on their futures than ever before, and their colleges are providing the opportunities to get them there — even amid a global pandemic.”

The MC PTK Chapter went on to receive even more honors this past spring. At its international Catalyst convention on April 9-10, PTK International named the Midland College chapter as one of the top 100 chapters worldwide.

Other chapter accomplishments and state awards include the Award of Merit for the chapter’s college project “Finding Joy in the Midst of the Pandemic.” The project included collecting videos from MC students and employees about how each handled the COVID pandemic and found happiness out of small things this past year. MC Writer/Photographer Stacey Hewitt received the Outstanding Friend of Texas Award for her assistance in editing the videos. Videos are located on the COVID information webpage on the MC website.

The Texas Region of PTK also awarded the MC chapter as one of the Top 10 Chapters in Texas and awarded Chapter President William Blaine Martin and Chapter Treasurer Cristiana Bond as Hall of Honor Distinguished Officers.

In addition, MC Phi Theta Kappa Advisor Dr. Terry Gilmour received the Horizon Award for “going above and beyond.”

“Midland College is very proud of our PTK students,” MC President Dr. Steve Thomas said. “They strive hard to succeed, not only in their college coursework, but also in extra-curricular activities, volunteer work and campus leadership. Under the direction of Dr. Terry Gilmour, MC Honors Director and Government professor, our Phi Theta Kappa chapter is one of our most active student organizations. These students are well prepared to be successful in their higher education goals and career aspirations.”

ALL-TEXAS ACADEMIC TEAM
In March, the UT System and Texas Association of Community Colleges honored the 2021 All-Texas Academic Team, which includes three MC Phi Theta Kappa members—Zainab Falana, William Blaine Martin and Angel Sowers.

“The All-Texas Academic team embodies the best element of Texas community colleges,” said Jacob Fraire, president and CEO of the Texas Association of Community Colleges. “Through their leadership, academic achievements and civic engagement, these students have worked to better themselves, their schools and their local communities. It is an honor to serve them and their institutions.”
On Friday, May 7, Midland College (MC) held its 47th commencement ceremony at Grande Communications Stadium in Midland. The ceremony honored graduates from December 2019 through May 2021. Over 600 students participated as MC President Dr. Steve Thomas and members of the MC Board of Trustees presented and conferred bachelor’s, associate and certificate credentials.

The ceremony included the National Anthem sung by MC graduate Mario Vargas and special graduate recognitions by MC President Dr. Steve Thomas. Graduates Angel Sowers and Richard Vaughn gave the keynote speeches.

Richard Vaughn
Richard Vaughn is 33 years old, works full time and is married with a family. He obtained an Associate of Science degree from Midland College in December 2020 and graduated as an Honors Scholar.

Even with his busy schedule, Vaughn is committed to completing a bachelor’s degree in Petroleum Engineering. As a drilling superintendent for Patterson-UTI, he said that a degree will enable him to move up in the company. He wants to inspire other oilfield employees to follow the route he has taken.

“I’ve been with Patterson for over 13 years,” Vaughan said. “I started when I was 20 working as an entry-level floor hand, and I’ve moved up the career ladder ever since. Four years ago, I was promoted to drilling superintendent over the Permian Basin. I felt that pursuing my degree would be helpful in my efforts to continue moving up within Patterson. Also, I really enjoy working in the oil and gas industry and love the fieldwork. I’ve always wanted to use my field knowledge and college education to become a well-rounded and respected petroleum engineer. I constantly encourage the employees whom I supervise to pursue a similar path of higher education to better their career opportunities.

“It is possible to get a degree and work full time. “You just have to find time to manage your job, home life and study life. Invest in yourself so that others want to invest in you, as well.”
Angel Sowers

Angel Sowers is a 1996 graduate of Midland High School. She said that her journey at Midland College actually started in the mid-1990s through dual enrollment courses while she was in high school. Sowers admits to having many detours and roadblocks to get where she is today. However, through perseverance, dedication and hard work, she graduated from Midland College this past December with an Associate of Applied Science degree in Paralegal Studies.

