

ALACRITY



Our first Jack Kent Cooke winner, Clara Ramirez (above), recently finished her Master's Degree in Public Health at the University of North Texas. She recently accepted a position in Denton as a Health Advocate. There, she screens patients at a health clinic, and a pediatric mobile clinic. We remember Clara too as our pioneer author, first publishing in the state history journal, *Touchstone*, in 2010.



Ricky Huitema, our first Terry Award Winner, graduated from Texas Tech this last May with a BS in both Chemical and Industrial engineering. He won an all-expense paid fellowship to study at Luoyang, China. There the tall blonde young man of Dutch extraction from Northeast Texas become a

Alacritous Alumni

kind of tourist attraction (lower left).

Jessica Velazquez (below) thought a course in physiology might upend her perfect GPA at Texas A&M at College Station, but she survived intact to graduate with a perfect 4.0. Jessica won our seventh Jack Kent Cooke in 2016, and like our other winners has been very generous with subsequent contenders from NTCC. She helped, mentored, and met with Brenda Godoy, and we thank Dr. Hearron too for facilitating that particular connection. Jessica has accepted a position in research.



She will be at the Baylor College of Medicine.

Ana Martinez, below, has excelled in math as a graduate student at Texas A&M Commerce, earning a 4.0 in her 1st year.



We remember Morgan Capps, whose cool Bio-Tex concept, "Symbiotic Super Couple"--made it on National Public Radio. She has just finished her twelve-hour nursing clinicals in Tyler, and is looking forward to acquiring her BSN soon. Capps and Ryan Mendoza alone have won Coca Cola Silver Awards.



We really do not know of many marriages thus far, but recently have had our second and third cases of two NTCC honors students being married! Courtney Phillips came in 4th in our 2014 poster contest, and Stephen Milburn (the couple to the lower left), our 5th Jack Kent Cooke winner, recently had a NE Texas wedding. Johnathan Chambers and Kaitlyn Klepfer (right) also!



They were married last fall. Johnathan and Kaitlyn were both honors film leaders.



NTCC's Brenda Godoy as paragon student, director, writer, actress, presenter, and Jack Kent Cooke Scholar

The Nation's Most Decorated Community-College Student

Bernard Kondenar of Lake County Illinois had a marvelous year, winning the \$7,500 Hites Award, a paragon top-ten grouping among the nation's 3 million community college students. He entered the top-20 group, the All USA Academic Team. Amy Croteau of Reading Community College did better financially, winning the Jack Kent Cooke scholarship (3 yrs. for \$120K), and the New Century Award, as the top-ranked student in Pennsylvania. But there was only one student in the nation who did not stop at two of these bellwether awards--but won all four. This was NTCC's **Brenda Godoy!**

Godoy came to Honors Northeast in 2016 as a Mount Pleasant Salutatorian with some reluctance. She knew she had to help with household expenses. Her main field was bio-medical. A lunch with Honors Professor, Dr. Mary Hearron changed her perspective. She still went on to set test-score records in Dr. Murphy's chem-

istry classes. She also presented at the National Collegiate Honors Council in Atlanta, a professional association, the ETHA in Galveston, and directed a Webb-Chapter-Award-winning film--on Mary Kay. She also topped university juniors and seniors in the GPHC, with a Boe Award, and in Texas, with a coming *Touchstone* essay! With her Jack Kent Cooke and her other awards, Godoy will join All-American Bowl football players in obtaining a full ride to Texas A&M at College Station.

Below, our two JKC winners and President Clinton



Scott Wesson Provides \$10,000 for Honors Scholarships, in Honor of Father



Vice President Jonathan McCullough, and Mount Pleasant Judge Jerry Wesson.

Dr. Jerry Wesson, long-term-NTCC Vice President, honors booster, student poster judge, and namesake of our two-year-old Wesson Award for leadership--now has a second "honors" award attached to his name. His son, Scott Wesson, a prosperous Colorado businessman, has recently provided \$10,000 for a series of \$500 scholarships to be awarded to enterprising sophomore Presidential Scholars.

We are very honored to learn as well that a \$2,500-a-year scholarship has been diverted to honors for a time, the Gladys Winkle Humanities Scholarship! We will have more to announce soon on these generous gifts.



Alacrity: Newsletter of Honors Northeast

College Leaders

President, Dr. Ron Clinton
VP Instruction, Dr. Kevin Rose

Honors Committee: Alicia Cantrell, Joy Cooper, Erika Garza, Dr. Drew Murphy, Sarah Spiker, Heidi Wooten.

Honors Professors: Dr. Andrew Daniel, Dr. Melissa Fulgham, Dr. Mary Hearron, Dr. Karyn Skaar, Jim Ward, Dr. Paula Wilhite, and Dr. Andrew Yox.

Honors Secretary: Delbra Anthony

Like to Help?

View our Honors Northeast website, and you may find the largest collection of prize-winning essays, films and poems about a single region--in this case, Northeast Texas--in the world. Our benefactors have enabled this "above-and-beyond" culture of scholarship. If you would like to contribute, contact VP Dr. Jonathan McCullough, 903-434-8229, Nita May, 434-8113, nmay@ntcc.edu, or Dr. Yox at ayox@ntcc.edu.



**NORTHEAST TEXAS
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

Want more information?

903-434-8229 • ayox@ntcc.edu
www.ntcc.edu/honors

NTCC is an AA, ADA, Equal Opportunity institution.

In this
edition:

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Almost another hailstorm! But instead another lustrous dinner at the Greer Farm (above) thanks to two beneficent donors who have had an indelible impact on what successes we have been able to muster.

