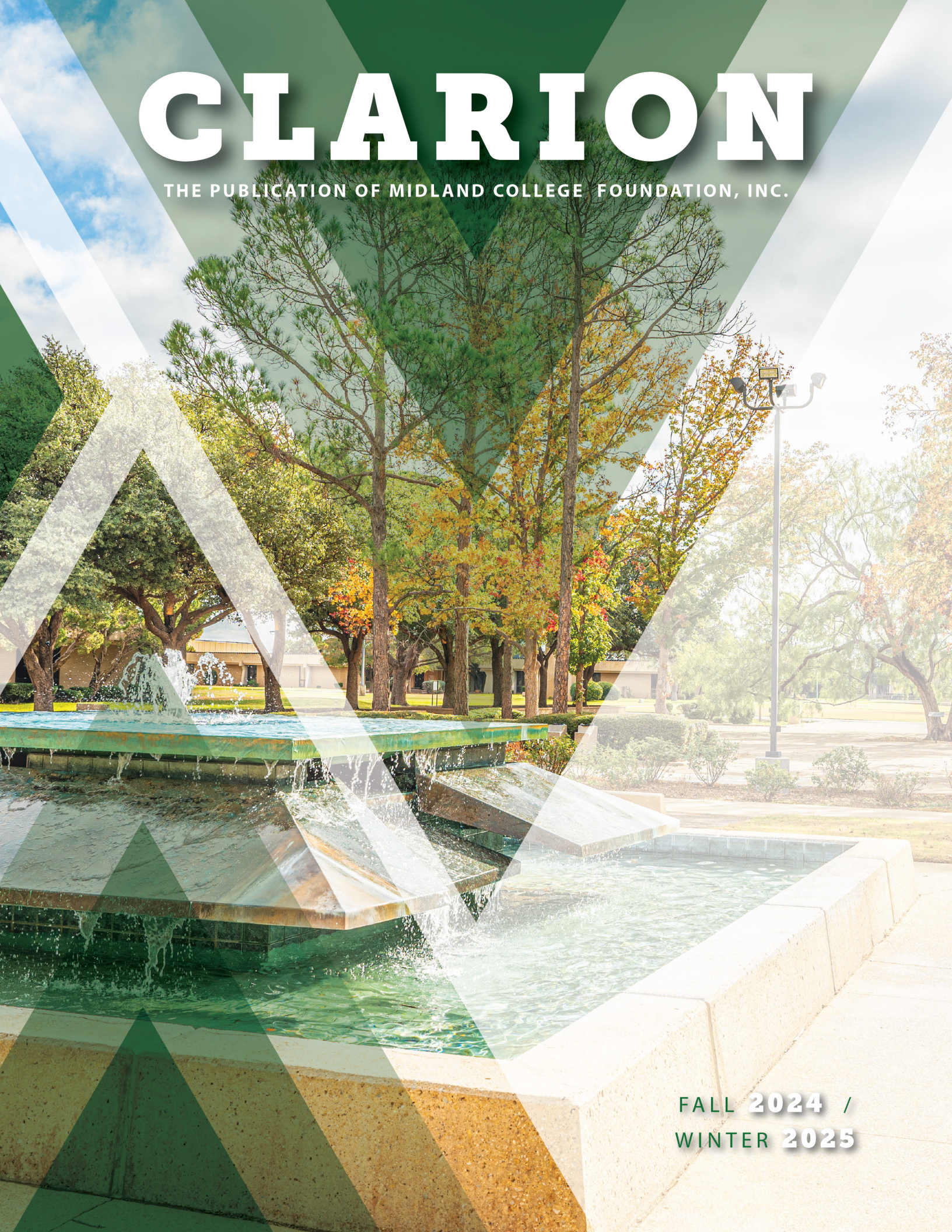


# CLARION

THE PUBLICATION OF MIDLAND COLLEGE FOUNDATION, INC.



FALL 2024 /  
WINTER 2025





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**Vice President, Institutional Advancement**  
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Dr. Adrian Vega

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FROM MIDLAND COLLEGE PRESIDENT  
**DR. DAMON KENNEDY**

Friends,

Midland College is challenging conventional perceptions of community colleges. We are not just evolving; we are reimagining every aspect of our institution to better serve our students, our community, and our partners. Our new theme, "Reimagine," reflects our bold vision for the future of Midland College, where innovation meets tradition, and every student finds a pathway to success.

The Midland College Strategic Plan, "Honor the Past, Reimagine the Future," defines the work in seven key pillars. **Access** to Midland College is not merely credit enrollment, but the many ways the college can transform lives and communities. **Student success** extends beyond academic achievements to include civic engagement and lifelong learning. We are redefining **world class technical training** to meet the demands of a rapidly evolving job market and ensuring our graduates are industry-ready. Through **collaboration**, we are also cultivating meaningful partnerships that enhance educational opportunities, economic development and community well-being. In addition, the college is contributing to the thriving Midland **community**. By championing **workplace quality** through a balanced approach to work and life that enhances employee well-being and productivity, we are becoming the employer of choice.

One of the most exciting projects underway at Midland College is campus revitalization. The Midland College District broke ground on a planned campus in 1973, and in 1975, the first classes were held at the main campus. Original buildings, including the Pevehouse Administration Building and the Abell-Hanger Science Faculty Building, were quickly followed by the main buildings situated around the quadrangle. Changes in student and community use, the evolution of the delivery of comprehensive student services and the implementation of online instruction have transformed the function of original structures. Additionally, growth in specialized programs and new technology has resulted in short-term building modifications and some misalignment between facilities and programs and activities. Building modifications, coupled with the wear and tear of 50 years, have taken a toll on the legacy structures. Further, needs of community and employers have created more demands on the College.

Campus revitalization is complex and multi-faceted. It involves catching up while moving ahead; burnishing and restoring the old while creating the new. The components of the campus revitalization are presented in the following:

- Project Coordination and Management
- Assessment
- Campus Master Planning
- Facility Design
- Facility Construction and Renovation

Together, we are not just preserving the past, but reimagining the campus for those who follow.

Damon Kennedy, Ph.D.





# Campus Revitalization

*Renewing, revisioning, and expanding the facilities, outdoor spaces, and physical infrastructure of the main campus to create a transformative community hub focused on the exponential power of education.*



# COMPONENTS



## 01 Project Coordination and Management

- Project Management Services



## 02 Assessment

- Full Facilities Audit
- Student Housing Feasibility Study
- OCR Audit
- Drainage Study
- GeoTech Study
- Program of Requirements CTE, Applied Technology
- Program of Requirements CTE, Health Sciences



## 03 Campus Master Planning

- New Facility Sites and Land Reservation
- Community and Recreational Spaces
- Landscape Architecture
- Traffic and Parking
- Signage and Wayfinding
- Renewal of the Campus Core
- MEP/Data-Communications Assessment
- Design Guidelines



## 04 Facility Design

- Student Housing
- CTE, Applied Technology and Health Sciences
- Conference Center
- Early College High School



## 05 Facility Construction and Renovation

- O'Shaughnessy Hall
- Daniel Hall
- Craddick Hall
- Applied Technology Facilities
- Health Sciences Addition
- Technology Center





## Project Coordination and Management

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Project coordination and management supports budget development, scheduling, selection of project teams, and project oversight from feasibility to owner occupancy. Recent experience with the PreK Academy building combined with the scope and complexity of the College's revitalization agenda, underscore the need for competent support. Technical expertise ensures the acquisition of quality professional services, timeliness of project completion, fiscal accountability, and overall efficiency. Project Control provided critical support during construction of the PreK building and has provided impactful consulting services during the months since. The firm was selected to provide project coordination and management for ongoing facilities work.





## Assessment

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Initially, assessment processes involved conducting a full audit of existing facilities, evaluating and documenting drainage issues on current and potential development sites, identifying soil conditions on undeveloped land and determining the requirements for new CTE facilities. However, student housing and Office of Civil Rights compliance emerged as pre-emptive concerns and have been included in assessment work.

- Full Facilities Audit
- Student Housing Feasibility Study
- OCR Audit
- Drainage Study
- GeoTech Study
- Program of Requirements CTE, Applied Technology
- Program of Requirements CTE, Health Sciences





## Full Facilities Audit

Based on the premise that knowledge of the types of space and its usage compared to needs is essential for effective planning, the College procured an audit of current facility usage. Work included population projections, workshops with College staff, analysis of classroom and lab utilization, floorplans with current use, future academic and non-academic space needs, and, most importantly, development of recommendations for potential departmental moves and changes in space usage.





# Assessment

## Student Housing Feasibility Study

In fall, serious deterioration and disrepair of dormitories were identified. The services of DLR Group were procured to conduct a full assessment of dormitories and to provide recommendations for restoring quality of residential life on campus. The final report detailed significant MEP issues, deteriorated and broken furnishings and fixtures and outdated interior spaces. Options for renovation were included. However, due to the overriding need for MEP work, costs for options varied minimally.



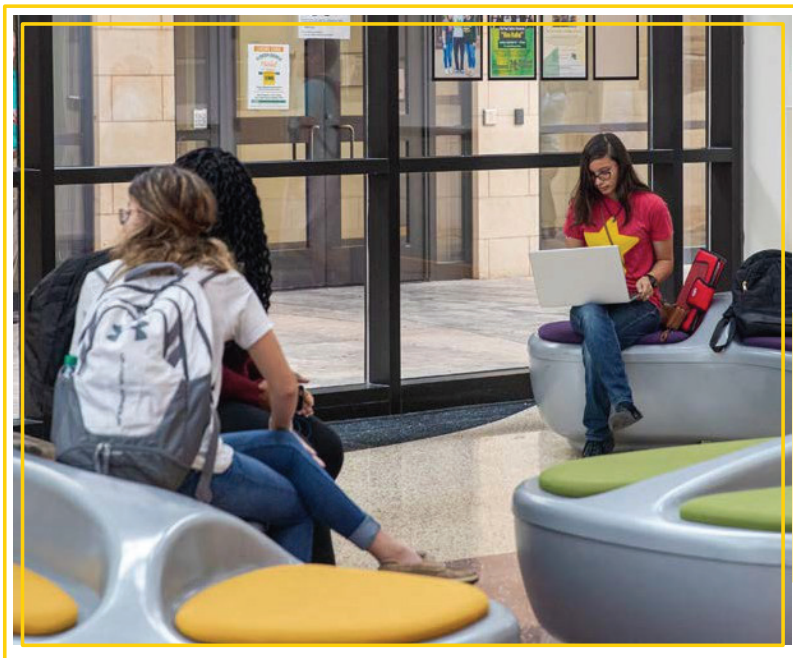




# Assessment

## Office of Civil Rights Audit

The President was notified in spring that the College had not fully completed required compliance activities from a 2017 Office of Civil Rights audit. The College has been permitted to conduct a new audit and develop a new compliance plan. An office of Parkhill with extensive experience was selected to conduct the audit. The Audit with new compliance plan has been completed and accepted by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.







# Drainage Study

Kimley-Horn and Associates has been selected to assess drainage conditions and develop a master drainage plan in order to identify and mitigate the impact of drainage for potential and existing facility sites. Phase I of this work addressed the northeast acreage and an area along the Eastern fence line. Additional assessment will include the west area and inside the original circle.





# Assessment

A photograph of a field filled with numerous small purple flowers and some yellow ones in the foreground. In the background, there are blurred images of buildings and a clear blue sky.