Sowers has excelled during the time she attended Midland College. She is a recipient of the Marion and Jan K. Jones Scholarship as well as the Fasken Scholarship. She is a member of two community college honor societies—Phi Theta Kappa and Sigma Kappa Delta. In March, the UT System and Texas Association of Community Colleges honored Sowers as a member of the All-Texas Academic Team.

She currently works as a supply chain associate for EOG Resources and is also studying for the Texas Real Estate license exam.

“My professional goals include aligning my career in a manner more matched with my educational background,” Sowers explained. “I have a strong desire to help both people and animals, and I plan to pursue avenues that allow me to do that. I have plans to get involved with CASA [Court Appointed Special Advocates]. There are so many children without a voice, and I would like to help them.

“I’m a ‘late bloomer’ when it comes to getting started with my education and professional career, but I am carving my own way and seeking my version of happiness and success. Midland College has certainly played a key part in my journey.”
Graduation
“PRE-K STYLE”

On Thursday, May 20, Midland College and the Midland Independent School District (MISD) hosted a very special graduation ceremony honoring 4-year-old students who completed the Pre-K Academy at Midland College. During the ceremony, the children also presented an end-of-the-year program. These children are now ready for kindergarten.

“We had 31 students in our 4-year-old class,” Lori Smith, academy principal explained. “They are excited about starting kindergarten in August, and this ceremony marked their transition from pre-k to kindergarten.”

The Pre-K Academy at Midland College is a joint project of MC and MISD and was established in August 2019 to help address the need for quality pre-school programming for the Midland community. The center also provides a hands-on instructional lab for Midland College students who are pursuing credentials in Child Development and Education.
For almost 40 years, Midland College has been offering Kids’ College, a summer enrichment program for students who will be completing the 1st through 6th grades. This year, during the month of June, over 600 children participated in the program.

“Favorite classes included ‘Cartooning Fun,’ ‘Lego STEM Challenge,’ ‘Biking with Cops,’ and ‘Kids in the Kitchen,’ just to name a few,” Brenda Cordero, MC associate director of Community Programs Continuing Education, said. “Of course, we also offered lots of sports classes including basketball, flag football, golf and yoga. Special thanks to Abell-Hanger Foundation and Pevehouse Family Foundation for awarding Kids’ College scholarships to help make this programming available to children who would not otherwise have had an opportunity to attend. These funds helped to provide scholarships for 50 children.”
This past May, Midland College joined with the entire West Texas community for Permian Basin Gives Day. Thanks to the generosity of the Midland community, Midland College raised $50,545 during the event. Donors designated donations for various Midland College funds; most were given for student scholarships for Early College High School at Midland College (ECHS@MC).

Midland College and Midland ISD established ECHS@MC with the goal of providing the environment and support that enables students to excel. This accelerated program allows students to earn an associate degree at the same time that they complete high school.

ECHS@MC students have been remarkably successful. For the past several years, 100 percent of the graduating class earned Midland College associate degrees, and 70 percent went on to study at four-year universities. These statistics are even more impressive when one looks at the demographics of the student body: 66 percent are first-generation-to-college, 83 percent are minorities and 43 percent are economically disadvantaged.

Examples of ECHS@MC graduates include the following:

- Blaine Martin, a recent 2021 graduate, was selected as a National College Match finalist through QuestBridge. This past March 11, he received word that he had been accepted to Trinity University in San Antonio and was awarded a $100,000 academic scholarship by the university.

- Natalie Gomez, a 2016 graduate, continued her studies to earn a bachelor’s degree and decided to remain in the area and give back to the community as a teacher at ECHS@MC.

- Emrys Peets, a 2015 ECHS@MC graduate and 2020 honors graduate at the University of Texas Austin, is now conducting doctoral research on the detection of dark matter using linear particle accelerators.

“These are just a few examples of the remarkable students who have gone through the ECHS@MC program,” MC President Dr. Steve Thomas said. “With your support, we can ensure that ECHS@MC continues to thrive, educating future generations of students.”
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