

# ALACRITY

## Alacritous Alumni



Conoly & Cody Russell married last summer and are expecting a boy! While with us from 2009-11, Cody became NTCC's 3rd Coca Cola Gold Scholar. He directed our first historical film, presented a memorable work on capital punishment at the NCHC, and obtained a record 37 honors credits! Russell is now a Geometry teacher and baseball coach at Mount Pleasant HS where he was the 2009 valedictorian.

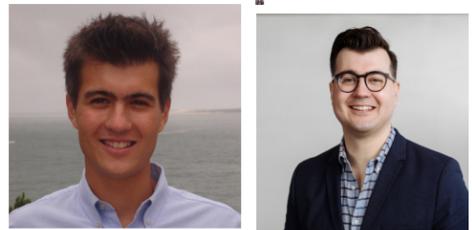


Steven Vaught in 2015 started a run of excellent scholars from Daingerfield. He once sprinted from a 3-hr Engineering class to come in 3rd in our 2015 poster contest, explaining the relation of musical aptitude and quantitative reasoning. He has since obtained a master's degree in physics and now is working as an Accessibility Specialist in Phoenix.

Presley McClendon won two of our Eckman Awards--in 2016 and 2017--and directed our 2016 film on Sam Houston and the Fate of the Texas Cherokee. After receiving her B.S. in chemistry at the University of North Texas, she is now teaching 7th grade at her alma mater, Mount Pleasant Junior High, and is again helping with the high school's award-winning Color Guard.



In 2008, Thibaut Guidet became the first of ten of our scholars to win a Boe Award for the Great Plains Honors Council. His essay was on another significant French figure beside himself to enter Texas, Jean Lafitte. After receiving degrees in business and finance at UT San Antonio, Guidet worked nine years at Rackspace, becoming a Senior Financial Analyst. He recently has accepted a position with Dura Software, in downtown San Antonio.



Mount Pleasant's Carlos Mendez won our premiere First-Place Caldwell Award in 2011 for his work on San Antonio Mayor, Henry Cisneros. He later received funding from the magnanimous former HUD Secretary to attend UT San Antonio. He is today married to Jessica. In 2019, Carlos



was promoted to Production Manager at Avanzar Technologies.

Who could forget Alicia Cantrell? Our 2018 Jack Kent Cooke recipient from Mount Vernon, acted in two of our films, gave a memorable address at the TSHA, and won Walter Cooper, Dr. Jerry Wesson, and Leaders of Promise Awards. She now



has graduated from Mills College (2020), served as a Congressional intern, and was recently named a Coro Fellow.

### Local Banks again Provide Remarkable Help



This past fall, Texas Heritage National Bank (THNB) of Daingerfield funded their fifth Presidential Scholarship in as many years. The recipient above, Jaidyn Thompson, shown with THNB Chairman of the Board, John Bryan, attained the most lucrative scholarship at NTCC. Thompson has presented her work on Daingerfield attorney, Harold Nix, at several venues. Below, Cypress Bank provided the 13th Laptop, in as many years to a scholar of Honors Northeast. The giver for the 4th time, was the Vice President of Cypress' Lone Star Branch, Billie Sue Hanson. The recipient was Cade Bennett of Naples, who stars in our upcoming film on Bo Pilgrim.



### The Spirit of 2020

Death may seem to win the game of life; and to many, 2020, was like a full-court press against any form of achievement. When we view honors at NTCC as a system between our young scholars, patrons, our administrators, mentors and parents, it was thrilling to see how every part of the operation accommodated to the challenges of the year with alacrity. Last June's *Alacrity* detailed some of these attainments. This past fall a signature moment came when Maritza Quinones (above right) defeated two upperclassmen, from Texas Woman's University and Midwestern University for the top student spot of the Great Plains Honors Council. This is the 4th straight year that NTCC students have won this election (See Deo Gratias on p. 3). Thanks to our patrons, the 13th annual Northeast Texas Poetry Contest yielded novel insights and images. Thanks to the kind of enthusiasm shown by Brian Ramirez (shown with award on p. 2), Cade Bennett (2nd from right above) and our film sponsors, two of