## GeoTech Study

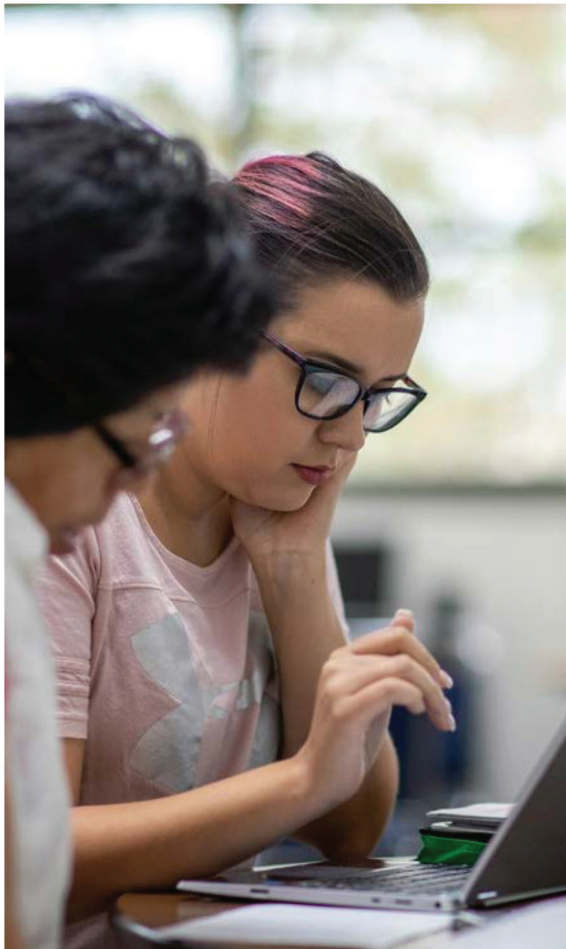
Beyond Engineering & Testing has conducted a preliminary geotechnical exploration of the north acreage designed to provide information required to determine suitability for development. The subsequent report confirmed that the area included in the study is suitable for exploration and development with minimal limited risk.





## Assessment

## Programs of Requirements, CTE



A program of requirements is essential to designing a functional facility from the “inside out.” Developing a program of requirements entails determining needs; assigning square footages based on function and testing these square footages via testfits; identifying functional adjacencies; specifying furniture, fixtures and equipment; detailing technical requirements; calculating assigned gross square footages; and estimating costs. Program of Requirements work has been provided by Facility Programming.







## Programs of Requirements, CTE

## Requirements, Applied Technology



In many cases, Applied Technology programs require expansive labs for heavy, large equipment such as actual diesel trucks and trailers, welding machines, automotive lifts, etc. The program of requirements for Applied Technology calls for facilities organized into four neighborhoods based on associated instructional requirements, with an *approximate 249,250 gross square feet* and *total estimated cost of \$168 million*.

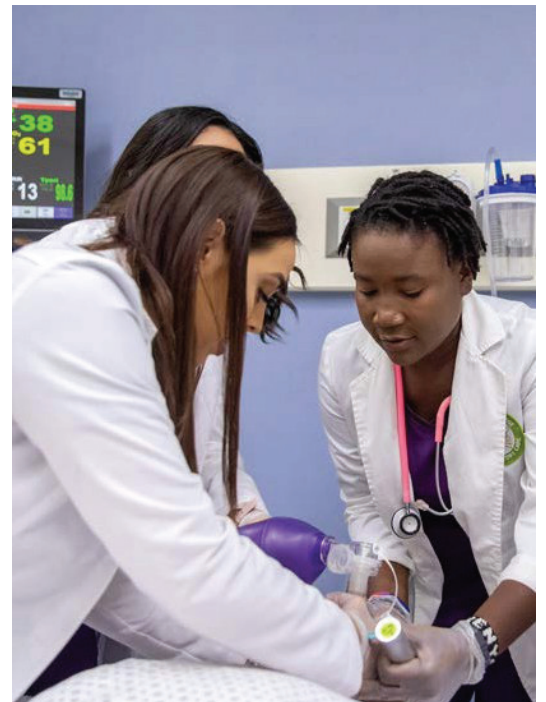




## Programs of Requirements, CTE

### Requirements, Health Sciences

Health Sciences facilities will provide space for dual credit health science programs currently housed at the Advanced Technology Center as well as new programs anticipated such as Sterile Processing, Medical Assisting, and dual credit Vocational Nursing. The program of requirements for Health Sciences calls for a single building with classrooms and labs including a lab for dual credit Anatomy and Physiology classes. *Approximate gross square footage totals 56,272 and total estimated cost is \$53,708,524.*







## Campus Master Planning

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The strategic process of envisioning and designing the physical and functional development and revitalization of the campus, the master plan serves as a roadmap for future development.

The goal - **a unified environment that fosters learning, innovation, and community engagement.**

The services of Pfluger Architects have been secured to prepare the campus master plan. Work has begun and will conclude in December 2024. Pfluger professional staff will integrate data and information from assessment work described in the previous section, collect and compile information from staff and faculty as well as key external stakeholders and develop a comprehensive Master Campus Plan. The master plan will address both the near term – the next five to seven years – and provide concepts and tools that will serve for the next ten years and thereafter.

- New Facility Sites and Land Reservation
- Community and Recreational Spaces
- Landscape Architecture
- Traffic and Parking
- Signage and Wayfinding
- Renewal of the Campus Core
- MEP/Data-Communications Assessment
- Design Guidelines









# Community and Recreational Spaces

Long known for its beauty and as a welcoming site for activities such as 5Ks and cultural events, the campus will be specifically evaluated for ways to increase community engagement and recreational quality. Naturalist and quality of place groups will be tapped to identify enhancements such as collaborative spaces, walking trails, nature preserve areas, and support spaces for walks and runs to further enhance use by students and the community the college serves. Recreational space needs for both students and community will be evaluated and revisions to current facilities identified and recommended.







# Campus Master Planning

## Landscape Architecture

Pfluger has engaged the services of KDC Associates to provide landscape design guidelines. KDC brings years of successful experience to the challenge of creating durable, low maintenance, and appealing landscape that embraces the characteristics of the college's original spaces and addresses the challenges of large new areas.







## Campus Master Planning

### Traffic and Parking

Pfluger has engaged the services of Kimley Horn to assess traffic and parking capacity including projections based on new facilities. It should be noted that new facilities not only increase vehicular traffic, MISD school buses will have the campus as a regular route several times a day. Information will be used to develop recommendations to ensure managed vehicular circulation.





# Campus Master Planning



## Signage and Wayfinding

Master planning will include systematic location and naming of buildings and parking areas for emergency access. In addition, much needed signage and wayfinding guidelines will be included as deliverables in the final plan.





# Campus Master Planning



## Renewal of the Campus Core

The administration has asked that renewal of the campus core including Beal Plaza and legacy buildings be a consideration in the planning process. The goal is to emerge with these areas refreshed and more functional while maintaining their status as signature characteristics of the campus.



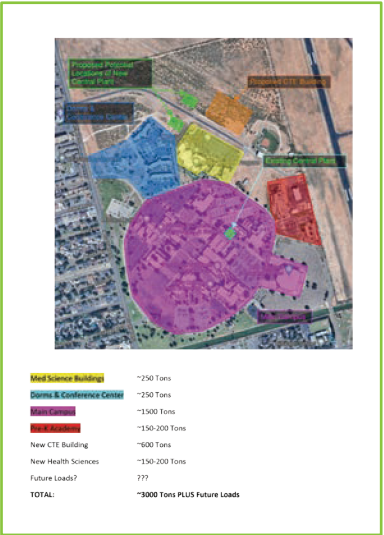




## MEP/Data-Communications Assessment

At the college’s request, Pfluger has contracted with Cleary Zimmerman Engineers to provide a general MEP assessment of the campus as well as recommendations for infrastructure to support new facilities. The firm is also collecting information regarding easements and underground utilities, and compiling information regarding the location of fiber and pathways. Further, Cleary Zimmerman is assessing cost efficiencies associated with new technologies and systems that will yield future savings.

A preliminary recommendation from Cleary Zimmerman is the construction of a second central plant to support new construction. This recommendation recognizes the resources needed to serve the approximately 250,000 square foot Applied Technology facility. It also recognizes that dormitory central infrastructure must be upgraded within three to five years and the new conference center will add to central plant needs. A second central plant would also support additional growth. The recommendation has not been finalized; however, costs for the second central plant are estimated at \$30 million.



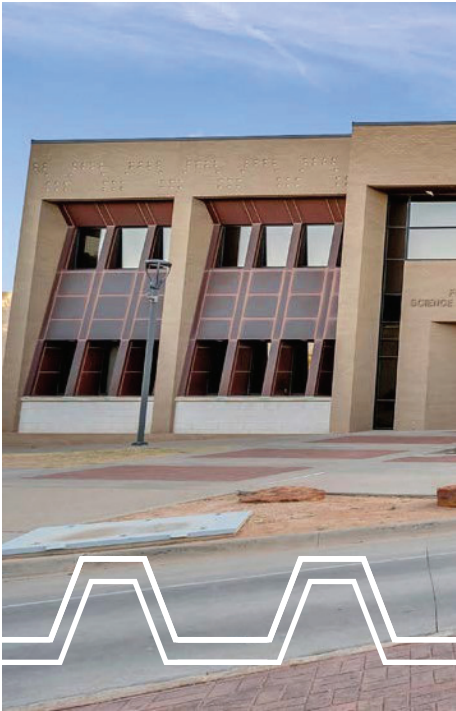
While the work of Cleary Zimmerman will be invaluable over time, as the college undertakes renovation of older buildings additional project-specific assessment of MEP will be required.





# Design Guidelines

A key product of master planning is the development of architectural design guidelines. These guidelines protect the integrity of original architectural themes that create the unique identity of the campus.



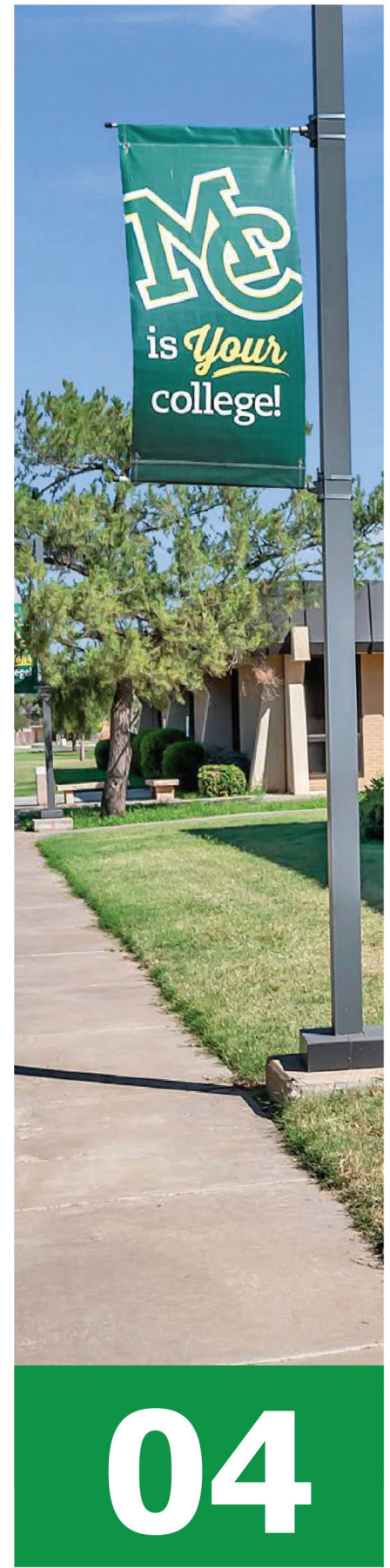


# Facility Design



Engaging professional firms to transform program of requirements or, in the case of dormitories, assessments of facilities, into practical, functional spaces with style consistent with existing campus facilities.

- Student Housing
- CTE, Applied Technology and Health Sciences
- Conference Center



# 04

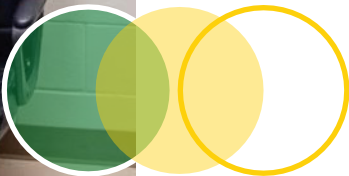




# Facility Design

## Student Housing Design

DLR has been engaged to develop renovation designs for the College’s three dormitories. DLR will integrate data and information collected while assessing dormitory status and will provide designs that are functional, improve security, provide community experiences, and enable students to personalize their space. While each dormitory is unique, spaces will have consistent standards and provide comparable experiences.



