



Jessica Velazquez (2016) has won her second Jack Kent Cooke Scholarship! This one will input \$150,000 and enable Velazquez to pursue graduate school at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston. Her specialization has been T-cells, and their role in Langerhans Cell Histiocytosis, a rare disease of the white blood cells. Jessica won our 7th JKC, and directed a Caldwell-Award winning film for us.



We were so pleased in December to receive a visit from star alumnus, Dr. Alexander Villalobos. He and his bride, Sarah, both have residencies at the School of Medicine at Emory University in Atlanta in radiology. While with us Villalobos produced our first honors film, and paved the way in acquiring summer REU internships. We now have a Villalobos Award for essays in medicine.

Alacrity: Newsletter of Honors Northeast

College Leaders

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

Honors Committee: John Rodriguez, 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

Alacritous Alumni

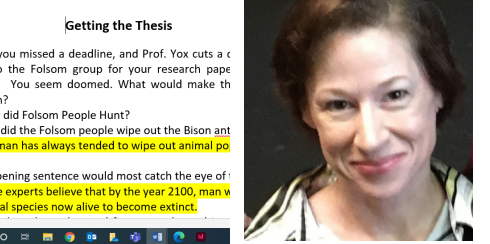
Daniel Landaverde (2020) broke all of Yox's well-meaning rules against over-employment, and after winning our tenth Jack Kent Cooke proceeded to stay employed while at North Texas University. But he achieved valuable experience, and last summer gained an internship with the Dairy Farmers of America in Dallas. He now has offers from leading brokerages, and plans to graduate in the spring.



Emmalea Shaw (2017) won our college's sixth Guistwhite Award, a major honor, since only 15-20 are chosen each year nationwide. She was also our college's first Texas Heritage National Bank Scholar, a Caldwell winner, film star, and a published author by her sophomore year. This spring she is presenting at the APTA, the largest physical therapy conference, gaining her doctorate, and getting married--to Ford.



Ann Goodson, the wife of our prolific film composer, Kenny, was with us our first year as a Presidential Scholar. She left something as indelible as any of us--the idea for a worksheet that has been employed every year in honors Texas history. She also helped us with our Shelby film and recent Christmas party, in many capacities.



Mercedes Collins was our 4th Texas Heritage National Bank Scholar. She won our poetry contest, and presented at the East Texas Historical Association, a professional association, as a student here. She helped with the research and acted in our Caldwell Award winning film on Barbara Conrad.



She graduated recently from Grand Canyon University in Phoenix with honors in history, and is pursuing graduate work.



**NORTHEAST TEXAS
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

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February, 2022

ALACRITY



Fourteenth Time: Noteworthy Metrics. Honors Northeast in Orlando

Conferences are not only idea-sharing events; they are contests that determine the scholars who have the ideas worth sharing. Written abstracts matter, and winsome abstracts, require arresting concepts. Fortunately, at NTCC the scholarly poetry known as conceptualization receives an early-first-semester billing: There is a poetry contest, email concept-with-definition shootouts, concept-generating "ideophanies," and debates featuring interdisciplinary "analogs." In terms of having students qualify for the oldest and most prestigious intervarsity honors council, NTCC on its 14th run, had a larger contingent of qualifying scholars than any other community college in the United States. Also for the first time, NTCC had more presenting student scholars than any university in State of Texas.

The program of the National Collegiate Honors Council in Orlando this year included nine names from NTCC, seven of whom were students. From left to right above, it included:

Cade Bennett, Dr. Andrew Yox, Aaliyah Avellaneda, Israel Perez, Brian Ramirez, John Rodriguez, Andrea Reyes, Hilda Rodriguez, and Maxime Risner.

NTCC's unique film-making tradition won space for an entire panel. The session featured snippets of past work. Director Brian Ramirez, star actor Cade Bennett, film scholar, Israel Perez, and multiple-personality actor, John Rodriguez, provided their perspectives.

All the students who went also presented a scholarly poster, a skill honed each spring at NTCC's McGraw Hill poster contests. Aaliyah Avellaneda presented her double-prize winning work on NTCC's former trustee, and Texas' former Lieutenant Governor, Bill Ratliff. Israel Perez presented on Bo Pilgrim, Maxime Risner on the Decline of Big-Animal Veterinarians, John Rodriguez on Hispanic Quietism, Hilda Rodriguez on Domestic Isolationism, and Cade Bennet on the relation between Texas capitalism and innovation.

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Local Banks Provide Vital Help



VP Brenda Howard of Texas Heritage National Bank is providing here the sixth, \$4,000-a-year Presidential Scholarship awarded by this leading Morris County Bank. No other award at the college combines such generosity and prestige. The recipient this year is John Rodriguez, a true polymath whose essay on Hispanic Quietism is due to be published this spring. We are also inspired greatly by Cypress Bank, based in Pittsburg, that has selected one of our students each year since 2008 to utilize a state of the art laptop. Below, Barry L. Jones of the beautiful new Mount Pleasant branch of Cypress on Jefferson Street hands Maiko Estrada this apposite gift.

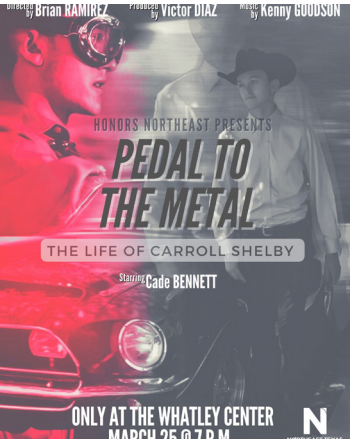


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Our Beneficent Benefactors



Tom Wilkinson III 1939-2021. The activities of our Winkle Scholar, Cade Bennett (above), attest to the remarkable support Tom Wilkinson, and his larger family gave to the development of the Humanities at NTCC. Tom commented on several of our essays and film scores. He was a great friend.