which--the Mowerys--even treated us to a special lunch, our yearly film effort went ahead as scheduled. We could not have a fall trip, but our social agenda overseen so caringly by Drs. Jim and Paula Archer over the years continued, with a Roundup at the Ag building & special Romp (left). The National Collegiate Honors Council went virtual last fall, but we managed a record number of presenters who all submitted viable video files--Maritza Quinones, Katelyn Lester, Jaidyn Thompson, Jalyn English, Gem Elmore, and Sam Griffin (Seen on bottom of p.2). Likewise, our freshmen had an excellent Fall Webb Society presentation that led to a 2021 Chapter Award. Our yearly film trailer, this one on Bo Pilgrim, exists on [www.ntcc.edu/honorsfilms](http://www.ntcc.edu/honorsfilms). The entire feature-length film, edited and revamped, is now ready for a premiere. Both honors seminars produced novel and arresting scholarship, and Aaliyah Avellaneda, and Jalyn English each captured \$100 Eckmans for attaining the highest GPAs in each (above in black).

## Alacrity: Newsletter of Honors Northeast

### College Leaders

**President:** Dr. Ron Clinton  
**VP Instruction:** Dr. Kevin Rose  
**Associate VP:** Anna Ingram

**Honors Committee:** Jalyn English, Erika Garza, Dr. Drew Murphy, Heidi Wooten, & Dr. Andrew Yox.

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

**Honors Coordinator:** Andrea Reyes  
**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](mailto:nmay@ntcc.edu), or Dr. Yox at [ayox@ntcc.edu](mailto:ayox@ntcc.edu).



**NORTHEAST TEXAS  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

*Want more information?*

903-434-8229 • [ayox@ntcc.edu](mailto:ayox@ntcc.edu)  
[www.ntcc.edu/honors](http://www.ntcc.edu/honors)

*NTCC is an AA, ADA, Equal Opportunity institution.*

In this  
edition:

Fall  
Happenings

Regional  
Vanguard

Alacritous  
Alumni

## Our Beneficent Benefactors



What we received in January of 2021 was amazing. John and Jan Bryan of Naples put our immediate budgetary concerns to rest. They also are allowing us to recruit more vigorously with a luncheon and award series. Scott Wesson, the son of Dr. Jerry Wesson above, reads both the Bible and a classic work of literature every year. He also is helping to make the Wesson Scholarship to our top academic sophomore an enduring award. Ned and Margaret Muse have

again enabled our robust travel tradition, begun by the Archers, and allowed us to accommodate to the COVID-added expenses of individual travel. Dr. Charles Florio recently moved to Fort Worth, but he enabled our group to make video conference presentations & hold a Christmas party. We thank also Karen Harmon, Dr. Mary Hearron, Dr. Jerry Wesson, Glenda Brogoitti as well as the Mowerys and Archers for shaping and renewing our accolade culture (p. 3).

## Our Film on Bo Pilgrim



Bottom line: We found that Pilgrim was as controversial as he was influential. Imagine a leader who owns 38 percent of the stock of the largest chicken company in the world in 2007, and yet he is also functioning as an evangelist. He was a leading patron of the Republican party yet he also fought a long-running feud with our area's most powerful Republican leader. He once described himself as a "Moses" who was elated to be leading thousands of people from Mexico to a promised land of greater abundance and spirituality. He talked about fulfilling environmental concerns but actually believed that it was better to be a "fisher of men" than to clean the fishbowl. Our film endeavors to explore a telling and remarkable regional phenomenon.

We are indebted again to Jerald and Mary Lou Mowery, to our administration, the alacrity of our student leaders, Mr. Kenny Goodson, Jefferson B&Bs, the artistry of Andrea Reyes, the help of her family, and the list goes on. The film has won a Webb Society Chapter Award (Held aptly by Brian Ramirez above), and we might even be able to have a premiere later this spring. The group that helped bring this off last summer included: C. Alcocer-Salas, Cade Bennett as Bo Pilgrim, Jalyn English--director, D. Hernandez, M. Mendoza, I. Perez, Brian Ramirez, as UP director and producer, Andrea, Joel and Julio Reyes, M. Risner, H. Rodriguez, J. Rodriguez, & Dr. A. Yox.