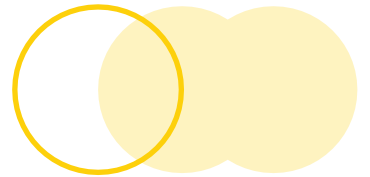




# Facility Design

## CTE: Applied Technology and Health Sciences

DLR was also selected to provide design services for both the Applied Technology and Health Sciences facilities. Design proposals address these separately and provide the College the opportunity to proceed with design services up to the release of construction documents. The design proposal for Applied Technology has been approved by the Board of Trustees; proposals for Health Sciences and the conference center are pending.

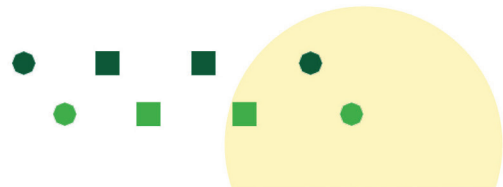






# Conference Center

The concept of a Conference Center was launched – including conceptual drawings - and a portion of the funding for same was donated to the College during the last administration. However, no further action was taken on the project. Current plans include securing design services and identifying funding to complete the construction of a Conference Center connected to Brown Hall.







# 05

## Facility Construction and Renovation



### **Student Housing**

Dormitory renovation is planned over a three-year period with one dormitory renovated each year. All occupants were removed from O'Shaughnessy Hall in June. Demolition is expected soon with substantial completion of renovation by August 1, 2025. Craddick and Daniel Halls will follow in order.

**Applied Technology Facilities, Health Sciences Addition, Technology Center** construction/remodel dates are not yet established.



# Campus Revitalization

|                                                                           | <i>Cost</i>       | <i>Start</i> | <i>Complete</i> | <i>Funding Source</i>                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>PROJECT COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT</b>                                |                   |              |                 |                                                                                                                        |
| <b>PROJECT MANAGEMENT</b>                                                 | 237,600           | 5-1-24       | TBD             | Operating                                                                                                              |
| <b>ASSESSMENT OF PHYSICAL ASSETS</b>                                      |                   |              |                 |                                                                                                                        |
| <b>FULL FACILITIES AUDIT</b>                                              | 204,000           | 10-2-24      | 6-7-24          | Foundation - Chap Circle                                                                                               |
| <b>STUDENT HOUSING FEASIBILITY</b>                                        | 260,000           | 2-27-24      | Done            | Operating - Current Yr                                                                                                 |
| <b>OCR AUDIT</b>                                                          | 62,915            | 4-17-24      | 7-16-24         | Operating - Current Yr                                                                                                 |
| <b>DRAINAGE STUDY</b>                                                     | 241,000           | 12-6-23      | 5-30-24         | Operating - Budgeted                                                                                                   |
| <b>GEOTECH STUDY</b>                                                      | 47,340            | 5-15-24      | 6-15-24         | Operating - Current Yr                                                                                                 |
| <b>PROGRAM OF REQUIREMENTS CTE, Applied Technology and Health Science</b> | 156,000           | 10-2-23      | Done            | Scharbauer Foundation Gift                                                                                             |
| <b>CAMPUS MASTER PLANNING</b>                                             |                   |              |                 |                                                                                                                        |
| <b>CAMPUS MASTER PLAN, MEP Included</b>                                   | 783,500           | 3-21-24      | 12-1-24         | Operating - Current Yr/<br>Next Yr Fund Balance                                                                        |
| <b>DESIGN</b>                                                             |                   |              |                 |                                                                                                                        |
| <b>STUDENT HOUSING</b>                                                    | 1,386,000         | 6-5-24       | 10-25-24        | Fund Balance                                                                                                           |
| <b>DESIGN - APPLIED TECHNOLOGY</b><br>through Construction Documents      | 6,536,320         | 6-5-24       | 12-18-24        | Abell-Hanger Foundation<br>- \$2,250,000;<br>Foundation/Chap Circle<br>- \$2,250,000;<br>Fund Balance<br>- \$2,036,320 |
| <b>DESIGN - HEALTH SCIENCES</b><br>through Construction Documents         | Est. 1,800,000    | 7-1-24       | 12-18-24        | Fund Balance                                                                                                           |
| <b>CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION</b>                                        |                   |              |                 |                                                                                                                        |
| <b>O'SHAUGHNESSY HALL RENOVATION</b>                                      | Est. 6,200,000    | 9-16-24      | 9-25            | Fund Balance                                                                                                           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                                              | <b>17,914,675</b> |              |                 |                                                                                                                        |







SEE WHAT'S

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**13** — ATHLETICS

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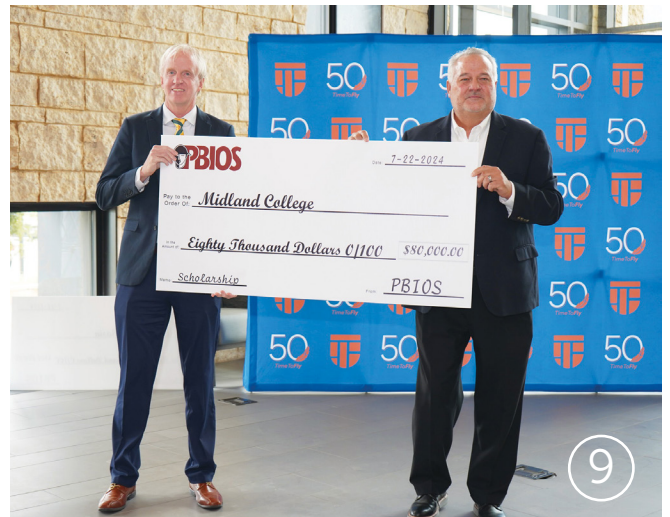
**42** — STUDENT EMERGENCY FUND

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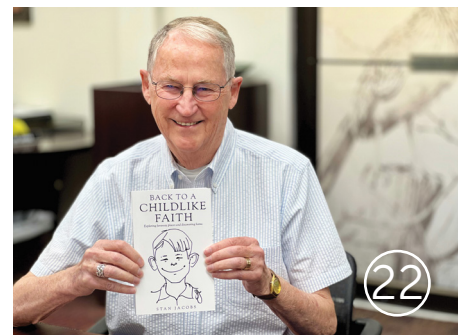
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33





The Honorable Lea Robertson (right), 385th District Court Judge, administers the oath of office to Mike Oestmann (left), new MC Board of Trustees member.

## *Oestmann* JOINS MIDLAND COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**This past May**, the Midland College Board of Trustees announced the appointment of Mr. Mike Oestmann. The Honorable Leah Robertson administered the oath of office to Oestmann during the MC Board meeting on Tuesday, May 21, 2024. He steps into the role previously held by retiring Board member Paul Morris.

Mr. Oestmann is a native Midlander and graduated from Lee High School (now Legacy High School) in 1978. He began his career with Exxon in 1982 after graduating from Rice University with a degree in geology and a geophysics option. He worked 15 years with Exxon and then with various independent oil and gas companies. In 2007, he co-founded Piedra Resources, which sold its assets in 2011. He began Tall City Exploration in 2012 and is currently a partner in Tall City Exploration IV.





Mike Oestmann (left) shakes hands with MC President Dr. Damon Kennedy (right) at a recent Davidson Distinguished Lecture Series reception. Mr. Oestmann is a member of the lecture series committee.

**For the past year**, Mike has served as vice president of the Midland College Foundation Board of Directors and is a member of the Davidson Distinguished Lecture Series committee.

"Mike's commitment to Midland, as well as his experience and dedication to the Midland College Foundation, will prove invaluable as we enhance our community impact," MC President Dr. Damon Kennedy said. "We look forward to the unique perspectives and contributions Mike brings to our institution."

In addition to his Midland College service, Oestmann is vice president of the board of Midland's Permian Basin Petroleum Museum and serves on the boards of RigWell Energy Services, The West Texas Geology Foundation and Galvanic Energy II. He also serves as an elder at Westway Church of Christ.

Oestmann and Cathy, his wife of 40 years, live in Midland and have four children and ten grandchildren.



## NEW PROGRAMS TO MEET ENERGY INDUSTRY DEMANDS

The largest natural gas compression service companies have 70 percent of their assets in the Permian Basin. According to Mickey McKee, Kodiak Gas Services Inc.'s CEO, customers in the Permian Basin are clamoring for more natural gas compression as they prepare for the next wave of LNG exports.

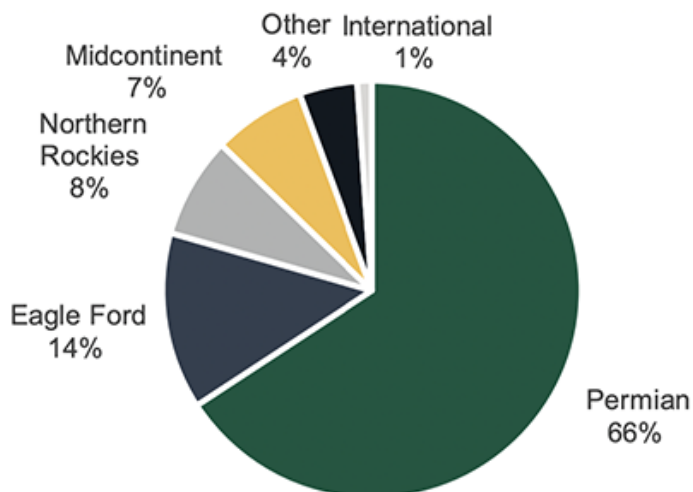
Kodiak, headquartered in The Woodlands, TX, near Houston, is working on 2025 contracts, when more Gulf Coast liquefied natural gas capacity is scheduled to come online.

"Kodiak is fully contracted on our 2024 new unit deliveries, and deep in discussions with our customers on their 2025 needs," McKee said. "As we look forward, customer demand for large horsepower compression infrastructure continues to be strong, particularly in the Permian Basin, where over 70 per cent of our horsepower is deployed. Our fleet is effectively fully utilized, and we expect this trend to last given the robust multi-year outlook for natural gas to supply the coming wave of LNG export projects."

Kodiak fleet horsepower grew year/year in the final quarter of 2023 to 3.26 million horsepower (hp) from 3.13 hp. The number of compression units was slightly higher at 3,078 from 3,024.

Within the United States, natural gas compression is expected to increase 15 billion cubic feet (BCF) per day in the next 10 years with a 7.5 million horsepower increase. The delegation of work for natural gas compression technicians is 7,000-10,000 horsepower per technician.

This means, there is a huge demand for natural gas compression technicians, and Midland College's new Natural Gas Compression program and its new Automation program are helping to fill the region's energy technician labor demand.



Source: Kodiak Gas Services Inc.

"While our Natural Gas Compression Associate of Applied Science degree program is new, we have actually been training our Diesel Technician students on natural gas compression equipment for several years," Erick Gutierrez, MC program chair of Automotive, Diesel and Energy Technology, said. "It all started in 2021 when Archrock donated a fully contained portable gas lift compression package with updated Centurion and EICS controls for student training. Since then, we have received other donations from various industry partners including the most recent donation of a Vapor Recovery Unit (VRU) from Endeavor Energy Resources this past May. This donation marks a significant step in advancing sustainable practices within the energy sector and supporting educational initiatives."

Gutierrez said that there are four sites throughout the United States that train natural gas compression technicians, and Midland College is the only training





Archrock was the first company to partner with MC for natural gas compression in 2021 when they donated a portable gas lift compression package to MC for training purposes.



In May 2024, Endeavor Energy Resources donated a Vapor Recover Unit to MC's new Natural Gas Compression program.

facility in the Permian Basin. The other Texas college offering similar training is Panola College in Carthage, serving students in East Texas. The other two colleges are Lackawanna College in Scranton, PA and San Juan College in Farmington, NM.

"It just makes sense that with 70 percent of all domestic natural gas being produced in the Permian Basin that Midland College should be a major training hub," Gutierrez stated.