The new Russell-Mowery Perpetual Honors Scholarship highlights an ideal we share. The annual \$500 award goes to a scholar who has made significant contributions to Northeast Texas culture. Israel Perez, publishing an essay on Bo Pilgrim, is the first winner. With him above are Mary Lou and Jerald Mowery.



Another major new award encourages scholarship. The Dr. and Mrs. Bradley Witt Scholarship will enable a series of NTCC scholars for several years to present at the National Collegiate Honors Council. Beverly Witt Wootten presents Dr. Yox with a very generous gift. We thank her, and brothers James and Gary.

Pedal to the Metal: Our Coming Premiere on the Life of Carroll Hall Shelby



We thank the *East Texas Journal* for the photo above.



NTCC patron and Muscle-Car Emissary, Carroll Hall Shelby, hardly lacks biographers. The recent award-winning film, *Ford vs. Ferrari*, featured him in particularly winsome ways. Yet we decided that Shelby's whole life deserves attention. Few Northeast Texans both have achieved such acclaim, and have contributed so richly to the life of our college. We were delighted also to learn that our premier film patrons, the Mowerys, knew the maker of the Cobra personally. Our team came together in a way that was more spontaneous than other years. Sophomore Cade Bennett joined Cassia Rose as the only scholar in our history to be featured twice in starring roles. Brian Ramirez, our 2020 film luminary volunteered to direct; Victor Diaz, an incoming Presidential Scholar already had some experience as a producer, and Kenny Goodson, whose verve as a composer is an inspiration to all of us, expressed the view that



Shelby's story might provide the vehicle to develop his own musical language. The film will premiere at the Whatley Center at 7PM, Friday, 25 March. The trailer is on the honors filmsite: www.ntcc.edu/honorsfilms.

Regional Vanguard



Members of *Honors NE* scored at the apex of the state award series in Phi Theta Kappa. Avellaneda and Risner, left, in black, won Star Awards, and Risner and Ramirez below won 2 of the 7 Walter Cooper Awards. Skylar Fondren, left, won a Leader of Promise Award nationally. Our film research team, lower left, meeting last summer, gives a special boost for the year ahead. Upper right: Ruben Guerrero, Fondren, Jordan Chapin, Evan Sears, and Victor Diaz presented at the Webb Meeting, and Jessie Parchman, Dorali Hernandez, Risner, and Avellaneda presented at the East Texas Historical Association.



Fall Happenings



Winners of the 14th Annual Northeast Texas Poetry Contest

We thank Drs. Jim and Paula Archer, and others for our 28th wonderful day trip, last September to Fort Worth. We took in Starbucks, the Zoo, The Woodshed Smokehouse, the Cultural District, and the comedy troupe, *Four Day Weekend*. Above as a book Evan Sears, Raul Leija, John Rodriguez, Cade Bennett, Dr. Andrew Yox, Skylar Fondren, Jordan Chapin, Jessie Parchman, and Transfer Coach, Noemi Deciga. Our 14th NE Texas poetry contest took place thanks to a special-



Deo Gratias! "An Acquisition of Assets" By Dr. Andrew Yox, Honors Director

Higher Education promises to dispel myths. But it also is associated with some of our culture's most tenacious myths. Current-day advice: ASAP. "Get your four-year degree now!" Or: Hook 'em Horns! "Only prestigious schools with good networks matter." Or even: Easy as Possible. "Play the game! Take the easiest courses with the easiest professors."

The myths miss what Higher Education has the capacity to be about. Higher Education is at its best an Acquisition of Assets. Students need what will most enable them to succeed in a career, and to develop their capacities, interests and talents. Higher Education provides success on these fronts as it provides accolades, an obverse skill set, networks, and a capacity to finish graduate work, bestowing financial help.

We thank God here at NTCC because we have a team that can help deliver each of these assets.

In an age of bureaucracy, soulless numbers, and grade inflation, actual monetary awards and success stories mean more and more. The current issue of *Alacrity* is again a testament of how our *Honors Northeast Team*—of administrators, professors, students, donors and parents—delivers in providing accolade pathways.

An obverse skill set? An ever more complex virtual and technical culture demands not only alacrity in STEM fields, but a facility with making lucid descriptions of what is going on. The interdisciplinary idealism of honors in conjunction

with inexpensive ways of pursuing double majors or dual degrees makes NTCC a great place to develop needed skills.

Networks? Our students have every reason to be an Aggie if they want that, or to enlist networks gained from any great university that they desire. But in addition, they can enjoy our professorial network with its biannual, two-thousand-word-per-student recommendation-writing workout. They have a community of peers here that parties and takes trips together. They have access to our wonderful patrons, and to our ever-more-established honors alumni.

Financial leverage? Thanks to our administration, and patrons, the average student at Honors Northeast can earn as they learn. Institutional and foundation scholarships outpace the costs of matriculation! We are one of the few places on earth that enjoys such a Camelot of Education.



donor in Mount Vernon, Beverly Kelley. The winners, B. Ramirez, M. Risner, S. Fondren, E. Sears, and I. Perez are shown below to the left. A. Avellaneda won our Dr. Jerry Wesson Scholarship as our top Academic sophomore, and the Eckman Award for the semester along with M. Estrada among the freshmen for having the top Honors Seminar GPA. B. Ramirez (lower left) is the 2021 winner of our new James and Elizabeth Whatley Honors Endowed Scholarship. He also won the Dr. Charles B. Florio Award for Leadership in PTK and honors. The awards call to mind a true pioneer and ongoing patron of *Honors Northeast*, Dr. Charles Florio (below).