## Regional Vanguard



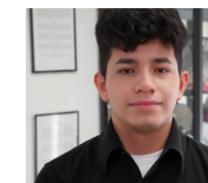
NTCC had a record 8 in the meeting of the National Collegiate Honors Council last fall. Quinones and English presented twice! Again, since 2013 among the 50 General Sessions of the NCHC was our film panel (upper left). Five presented posters (lower left). Our Webb Society (upper right) also presented their work on Bo Pilgrim for the fall meeting, and were one of 3 groups to be featured on the state website. NTCC Scholars (right) won 2% of the 200 Leaders of Promise awarded in the nation by Phi Theta Kappa and Coca Cola last July: C. Alcocer, H. Barnes, M. Quinones & J. Thompson.



## Fall Happenings



We thank Drs. Jim and Paula Archer for an autumn COVID substitute for a trip to the Big D. Our 2020 Romp at Daingerfield Park featured a meeting on the outside terrace of the MP Starbucks, races, hiking, soccer, and prizes. Our 13th NE Texas Poetry Contest awarded Katelyn Lester a \$400 1st Prize, Nallely Gutierrez, \$300, Hilda Rodriguez, \$200, and Carolina Alcocer-Salas \$100. Alcocer-Salas also won a \$200 Dr. Charles B. Florio Award for Leadership.



## Deo Gratias! "Accolade Culture." By Dr. A. Yox, Honors Director

A newly married couple strolled along a beautiful lakefront. They reached a tennis court. John told Sherry: "I don't think I ever told you that in college my nickname was 'love machine.'"

Sherry's brow wrinkled: "Now wait a minute, we are going to have to sit down and talk about this!"

"Oh it was nothing Sherry, it is just that I was really bad in tennis."

We thank God that our honors program at NTCC has become an accolade machine--in a good sense. We can build résumés. We can offer one-on-one encouragement. We can leverage a first round of accolades for better accolades. We can tell achievement stories in such a way that a final wave of national accolades is possible. Not every student in our program benefits from our accolade culture, but fortunately, a majority do.

We are both indebted to our donors for special awards and activities, as well as our administration for maintaining the kind of student travel that enables top accolades. We are indebted to professors like Dr. Melissa Fulgham, and honors coordinator, Andrea Reyes, who are able to transmute a record of achievement into a winsome student story. We are becoming more and more indebted to a larger community who are willing to meet with our students for interviews, judge their

Thanks to the late James and Elizabeth Whatley and their initial \$50K-donation to honors, we now have a sophomore award for one who has shown the best combined scholarship, leadership and service. This year's winner was our film director, and H. Student Council President, Jalyn English (below: top left). The Dr. Jerry Wesson Scholarship for the top academic sophomore went to Katelyn Lester. Lester was the winner of a 2nd-place state Caldwell, & our McGraw Hill & poetry winner. Finally we were able this year to grant two Gladys Winkle scholarships for continuing excellence in the Humanities, to John Rodriguez and Israel Perez (in black below).

posters, help facilitate our films, and provide resources for their research.

All of this helps to explain why we have won four straight elections for the top student spot of the Great Plains Honors Council, over fifty national awards, and have an unprecedented showcase of award-winning works of art and scholarship concerning Northeast Texas on: [www.ntcc.edu/honors](http://www.ntcc.edu/honors).

And then there are the Jalyns, Katelyns, Maritzas, & parents. Dorali and Hilda below, who were promoted.

Our Bo Pilgrim research alerts us to the idea that our area did not just receive any immigrants after 1988, but a rather screened group. Our area lags in sophistication, wealth, and health, but our people of Northeast Texas are spiritually hard-wired, and tenacious. Every accolade begins with a challenge, and our students are showing the verve to win big.