Many students feeding into the Natural Gas Compression program will begin their training as dual credit high school students, and Midland College has established several completion points for students entering through this route. All students begin with Diesel Technology courses learning the basics of diesel engines that include diagnosis, repair and maintenance. This leads to a certificate in Diesel Technology. From there, students can opt into one of three areas—Diesel Truck/Trailer, Heavy Equipment or Natural Gas Compression, all of which lead to Associate of Applied Science degrees.

"Some of our students leave us after they obtain a Diesel Technology certificate," Gutierrez explained. "That's OK. Sometimes life circumstances prevent them from

immediately going on to complete a degree. Even the students who stop at the certificate level can obtain employment with competitive wages. Eventually, many of these students return to Midland College to finish the program and obtain associate degrees. Of course, a higher degree of training and specialization will lead to a higher wage. One of our recent associate-degree students is now working as a natural gas engine builder earning an annual salary of \$170,000. Of course, this isn't the norm. Starting salary is approximately \$30/hour, plus benefits which, of course, include the standard things like health insurance, but also include vehicle stipends. There is also a huge opportunity to earn overtime pay."

The pathway for Midland College's new Associate of Applied Science degree in Automation is similar. Students begin with Energy Technology curriculum that includes an introduction to the petroleum industry, basic fluid power, mechanical skills for energy, industrial automation, OSHA regulations and a course covering pumps, compressors and mechanical drives. These courses lead to an Energy Technician Certificate. Students can then choose one of two associate-degree programs—either in Petroleum Energy Technology or the new degree program in Automation.

## | Energy Industry Program |



According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the number of new jobs in automation created by the energy industry is growing at a rate of 9 percent per year. As technology advances, it is possible that more and more tasks will be automated.

"Energy companies are some of the forerunners in technology," Gutierrez said. "Many of the jobs that 10 to 20 years ago required a technician to drive to a location in West Texas can now be accomplished remotely. This requires a knowledge of programmable logic controllers, which includes wiring and programming of components and setting parameters."



*Indeed.com* reports that workers in West Texas/Eastern New Mexico make some of the highest energy automation technician wages in the nation averaging \$33.42/hour.

According to the December 2023 issue of *Oilman* magazine, in the realm of exploration and production, the oil and gas industry is "facing an undeniable truth: those equipped with tech skills will steer the future. As the margin between profit and loss narrows with the fluctuating prices of oil, the precision and efficiency brought about by tech expertise stand as pivotal determinants of success."

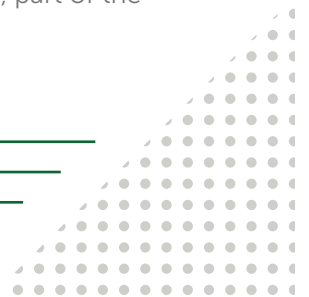


The magazine states that automation in the energy industry is now branching into areas such as artificial intelligence (AI), data analytics, project management and even cybersecurity.

"Our goal for both the new Automation program, as well as the Natural Gas Compression program is to prepare students for not only jobs that are in demand now, but also those that will give them the skill sets to transition and advance into future jobs as technology changes," Gutierrez concluded.

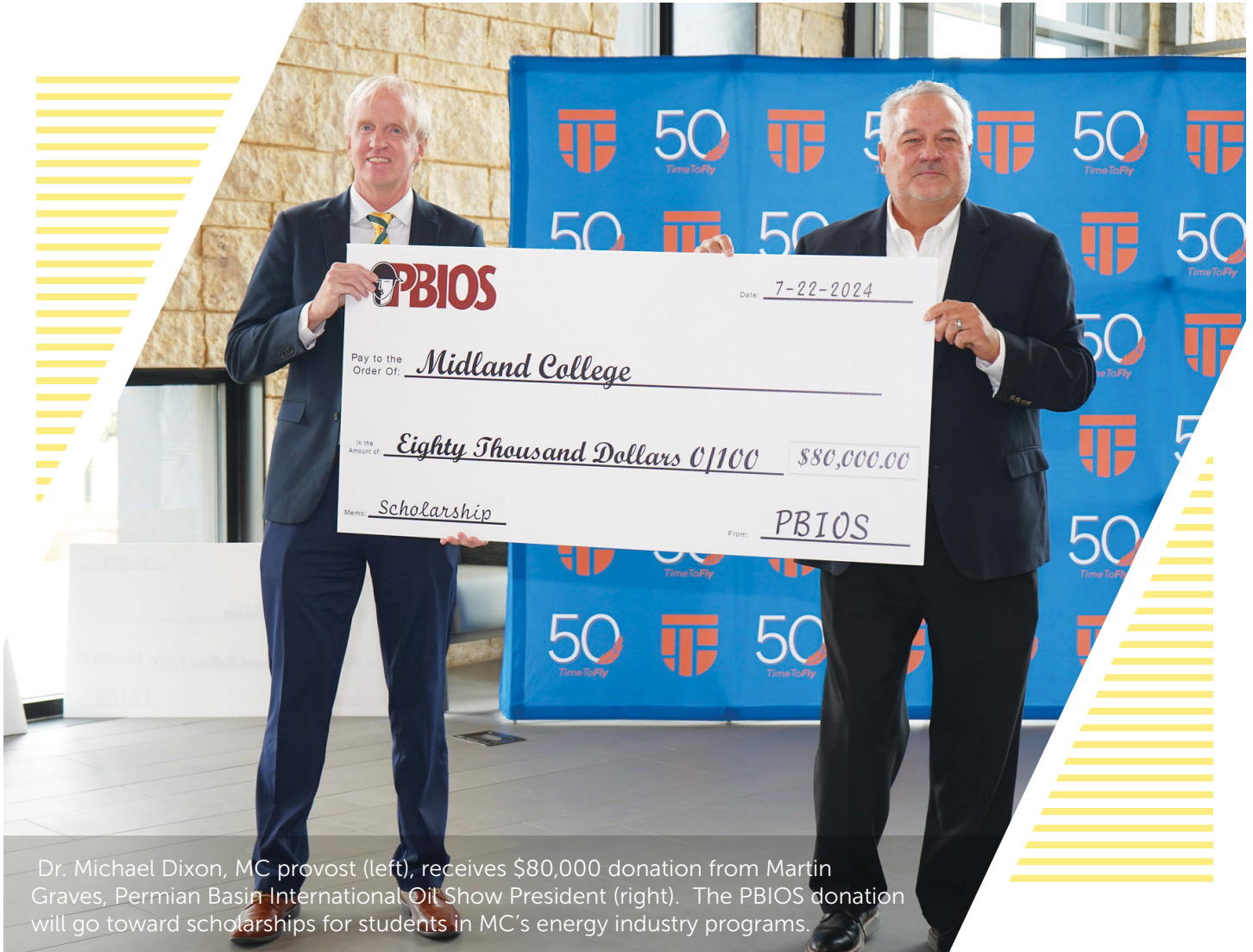


Currently, Midland College faculty who teach Natural Gas Compression are housed at the Diesel Technology Building on Florida Street near the College's Cogdell Learning Center. The College holds Automation and other Energy Technology courses at the MC Advanced Technology Center located on Cuthbert Avenue, just east of Midkiff Street. MC President Dr. Damon Kennedy said that future plans are to get both programs relocated to the main campus on Garfield Street in a new state-of-the-art Industrial Technology complex situated on the north end of the campus, part of the campus Master Plan.





## MIDLAND COLLEGE RECEIVES DONATIONS FOR **ENERGY INDUSTRY TRAINING**



Dr. Michael Dixon, MC provost (left), receives \$80,000 donation from Martin Graves, Permian Basin International Oil Show President (right). The PBIOS donation will go toward scholarships for students in MC's energy industry programs.

During July 2024, Midland College received two donations from organizations that support the energy industry—the Permian Basin International Oil Show (PBIOS) and the Permian Basin Association of Pipeliners (PBAP). Both of these donations will be used to support MC programs that train future and current energy industry employees.

Midland College will use the gift from PBIOS to provide scholarships for students in the program areas of Automation, Diesel Technology, Energy Technology, Engineering and Natural Gas Compression. The PBAP gift applies to scholarships for engineering students and to the MC Petroleum Professional Development Center for equipment, training materials and student scholarships.

"Midland College is deeply grateful for these generous donations," Midland College Provost Dr. Michael Dixon said. "These contributions will play a crucial role in advancing our programs dedicated to cultivating workforce development throughout the Permian Basin and beyond. With this support, we can provide our students with state-of-the-art education and training, empowering them to become leaders and innovators in the energy sector."

# THOMAS GIFT SUPPORTS STEM PROGRAMMING

Thanks to the philanthropy of Joanna & Joe Thomas, Midland College was able to enhance STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) programming during the 2023-2024 academic year.

The Thomas gift provided funding for MC's second annual Symposium at Cloudcroft on April 10-14, 2024, with dual themes of Geochemistry and Marine Chemistry. Students toured New Mexico State University's Sunspot Solar Observatory and collected soil samples from various Cloudcroft trails. They also attended nine evening lectures held at the Cloudcroft Chamber of Commerce consisting of various topics including marine sulfur cycle, petroleum deposits and refining, natural gas recovery and processing from abandoned coal mines and phosphate concentrations in soil samples, just to name a few.

"Overall the symposium was a great success with chemistry club students from the University of Texas Permian Basin and Angelo State University joining the Midland College Chemistry Club," Dr. Pat Kesavan, MC Chemistry faculty professor, said. "We had 30 in attendance, including faculty and students from three campuses. It was a wonderful networking opportunity, and it fostered engagement and enhancement among student chapters and the local section of the American Chemical Society."

In addition to the funding received from Mr. & Mrs. Thomas, MC Chemistry Club members raised funds for travel by working at the Chap Center concession stands and cleaning Astound Broadband Stadium after fall 2023 football games.

Also thanks to the Thomas gift, Midland College revived Science Extravaganza after an 8-year hiatus. Over 800 area sixth graders attended the MC campus on Friday, April 26, 2024 for a day of scientific exploration. The event offered over 20 interactive science exhibits and experiments for the students to enjoy that included stations focusing on chemistry, physics, biology, fingerprinting, forensics, a simulated life lab and even interaction with a pig lung at the respiratory care station.





"This type of event engages students in learning while still being fun," Dr. Michael Dixon, MC Provost, said.

MC Science, Math, Engineering and Health Sciences students participated in the event by leading some of the hands-on experiments.

"The 6th graders came here to have fun, but they also had their eyes opened to careers in the future that they hadn't considered," Dayani Hernandez, MC Nursing student, said. "It is definitely something that will stick with them because later in life they won't see it just as a field trip, but rather as something that influenced their career."

On Tuesday, May 21, during Permian Basin Gives Day, Midland College received additional funding from Joanna & Joe Thomas for STEM projects. Dixon said that plans are already underway for the 2025 Science Extravaganza event in which the College will expand the event to host 2,000 elementary and junior high students.

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Gift from Joanna & Joe Thomas funded the MC Symposium at Cloudcroft on April 10-14, 2024. MC Chemistry students toured Sunspot Solar Observatory, attended evening lectures and collected soil samples for further analysis and research.





The philanthropy of Joanna & Joe Thomas funds Science Extravaganza, an opportunity for 6th-grade students to tour the MC campus and participate in interactive STEM exhibits.