Our Beneficent Benefactors



Since 2014 Honors has been the recipient of special IBM matching grants. We are so thankful that Dr. Paula Archer (left above, with husband, Dr. Jim) has made this special effort through the years to secure the help of her former employer! A recent gift arrived this past June. As stated before, and elsewhere in *Alacrity*, we again are indebted to Jerald and Mary Lou Mowery (above) who

have supported our 2018 film, & our poster contest with very generous donations, have judged our poster contest, and have spearheaded our attendance at Kilgore's Shakespeare festival. We thank Dr. Mary Hearron, with student above, who continues to support honors financially, and in many other ways. Glenda Brogoitti has made many contributions to our films and poster events (above right).



Alicia Cantrell, Rachel Jordan, and Cassidy Watkins also placed. See our website for the 14 community judges who mentored and evaluated. Our Texas Heritage Bank Scholar, Watkins, below in green, was the star of our film on Mary Kay, premiered in February. Chambers, Cantrell, & Morgan Martin sponsored an engaging program of their essays at the Mount Pleasant Library, below right. Madison Blood won our 4th Chitsey Award with Dr. Hearron below, and Chambers and Watson, both in a mood-setting film scene, below right, were our spring Eckman Award winners for honors seminar excellence.

Spring Sensations



We were thrilled to close the year with the paragon case of Brenda, p. 1. But we also note the sky-high trajectories of Presidential Scholar sophomores, **Chesney Davis**, and **Alicia Cantrell** shown above. *Alacrity* has noted how NTCC emerged on top of the Guistwhite website, which this year did not go to any of our students or those mentioned on p. 1. However, according to our own awards expert, Dr. Melissa Fulgham, the Hites Award, rather than the top-fifteen set Guistwhite, is academically more prestigious. So we are very humbled to note that not only Brenda made this top ten group, but also Chesney. NTCC had 20 percent of the Hites winners in the nation in 2018! Davis was a high-acumen engineering student, and a Phi Theta Kappa regional Vice President. He and Adriana Rodriguez were our duelling Northeast Texas poet laureates. Davis also won an Eckman Award, was our Cypress Bank Scholar, and won a McGraw-Hill Poster Award. And then there is our gracious leader of both Honors and Phi Theta Kappa, Alicia Cantrell who won our ninth Jack Kent Cooke since 2010. In 1919, the year he saved Europe from starvation, Herbert Hoover won 23 awards. At one point last fall, after her Leaders of Promise, Cooper, and Wesson in one month, Cantrell was earning awards at a higher rate. This spring she also won a Coca Cola Gold. Not bad for a young woman who largely has had to care for herself!



Regional Vanguard



For the 3rd time (left), NTCC won 2 of the 6-8 Boe Awards of the Great Plains Honors Council (GPHC). Hannah Dickson, from our Humusic seminar, won a spot among the freshman-sophomores with her work on the human need for music. Brenda Godoy placed in the upper division as noted on p. 1! We also had two publications in the venerable state journal, *Touchstone*, thanks to Alicia Cantrell, and Rachel Jordan (top right). Finally, Jazmin Garcia, and Rhylie Anderson won our 18th and 19th State Caldwell Awards.



Our thanks to Drs. Jim and Paula Archer and others for gifts allowing us to enjoy our 22nd semester trip--to Dallas (above) in January. We explored the Heard Wildlife trails, shopped at the Frisco Mall, heard a modern pipe organ at the Frisco Community Church, and rooted for the Allen Americans hockey team. We thank Jerald and Mary Lou Mowry, & agent Casy Slaght of McGraw Hill for our 10th McGraw Hill Poster



Contest. On top, above, Matthew Chambers, winning \$400 & MH gift.



Deo Gratias! "For More and More." By Dr. Andrew Yox, Honors Director

Hillbilly Elegy, *White Trash*, a recent essay on the upper 9.9 %, and even the text of our Honors Retreat book, *Academically Adrift* provide ample testimony of predicaments with the American Dream. It barely surprises us that the average student of Higher Education in the U.S. now spends less time academically—27 hours per week--than the average high school student!

We certainly would be naive to think that we could easily overturn the trans-generational pathologies and traumas that ding their way into modern life. Viewed one way, Honors might appear as some escapist fantasy, buoyed by realities, even as it lives apart from them.

We in honors certainly strive to mentor and support while maintaining high standards. I so thank our 2 donors who allowed us to have a beautiful retreat before the excellent dinner at the Greer Farm last March so we could talk about it. Our honors professors are doing great in setting standards, according to our retreat text, *Academically Adrift*, by Arum and Roksa!

But what if we do have the best honors program in the United States?

We would still have no panacea. Some never overcome the darkness. But honors can confer unique gifts (Romans 12:10) of encouragement and hope. It can provide a good fiberglass ladder with the sturdy stabilizers of

kindness, and empathy. We can say—(thanks to you all), if you work hard, there are real, even amazing rewards. We can provide a Culture of Honor that points students up and beyond the low expectations, social problems, and lack of engagement they may be experiencing.

In much of the United States today, Higher Education is expecting less and less. Thanks to our team of donors and academics in Northeast Texas, and thanks be to God!--we have the privilege of expecting more and more.

Along this line, I would like to give a public thank-you to Kim Irvin, whose knowledge of special programs allowed us to offer our first true full ride in seven years, to Winnsboro Valedictorian, Karla Fuentes (below). Karla will join us as a Presidential Scholar in the fall.