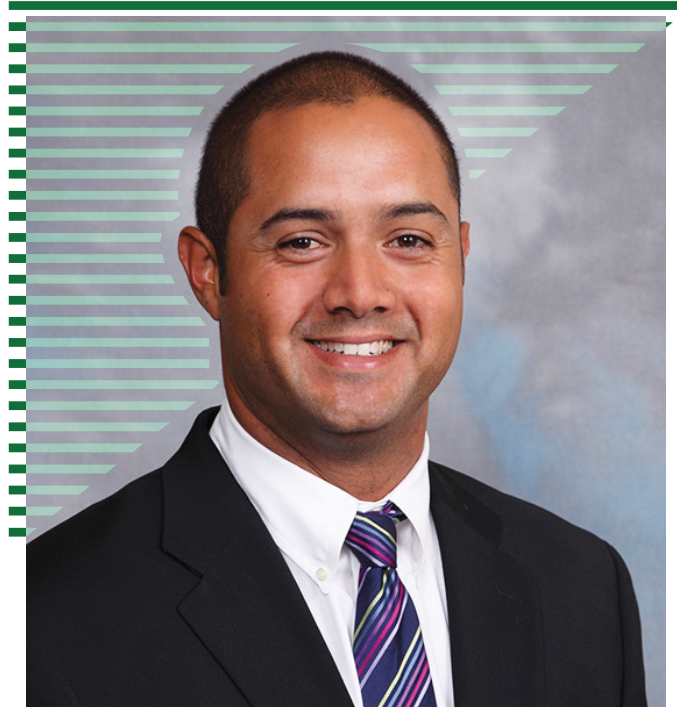
# MC ATHLETICS FINISHES 2024 SPRING SEASON STRONG IN REGIONAL COMPETITIONS AND ACADEMIC PURSUITS

Midland College spring 2024 athletic teams ended the year with much to celebrate. This included the Western Junior College Athletic Conference (WJCAC) naming MC Baseball Coach Hector Rodriguez as the 2024 WJCAC Baseball Coach of the Year.

In his seventh year as head coach at Midland College, Rodriguez led the Chaparrals to an impressive season finishing with a regular-season record of 44-16, a conference-play record of 28-8 and a WJCAC Conference title.

"Coach Rodriguez is very deserving of being selected as the 2024 WJCAC Coach of the Year," Forrest Allen, MC Athletic Director, said. "After guiding the MC baseball team to a second WJCAC Championship in his tenure as head coach, Rodriguez has placed himself among the top two-year college coaches in the NJCAA.

"Hector's calm demeanor belies his fiery and competitive nature. He has done a tremendous job in recruiting, developing and coaching the MC baseball team as it knocks on the door of greatness with Coach Rod at the helm. I'm very happy for him, and I'm proud of the kind of husband, father and coach he is."



**MC Baseball Coach Hector Rodriguez**  
2024 WJCAC Baseball Coach of the Year



**Midland College Chaparrals Baseball** recorded an impressive 44-16 record, including the WJCAC championship and advancing to the NJCAA Region 5 Baseball Tournament championship game.



**Kudos** also go the Chaps Golf Team for finishing the 2023-2024 year with a third-place finish in the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) tournament in Hobbs, NM. They placed just seven strokes behind national champion New Mexico Junior College (NMJC) and four strokes behind second place Odessa College (OC). Chaps golfer Tom Watson is a national runner-up medalist.

In Women's sports, the Lady Chaps softball team finished 2024 with an impressive 45-13 overall record, a second-place finish in the WJCAC and six team members earning All-WJCAC honors.

In July, Midland College announced that its golf team, as well as 13 individual athletes from various sports received NJCAA All-Academic recognition.

"We are exceedingly proud of our student-athletes for distinguishing themselves in the classroom," Allen said "The balancing of academic and athletic pursuits is often not given full credit by many who don't understand the considerable sacrifices it takes to excel in both arenas. These students are an outstanding example of high achievement on and off the various venues of competitive performance. This recognition not only highlights their academic achievements but also their ability to manage the dual responsibilities of being a student and an athlete."



**Chaps Golf Team**  
NJCAA Men's Division Golf 3rd Place



**MC Lady Chaps Softball Team**



"This achievement by our student athletes underscores the college's commitment to fostering an environment where academic and athletic excellence go hand in hand,"

MC President Dr. Damon Kennedy said.



## 2023-24 NJCAA ALL-ACADEMIC TEAM



Oscar Holm-Bredkjaer (2nd)



Todd Parker (2nd)



Gene Ryu (2nd)



Max Cavazos (3rd)



Jayton Vaughn (3rd)



Blake Hollingshead (3rd)



Parker Ibrahimi (3rd)



Jake Martinez (3rd)



Martyna Lubowicz (2nd)



Ashley Aguilar (3rd)



Luisa Anderegg (2nd)



Endija Sedlina (3rd)



Abigail Covarrubias (3rd)







# POETRY, ART AND ***ALL THAT JAZZ!***



On Thursday, May 2, 2024, Midland College honored creativity and self-expression during the annual Hilda Simmons Levitt Poetry Awards Celebration, the spring student art show exhibit and performances by MC music students.

"It was an unforgettable evening celebrating fine arts—written, visual and performing," Dr. William Feeler, dean of English, Humanities, Fine Arts & Communication, said. "We have amazing students, and our faculty are to be applauded for inspiring and empowering students to become confident and independent learners. Creativity and self-expression are essential components of the learning process."

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## Poetry

The Hilda Simmons Levitt Poetry Contest—with more than \$1,000 in prize money—has been called one of the most prestigious in the state. It was established in 1988 by the late Stanley Levitt to honor his wife's memory and her love of poetry.

Hilda Simmons Levitt graduated with honors in journalism from Louisiana State University. She took a break from writing to help her husband operate his successful retail business in Midland and to raise their family. Then, at the age of 62, she decided to pursue writing again. So, she enrolled in creative writing classes at Midland College and continued taking classes until her death in 1986. The poetry contest is now underwritten by the Levitt's daughter Carol Schwartz who resides in Washington, DC.

This year's contest judge was Marlon Fick, associate professor of English at the University of Texas Permian Basin. MC coordinator of the contest is Nancy Barnard, English and Integrated Reading & Writing instructor.



MC Student Jayne Bauer (left) receives 1st place award in the 2024 Hilda Simmons Levitt Poetry Contest from Nancy Barnard, contest coordinator and MC English Instructor.



## Visual Arts

Following the poetry contest awards celebration, the Midland College Institutional Advancement Office hosted the spring student art show exhibit and reception in the Allison Fine Arts Building McCormick Gallery. The exhibit included drawings, paintings and three-dimensional works. Students in MC art classes range in age from 16 to 80+, and many continually take classes each semester to refine their skills and talents.

In addition to the student art show held at the end of the fall and spring semesters, McCormick Gallery also features multiple contemporary art exhibits September through April each year. The exhibits contain works in various mediums by artists from throughout the United States. In October of every year, Midland College hosts the Midland Arts Association fall juried art show in McCormick Gallery. The gallery is open from 8:00 am-9:00 pm, Monday through Thursday, and 8:00 am-12:00 noon on Fridays. Admission is free. MC Art programs are coordinated by Dagan Sherman, and McCormick Gallery is under the direction of Sherman and fellow art professors Michael Hubbard and Michael Richardson.

**Spring 2024 MC student art show exhibit**

## Music

Fine arts at Midland College also includes music, and to conclude the festivities on May 2, Midland College students entertained a standing-room only audience with performances from voice students, the Midland College Choir under the direction of Dr. Katie Osuampke and the always-entertaining Midland College Jazz Band led by Dr. Rabon Bewley.

Since the founding of Midland College's Allison Fine Arts Building in 1978, MC's music program has offered

a full range of courses and performing opportunities. Recent achievements include the distinctions of being the first community college in the world to be designated a Conn-Selmer School and the first music program in the Permian Basin to incorporate PianoDisc technology into its grand pianos. In addition, Midland College is the first institution in West Texas and the fourth community college in the nation to be designated an All-Steinway School. Thanks to a grant from the Rea Charitable Trust, Midland College houses the Bryce and Isabel McClintic Rea Center for Music Technology and Creativity.



**MC Jazz Band**





Terry Gilmour, Ph.D. (left) and Erick Gutierrez (right) named Midland College 2024 Teaching Excellence Award recipients

## TEACHING EXCELLENCE *recognized*

On Wednesday, April 24, 2024 Midland College announced that Terry Gilmour, Ph.D. and Erick Gutierrez are the recipients of the 2024 Dr. Stan Jacobs Teaching Excellence Award. MC presents the peer-driven Teaching Excellence Awards each year to select faculty members who have made significant contributions to the intellectual life of the college through innovation in the classroom and their commitment to students. Thanks to a generous endowment given to MC by Dr. Stan Jacobs, a retired MC professor and administrator, the top two winners each receive a \$5,000 cash honorarium. Their names are also permanently displayed in the Pevehouse Administration Building along with the names of winners from previous years.

***Terry Gilmour, Ph.D* — Professor of Government/Political Science, Director of the MC Honors Program**

Dr. Gilmour has taught Government full-time at Midland College since 1997 and served as an adjunct faculty member for several years prior. She holds Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees from West Texas A&M University and a doctoral degree from Texas Tech University. Currently, Gilmour not only teaches government courses, but also serves as the director of MC's Honors Program and as advisor to the college's Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society.

***Erick Gutierrez* — Department Chair, Associate Professor Automation, Automotive Technology, Diesel Technology, Natural Gas Compression, Petroleum Energy Technology**

Gutierrez holds Associate of Applied Science and Bachelor of Applied Technology degrees from Midland College. This year, Gutierrez led his students to 15 separate awards in the Skills USA competitions at district and state levels.

The selection process spans several months and includes input from MC faculty and staff beginning with a call for nominations. After the nomination window closes, six people from different disciplines conduct a meticulous eligibility review. The committee then selects three finalists from the Academic/Transfer divisions and three finalists from the Workforce divisions. These finalists epitomize the pinnacle of educational excellence, embodying the spirit of innovation, dedication and passion that define teaching excellence.



# ALUMNI & FORMER STUDENTS ASSOCIATION NETWORK AND HAVE FUN

The Midland College Alumni & Former Students Association is hosting several events to offer a chance for engagement and meeting new friends as well as providing community service. On Thursday, August 8, the MC Alumni & Former Students Association leadership team hosted a mixer on the second floor of the Fasken Learning Resource Center (MC library), one of the most beautiful spots on campus overlooking the Hodge Carillon Tower and the campus quadrangle toward Garfield Street. The reception was sponsored by Audrey & J.B. Whatley.



Enjoying friends and having fun at the August 8, MC Alumni & Former Students Association mixer



From left to right, MC alumni Reagan Hignojo, Tim Jakel and Hunter Haynie



MC President Dr. Damon Kennedy (left) visits with John Eberly (right)



Kelsei Yow and Daniel Aldana



Nikole & Korbin Dalton



# MIDLAND COLLEGE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AWARDS SCHOLARSHIPS

In summer 2024, the Midland College Alumni and Former Student Association awarded three scholarships to December 2023 and May 2024 Midland College graduates.

Chantel Estrada and Azaan Waseem received the Midland College Alumni and Former Student Association Scholarship. Funds from designated alumni donations and fundraising activities provides the proceeds for this scholarship award. Estrada transferred to the University of Texas San Antonio and is pursuing a bachelor's degree in microbiology and immunology. Waseem is attending the University of Texas Austin and majoring in computer science.

Last November, Henry Foundation established the Paula & Jim Henry Alumni Scholarship in memory of Jim Henry. Midland College awards the scholarship to a graduate majoring in history (in honor of Paula's passion and background in history) or engineering (in memory of Jim's engineering legacy). The Alumni and Former Student Association awarded the first Paula & Jim Henry Alumni Scholarship to Aboudlay Diop who transferred to Texas A&M University and is majoring in electrical engineering.



**CHANTE ESTRADA,**  
recipient of the MC Alumni and  
Former Student Association  
Scholarship. She transferred  
to UT San Antonio majoring in  
microbiology and immunology.



**AZAAN WASEEM,**  
recipient of the MC Alumni and  
Former Student Association  
Scholarship. He attends UT  
Austin and is majoring in  
computer science.



**ABOUDLAY DIOP,**  
recipient of the Paula & Jim Henry  
Alumni Scholarship. He is now  
attending Texas A&M majoring in  
electrical engineering.



## RETIRED AND LOVING IT!

On June 17, MC retirees celebrated with barbecue, fellowship and a special presentation by the MC Music department. The next retiree event is scheduled for December 12, at 11:30 am in the Scharbauer Student Center Carrasco Room.



MC retirees attending June 17 luncheon



Joe Blumentritt and Bahola Edwards



Karen Harris (left) and Tana Baker (right)



MC President Dr. Damon Kennedy and Emma King



MC President Dr. Damon Kennedy and Monica Sosa



From left to right, Ema Rivera, Irma Moreno, Mary Lopez, Bahola Edwards and Julia Olgin



From left to right, Mike Stevens, H.A. Tuck and MC President Dr. Damon Kennedy



Dr. Stan Jacobs holding his recently published autobiography  
*Back to a Childlike Faith*

# ARTIST, WORLD TRAVELER, MISSIONARY, AUTHOR, SEEKER OF FUN

Retiree Spotlight: Dr. Stan Jacobs

Upon his retirement in 2012 after 41 years of service, Midland College honored Dr. Stan Jacobs with a special exhibit of 50 caricatures that he had drawn over the previous 45 years in over 35 countries. The caricatures are now back in his home, but the tree that was planted in his honor upon his 40th year at MC still stands near the Dollye Neal Chapel. It is a tribute to his dedication and service to the college—41 years as a full-time faculty and administrator, 10 years as an adjunct art history professor and his continued summer job of teaching cartooning at Kids' College.

Jacobs is a three-time recipient of the Midland College Teaching Excellence Award, and in 2018, he gifted Midland College with an endowment that increases the monetary honorarium that goes with the award. To honor the gift, Midland College officials renamed the award as the Dr. Stan Jacobs Teaching Excellence Award.





Jacobs began his employment at MC in 1971 as an art instructor. Al Langford, MC's first president, interviewed him for the job in the lobby of the old Scharbauer Hotel in downtown Midland. Jacobs taught some of his first classes at the stables and servants' quarters at the Museum of the Southwest.

"When I arrived in Midland for the interview, it seemed like it was the edge of the earth," Jacobs recalled in his autobiography *Back to a Childlike Faith*. "There was a small group of tall buildings huddled together and small trees and green grass around them. The next day, Midland received one of its famous 'gully washers.'

"During my interview, Dr. Langford said, 'Someday, we're going to have a campus with 3,000 students and a new fine arts building. We're looking for someone who can build the best art department in the state.' I was sold. Two days after the interview, Dr. Langford called me, offered me the job and I accepted. Dr. Langford sent me the contract, and I signed on for the first year at an annual salary of \$8,500, which was about 55 percent of my salary when I left active duty in the Navy in 1969!"

In his book, Jacobs, who grew up in Kansas, recalls his move to Midland in the summer of 1971: "On our first night in Midland, we stayed at the Texan Inn motel on East Illinois Avenue downtown. Nowadays, the Texas Inn would not even be listed on Trip Advisor, but it was late, and we had been on the road all day. Our thermos bottle of milk was gone, and we washed out the bottle and filled it with water. But the water tasted strange, so we washed it out again and again. That was our first taste of Midland water. The next day we found a house to rent for \$145 per month, just off Midkiff Street on West Storey Street, near the Pay-Less shoe store. It was a three-bedroom, one-and-a-half-bath brick house with an evaporative cooler. What a find! And we found it so quickly, too. We bought the house the following year for \$15,500, and house payments were \$145 per month. We thought we had made a good beginning in Midland."

In 1983, Jacobs received a doctorate from Texas Tech in Fine Arts Administration. In 1996, he was promoted to Associate Vice President of Instruction, a position he held until his retirement in 2012. Jacobs served under the first four MC presidents, and he approved the hiring of the current president Dr. Damon Kennedy as a history instructor.

Before he stepped into the role of Midland College administrator, Stan Jacobs' notoriety reached an all-time high when he led a group sculpture project on a snowy Monday in November 1980. The project was a 25-foot snow sculpture of a nude playboy bunny reclining and gazing at the Hodge Carillon Tower.



Jacobs coordinated the sculpting of MC's infamous Snow Bunny in November 1980.

"There was a regular meeting of the Midland College board of trustees the following day," Jacobs writes in his autobiography. "One of the board members asked Dr. Langford, 'Al, do you know who is responsible for the snow sculpture?' (The snow bunny was just to the south of the board room.) I was told that he replied rather sheepishly, 'No, but I have a pretty good idea.' Temporarily, it had been our secret. I thought the sculpture would be dismantled by our maintenance department the next day, but according to reports, not only was our artwork a 'cause celebre,' but several college students who had nothing to do with it had taken credit for it. For many years after that, I had told the story of the snow bunny to my Art History classes. To me, it was every bit as much a 'fertility artifact' as the Venus of Willendorf. Although it melted in a few days, it had been well documented in personal photos and in the archives of the *Midland Reporter Telegram*."

"It's probably a good thing that the MC board members didn't know who was responsible for that sculpture," Jacobs said. "Many of their wives had been my art students!"



Even as an administrator, Jacobs never lost his sense of humor. For example, one year for the annual Administrative Professionals luncheon, Jacobs along with Dr. Richard Jolly, former executive vice president of Instruction, dressed up and performed as Sonny and Cher. (Jacobs was Cher.)

Despite his many MC antics, Jacobs continued to lead the growth of the art program, the Fine Arts and Communication division and academic-transfer programs at MC. During the time he was contributing to the success of Midland College, Jacobs' faith was also growing. In his book, Jacobs details his faith stories and account of God's miracles throughout his life.

Jacobs said that one of the strongest purposes he has found in his life is that of helping children. He has mentored countless children and continues to do so. In the acknowledgment section of his book, he gives thanks to these children—his reading buddies at Pease Elementary School, the children in the homework help program at Casa de Amigos, his little brothers through the Big Brother Big Sister program, his church acolytes and members of the Christ Church youth group.

His mentorship hasn't been limited to only Midland youth. Through Jacobs' extensive travels, he has touched young lives in Russia, Honduras, Bolivia, Tanzania and Nepal, just to name a few of the countries he has visited on various mission trips. In addition, Jacobs has shared God's word with incarcerated youth at Culver Youth Detention facility in Midland and with those in state prisons.

One of his favorite pastimes is helping with Popsicles in the Park, a ministry of Christ Church (Anglican) in Midland. On Wednesdays in the summer, Jacobs, his wife Carole and other church members treat children to popsicles, read Bible stories and play games. During one of these sessions this past summer, Jacobs even did a pushup on a dare from a 9-year-old.

"I got down just fine and did the pushup," Jacobs said. "But it took three children to help me back up! Chronologically, my current age is 80, but I think that inside I'm really a 9-year-old."



Jacobs at age 80 doing a pushup on a dare from a 9-year-old.

Before retirement, Jacobs began mentoring children at Santa Rita Elementary School through a program at his church called Kids' Hope. Jacobs still finds joy in mentoring students at Santa Rita.

"These children are socially, behaviorally and/or educationally challenged," Jacobs explained. "Often the children are without fathers in the home, and one of the parents is incarcerated. They need someone in their lives who will listen to them, show them that they are special and just spend time with them. Children need three things: attention, encouragement and approval. When they receive those things from people they care about, they thrive. I usually work one-on-one with about five children each school year."

Jacobs also volunteers his time as coach to the Santa Rita Elementary School chess club, in which some of his mentees are members.

"We consider it a good year when we win as many matches as we lose," Jacobs said. "We have a lot of fun."

Jacobs credits his young friends with helping him to expand his own faith. In the autobiography, he mentions many by name, including Christopher Tuveson "who taught me how to appreciate horny toads, hummingbirds and hematite."

While Jacobs was volunteering at Casa de Amigos, he met Christopher who was in the third grade. As it turned out, Christopher was also enrolled at Santa Rita, and Jacobs asked to be his mentor.

"Christopher often wound up in the principal's office," Jacobs recalled. "He would get into fights if he was provoked, and he would get angry with himself if he made a mistake or if he was unable to solve a problem. I suspected that he had a form of autism and that he was probably on some form of medication, but the school could not share that information with a volunteer."

For two years, Jacobs met with Christopher. He said that the two of them talked, read books, played catch, climbed trees, flew kites, assembled model airplanes and enjoyed the wonders of nature like sniffing irises, finding a gecko skeleton, chasing huge grasshoppers and marveling at horny toads, hummingbirds and the smell of hematite. Christopher and his family moved to San Angelo, but Jacobs still visits with them, as he does with many of the children with whom he has mentored and who are now adults.

While Jacobs has called Midland his home for 53 years, he has visited over 60 countries. He has served as a missionary from Christ Church for the past 24 years teaching English and sharing the Christian Gospel. On some of his trips, he has helped children paint murals of themselves on walls and building exteriors. He also records each trip with photos and sketches, which capture the beauty and innocence of children throughout the world.

His latest international trip was this past May when he went to Nepal as one of 27 representatives from throughout the United States. The members of Christ Church paid for medical supplies and art supplies for mission work with the children.

Even at age 80, Jacobs still enjoys travel and keeping busy. He and his wife Carole are looking forward to their next mission trip in the spring of 2025.

Jacobs finishes his autobiography with these words from a children's song:

"We can fly . . . We can soar . . . Nothing is impossible.  
We can fly . . . We can soar . . . Trusting God and leaving  
our fears behind."



Photo Jacobs took of a child in Tanzania during one of his mission trips.



Tanzanian children with coloring books sitting in front of wall they painted under Jacobs' supervision.



# BEETHOVEN AND BLUES

On Saturday, March 23, Midland College Foundation partnered with the West Texas Symphony to host singer-songwriter Amos Lee as the spring installment of the Phyllis and Bob Cowan Performing Arts Series. Since 2000, the endowment established by the late Phyllis and Bob Cowan has brought world-renowned performers to the stage at the Al G. Langford Chaparral (Chap) Center. Thanks to a grant from the Rea Charitable Trust, the spring 2024 installment of the Series featured the West Texas Symphony accompanying Mr. Lee.

Selections included a portion of Beethoven's "Piano Concerto No. 5 in E-Flat Major" (as transcribed by conductor Andrew Lipke) as an introduction to Lee's shattering "Madison." The West Texas Symphony orchestra just as easily pivoted into Lee's 2008 touch of blues song "Street Corner Preacher."

Prior to the performance, *Friends of the Series* and Midland College Distinguished Donors enjoyed a reception on the floor of Chap Center sponsored by Barbara & Trey Grafa and Blonkvist Investment Group.



Ryan & Hillary Lovell



Trey & Barbra Grafa



Scott & Brittany Lynch



Jan & Paul Stephens



From left to right, Jack E. Blake, Jr., Mary Blake, Paula Douglas and Gary Douglas



Candice Millard presenting  
in the Wagner & Brown  
Auditorium at Midland  
College

# NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR AT MC

On Thursday, April 11, writer and journalist Candice Millard was the spring 2024 installment of the Davidson Distinguished Lecture Series. During her presentation, Ms. Millard kept the audience members on the edge of their seats as she discussed her sometimes harrowing travels to research her four *New York Times* bestselling books *The River of Doubt*, *Destiny of the Republic*, *Hero of the Empire*, and *River of the Gods*. Millard, a former writer and editor for National Geographic, also gave an account of her visit to the entrance of the Ethiopian monastery believed by many to hold the Ark of the Covenant.

The lecture was held in the Allison Fine Arts Building Wagner & Brown Auditorium. Prior to the lecture MC *Friends of the Series* and Distinguished Donors enjoyed a cocktail buffet reception in McCormick Gallery.



Lyndolyn Pervier and J Don Wallace



MC President  
Dr. Damon Kennedy and  
Candice Millard



From left to right, Mike  
Oestmann, Steve Davidson and  
the Honorable David Rogers



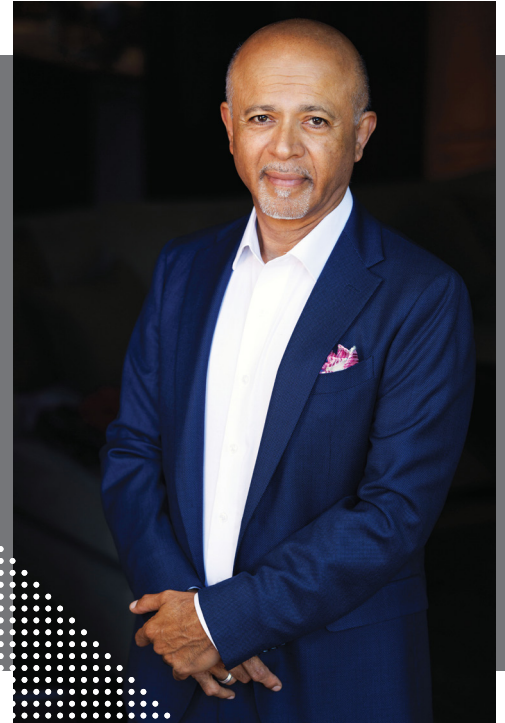
Ann Hathaway (left) and  
Norma McGrew (right)



## AN EVENING WITH DR. ABRAHAM VERGHESE

"THE CARING IN HEALTHCARE:  
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES  
IN A TECHNOLOGICAL ERA"

Tuesday, March 25, 2025, 7:00 pm



The Davidson Distinguished Lecture Series invites all to this special presentation by Dr. Abraham Verghese New York Times bestselling author practicing physician and Stanford University professor.

Verghese is a prominent voice in medicine with a uniquely humanistic view of the future of healthcare. He received the National Humanities Medal from President Obama "for reminding us that the patient is the center of the medical enterprise." For 15 years Dr. Verghese was Vice Chair for the Theory & Practice of Medicine at Stanford University.

Outside of healthcare he is best known as a phenomenally successful author. His first novel *Cutting for Stone* topped the New York Times bestseller list for over two years, was translated into more than twenty languages and is being adapted for film. Amazon named it one of its 100 Books to Read in a Lifetime. In 2023 he published his long-awaited second novel *The Covenant of Water* which debuted as a *New York Times* bestseller and remained on the list for several weeks. His memoirs include the award-winning *My Own Country* and *The Tennis Partner*.

Trained in infectious diseases and pulmonary medicine he has long been a top thinker in healthcare. His TED talk "A Doctor's Touch" has been viewed almost two million times and is as meaningful now as the day he delivered it. During the COVID pandemic his messages of appreciation, understanding and compassion for all in healthcare and his inspiration on how we go forward were widely appreciated. He also speaks about the future of healthcare.

He is co-host with Dr. Eric Topol of the Medicine and the Machine podcast, and he has long been a top thinker on how we marry cutting-edge technology to advance medicine with a focus on the physical patient. This dual-pronged approach incorporating both an appreciation of technological developments and a profound commitment to the sacred relationship between doctor/caregiver and patient makes him a leading voice in the discussion about what quality care means now and in the future.

Dr. Verghese leads PRESENCE, a multidisciplinary center that studies the human experience of patients, physicians and caregivers. His warmth and vision, as well as his world-class gifts as a storyteller, make him a powerful speaker both to healthcare professionals and the patient in all of us.

# MICHAEL FEINSTEIN IN BECAUSE OF YOU

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MY TRIBUTE TO TONY BENNETT

FEATURING THE  
CARNEGIE HALL BIG BAND

Saturday, March 29, 2025, 7:30 pm



The Phyllis and Bob Cowan Performing Arts Series presents Michael Feinstein as he brings to life Big Band celebrations and the Tony Bennett legacy. Supported by the Carnegie Hall Big Band, Feinstein pays a heartfelt tribute to the legendary Tony Bennett, bringing his iconic songs to life in a symphony of sound.

The performance will feature hits such as "Because of You," "Rags to Riches," "I Left My Heart in San Francisco," "The Best is Yet to Come," "I Get a Kick Out of You," "Stranger in Paradise" and many more. Feinstein's dynamic interpretations, coupled with the grandeur of the big band, will create an unforgettable night that honors the legacy of Tony Bennett in all its glory.

Michael Feinstein's close friendship with Tony Bennett adds a profound layer to this tribute, as their camaraderie brings authenticity and depth to each note performed. Not only does Feinstein's masterful interpretation of

Bennett's timeless repertoire pay homage to an era of classic songwriting, but it also preserves the rich cultural heritage that these songs represent.

The show brings to bear the history of Carnegie Hall, which has been connected to the American big band for decades. Icons from across the 20th and 21st centuries have graced the stage of Carnegie Hall, from Benny Goodman to Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong to Ella Fitzgerald and from Frank Sinatra to, of course, Tony Bennett. A multi-media element of the show will help to bring this history to life onstage.

"Tony Bennett is one of the most enduring icons of the 20th century. He has created a body of work surpassed by none." - Michael Feinstein

(This show is not affiliated with the Tony Bennett Estate.)



## | Friends of The Series |

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## POMP AND CIRCUMSTANCE

The month of May at Midland College brings with it the usual end-of-the-year festivities, all of which culminate in commencement exercises. Each May, Midland College holds two graduations—one for students completing bachelor degrees, associate degrees and certificates, and the other one for students earning Adult Basic Education credentials, such as high school equivalency diplomas (GED®).



## MIDLAND COLLEGE MAY 2024 COMMENCEMENT FRIDAY, MAY 10





MIDLAND COLLEGE 2024 ADULT BASIC  
EDUCATION GRADUATION  
THURSDAY, MAY 16





## SUMMER TIME IS THE PERFECT TIME AT MC ENHANCING QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE COMMUNITY MC SUMMER CHILDREN AND YOUTH PROGRAMMING

The days get longer, and the weather gets hotter. In addition to regular college summer classes, MC also opens its doors to children and youth during the summer through Kids' College and the Midland Young Leaders Challenge.



Kids' College is an MC tradition where each summer Midland children are able to participate in enrichment activities that include arts & crafts, drama, sports, cooking, robotics, foreign languages, computer coding, drone flying, Lego engineering, makers' space activities, yoga, geology, photography and even a ninja obstacle course! Many thanks to James A. "Buddy" Davidson Charitable Foundation and Abell-Hanger Foundation for providing Kids' College scholarships to over 80 children who qualify for local school ISD Free and Reduced Lunch programs, are from single-parent households and/or who are in foster care programs. James A. "Buddy" Davidson Charitable Foundation also awarded MC with a generous grant for Kids' College equipment and supplies.





# MIDLAND YOUNG LEADERS CHALLENGE

WITH GENERAL TOMMY FRANKS



2024 Midland Young Leaders Challenge participants

On June 12 and 13, the Midland College Institutional Advancement Office hosted the annual Midland Young Leaders Challenge for students who had just completed the 11th grade. The two-day intensive leadership workshop is a partnership among Midland College, Midland ISD and the General Tommy Franks Leadership Institute and Museum in Hobart, OK. The program offers 30 of the top high school juniors in Midland County a face-to-face experience with prominent Midland leaders. During the workshop, students participated in ethical and leadership challenges, and they worked with Midland College speech and communications faculty to prepare and deliver persuasive speeches. Thanks to a grant provided by Henry Foundation, the program also awards scholarships to participants who excel during the workshop. In addition to a scholarship, the top "Four-Star" student gets to attend the national Four-Star Leadership program hosted by Midland native General Tommy Franks. This year's participants included students from Legacy High School, Midland High School, Midland Young Women's Leadership Academy, Greenwood High School, Trinity School and Midland Classical Academy.





Husband and wife Stephen Robertson and The Honorable Leah Robertson were the keynote speakers at the Midland Young Leaders Challenge awards celebration on Thursday, June 13, in the Allison Fine Arts Building on the MC campus. Stephen is the executive vice president of the Permian Basin Petroleum Association and Leah is the presiding judge of the 385th District Court.

Dr. Jill Green, executive director of the General Tommy Franks Leadership Institute and Museum (left), presents the "Four Star" award to top 2024 Midland Young Leaders Challenge participant Elana 'Eli' Águila (right) Eli attends Midland High School.



Winner of the 2024 Midland Young Leaders Challenge Op-Ed Writing Contest Kip Cohlmiya (center) with his parents Krista & Jack Cohlmiya. Kip attends Legacy High School.



# ENHANCING SUPPORT FOR FIRST GENERATION -TO-COLLEGE STUDENTS

**BELIEVE  
THERE ARE  
FIRSTS FOR  
EVERYTHING**

*Midland College First Generation*

This past August, the Center for First-Generation Student Success selected Midland College to join the 2024-2025 cohort of the FirstGenForward Network. This prestigious designation highlights Midland College's dedication to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment for all students. The network is a national initiative that recognizes institutions of higher education for their commitment to improving experiences and advancing success for first-generation college students.

"Engagement with the FirstGen Forward Network is an opportunity for Midland College to learn from other colleges as they explore and implement innovative strategies to better serve students," MC President Dr. Damon Kennedy said. "We're excited for the work ahead."

The Center for First-Generation Student Success focuses on driving innovation and advancing outcomes for first-generation students. It provides institutions with resources, expertise and community support to address the unique challenges faced by first-generation students. As part of the new cohort, Midland College will have access to best practices, professional development opportunities and a national community of like-minded institutions working toward the same goal.

"Being selected for the FirstGen Forward Network is a significant honor for Midland College," Joseph Granado, MC vice president of Student Services, said. "This recognition underscores our ongoing commitment to ensuring that first-generation students have the resources, support and opportunities they need to succeed in their academic pursuits and beyond."

Midland College's recent initiatives aimed at supporting first-generation students include targeted advising, mentorship programs and student clubs designed to address the unique challenges these students may face. As a FirstGen Forward institution, Midland College will collaborate with other members of the network to share insights and strategies for improving the academic outcomes of first-generation students. This collaborative approach ensures that MC remains at the forefront of efforts to support first-generation students and foster a campus environment that is welcoming and inclusive for all.

"Our goal is to empower first-generation students by providing them with the tools and support necessary to thrive in college and in their future careers," Ida Curiel, MC associate director of First Generation & Post-College Initiatives said. "Through this partnership, we are excited to continue developing innovative programs and initiatives that will positively impact the lives of our students."

# FREE DUAL CREDIT COURSES FOR ALL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN SERVICE AREA



In late August, Midland College announced that high school students in the College's service area will receive FREE dual credit courses. This initiative aims to provide greater access to transfer and career/technical (CTE) dual credit classes by removing financial barriers and creating educational and career opportunities. The offer is open to public, private, charter and home school students, and it covers all fees for tuition, books and supplies.

"By taking advantage of dual credit, students obtain college credits, or even an associate degree, before finishing high school," Dr. Michael Dixon, MC provost, said. "This helps them fast-track their path to a degree, ultimately saving time and significantly reducing the overall cost of their education."

Dixon acknowledged the significant concern that students and their families have regarding the cost of college. This is especially true for dual credit courses because families may not budget for college credit classes while students are in high school.

Dr. Damon Kennedy, president of Midland College, reiterated MC's commitment to offering educational programs that are not only relevant but also responsive to the needs of the community, and he highlighted that CTE dual credit courses provide opportunities for students to develop technical skills to secure a job right after high school, aligning with the needs of employers in the Permian Basin.

"Ensuring our students are prepared to quickly obtain high-demand jobs is not just about education," Kennedy said. "It's about empowering the next generation to build their future and strengthen our community."

"Midland College has a long history of collaborating with surrounding school districts and community partners to equally invest in the success of our students, and the coordination of programs like this exemplifies our commitment to the region."



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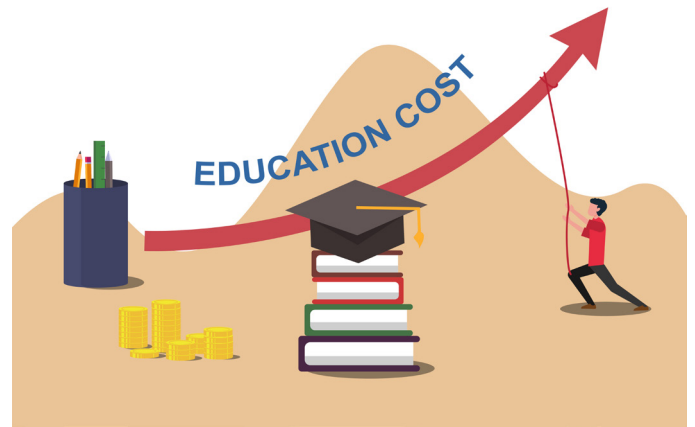
**YOUNG PROFESSIONALS IN ENERGY  
SCHOLARSHIP**  
Young Professionals in Energy

# TEXTBOOK SCHOLARSHIPS

For approximately 20 years, Friends of Libraries and Literacy, Inc. have given Midland College funds for textbook scholarships. In exchange for the textbook scholarship, students must also complete volunteer hours working at the Friends Bookstore located at 2305 W. Michigan Avenue in Midland.

"It really is a win-win for everyone," Meredith Walker, MC scholarships director, said. "The students receive funds to help defray the expense of textbooks, and they learn the importance of helping our community through volunteering. The bookstore benefits by increasing their volunteer pool.

"This scholarship is greatly appreciated because textbook prices have increased at an alarming rate. The average cost of books and supplies hovers around \$1,100 per year. Many students, especially those who are first-generation to college, don't realize that in addition to tuition and fees, added costs of college attendance are textbooks and supplies. Many thanks to the "Friends" for being a "friend" to MC!"



According to a study conducted by the U.S. Public Interest Research Group, 65 percent of students admitted that they put off getting the necessary materials for their classes even though it may hurt their grade. In the study, one in six chose not to enroll in or dropped a class because of the cost of textbooks.

This past January a gift from the Jack O. McCall & Dolores L. McCall Foundation enabled Midland College to establish another textbook scholarship. Both textbook scholarships are administered by the Midland College Scholarships Office.



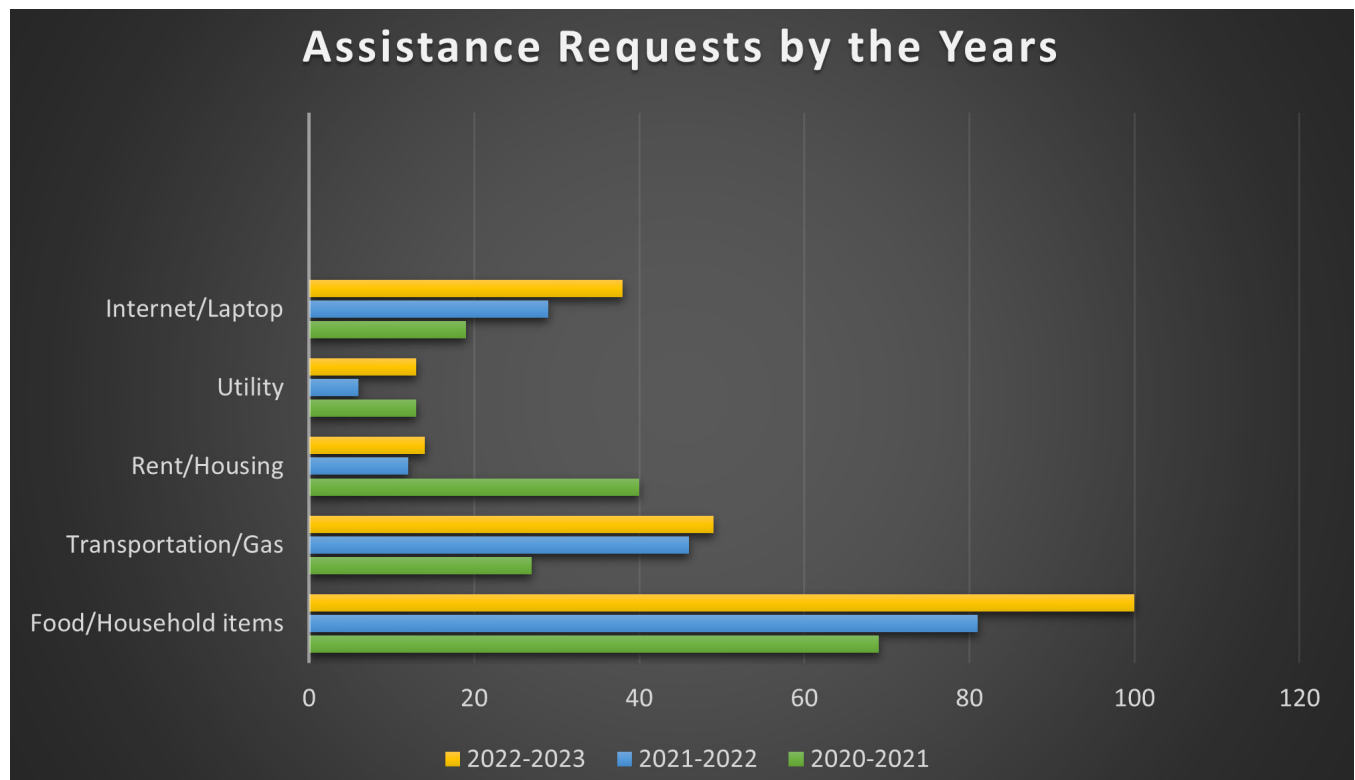




## EMPOWERING STUDENTS TO SUCCEED

### CHAPS HELPING CHAPS, MIDLAND COLLEGE STUDENT EMERGENCY FUND

The 2023-2024 academic year was a remarkable period of growth and success for the Student Emergency Fund and Chaps Helping Chaps program, including the start of the Chaps Pantry. In fact, during the past four years, the number of students receiving assistance through the Chaps Helping Chaps Student Emergency Fund has grown steadily. While student requests have varied, the top three needs are food/household items, transportation/gas and access to the internet or laptops.





"Rita Brady secretary to vice president of Student Services"



"Dr. Michael Dixon, provost"

Midland College is deeply grateful for the support of Student Emergency Fund donors, many of whom are MC employees.

"I contribute to the Student Emergency Fund because I see the need first-hand working in the Scharbauer Student Center where all students begin the enrollment process," Rita Brady, secretary to the vice president of Student Services, said. "Through the Student Emergency Fund, MC provides a place for students to go for food, tires, gas money, one day of childcare and other basic needs. MC employees need to support our students so they can further their education."

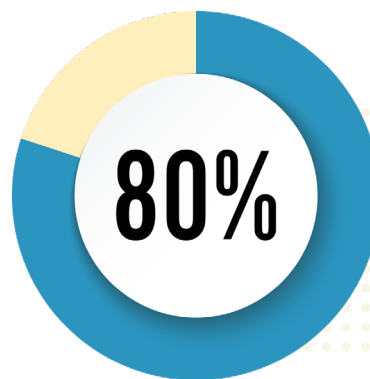
Like Brady, MC Provost Dr. Michael Dixon has been giving to the Student Emergency Fund since its inception. He firmly believes that colleges must support students through the full range of challenges they have in order to keep them on track and focused on their studies.

"For many students dealing with everyday issues like paying utility bills, car repairs or medical expenses can become more pressing than their actual coursework," Dixon explained. "These non-academic problems often lead to students dropping classes or even leaving school. The Student Emergency Fund makes a real difference by providing help with things like food insecurity, unexpected bills and other urgent needs."

The Chaps Helping Chaps program (formerly called SOS—Support our Students) began approximately six years ago with an initial investment from MC employees. They saw

a need to assist students who suddenly found themselves overwhelmed with an emergency situation that had the potential to prevent them from continuing their studies at MC and receiving a credential. This included cases of domestic abuse, single mothers who had suddenly lost their jobs or who were struggling by working two jobs and also caring for their children, military veterans who were homeless and suffering from PTSD and students who had unexpected financial emergencies like dead car batteries, broken laptops or no way to pay for their meals until the next payday.

On average, the Chaps Helping Chaps – Student Emergency Fund program helps students with an 80 percent retention or completion rate, meaning that recipients will go on to graduate or return to MC the following semester, 80 percent of the time.







"MC student Brianna Dickens and her daughter. The Student Emergency assisted Brianna and her children with food and a utility bill."

"The Student Emergency Fund assisted me with food and paying my utility bill," MC student Brianna Dickens stated. "I'm 24 years old with two children, and we are trying to better our lives. I was able to relieve some stress and not wonder how I would get to class."

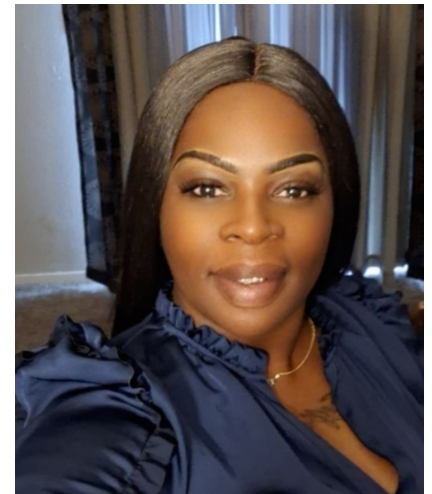
Due to a severe storm and other circumstances, Sayna R. found herself in need of gas, food and household items. The Student Emergency Fund provided temporary assistance that enabled her to stay in school while she was overcoming these obstacles.

"I am a full-time student pursuing a degree in Arts, Humanities and Communications," Karen Wilson said. "I am accustomed to working, but due to car troubles and family issues, I was unable to maintain employment, take care of family and attend school. The struggles of life were impacting me in negative ways, and at times I found it hard to focus. The Student Emergency Fund provided me with gas for my car so that I could make it to classes. My refrigerator also lacked everything but milk and condiments. Thanks to the Chaps Helping Chaps program, I was also able to purchase food and get a utility bill paid. I'm so grateful because I had NOTHING!"

"I must also say that the staff and my fellow students at Midland College have been very helpful. When my father passed away this past April, the outpouring of support from staff and students was incredible. They gave me the words of encouragement to stay strong and press on."

Nicole Cooper, MC dean of Student Life, administers the Chaps Helping Chaps program and Student Emergency Fund. She told of another student who received assistance from the program:

"Yolandah was new to the Midland area, and she was juggling her newborn son and school. The Student Emergency Fund provided her with an HEB card so that she could purchase formula and diapers. She later came to the Pantry for food and hygiene items as well. After she recovered from her temporary setback, she came to my office once again, this time so that she could donate to the Pantry. She handed me a few grocery bags full of items. She said she was back on her feet and wanted to pay it forward to another student in need. This is a great example of what we're trying to do with the emergency resources on-campus. She used the resources when she needed them and is now functioning without."



"Karen Wilson received assistance from Chaps Helping Chaps by receiving a gas card, payment for a utility bill and food from the Chap Pantry."



During the 2024-2025 academic year, the Chaps Helping Chaps program and Student Emergency Fund will help Midland College continue the mission of empowering students and creating an educational landscape that truly puts "students first." Cooper has ambitious plans to expand programs, serve even more students and build upon the success of this past year. Midland College will continue to seek new funding opportunities, strengthen partnerships and engage with the community to ensure that MC meets the evolving needs of students.

"Chaps Helping Chaps assisted Yolandah Davis when she was struggling with her newborn."

# GENERAL DONATIONS

FEBRUARY 25, 2024 - AUGUST 31, 2024

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Dr. Terry & Bruce Gilmour

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## COLLEGE AND CAREER CONNECTIONS

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## CONTINUING EDUCATION SPONSORSHIP

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## EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM (ECHS@MC)

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## FRIENDS OF THE SERIES

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## PRE-K ACADEMY

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## PRE-K ACADEMY BUILDING CAMPAIGN

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## RECEPTION SPONSORS

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## STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

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## VOLLEYBALL PROGRAM

Nitro Sports Academy

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