

Ramirez, Risner, Bennett, and Rodriguez

Place in 13th Annual McGraw Hill Poster Contest



Above, right to left: Brian Ramirez, Maxime Risner, Cade Bennett, John G. Rodriguez

After a year of virtual presentations facilitated by iPhones and YouTube, Northeast community poster judges, and NTCC students came back together in real time at the Whatley Foyer, Friday, 7 May, for the Thirteenth Annual McGraw-Hill Poster Contest. This scholarly contest, sponsored this year by *Santa's Sweeties*, a high-end sewing circle in Mount Vernon, *McGraw-Hill* Education Corporation, and *Jerald and Mary Lou Mowery* of Mount Vernon featured what many believed was the best visualization of scholarly work in the history of the conference.

For the first time, in 2021, all student posters were professionally printed, thanks to support from the NTCC administration, and Vice President *Kevin Rose*. Though it was not the highest scored NTCC poster contest of all time, the *lowest single score* in 2021 was higher than the *average score* in the virtual contest of 2020. Experienced judges such as *Drs. Beason, Renning, and Wesson; Lisa Ellermann, and Edward Florey* all indicated that the visual

component was the best yet, while some indicated that the scholarly performance of the students in 2021 was better than ever before.



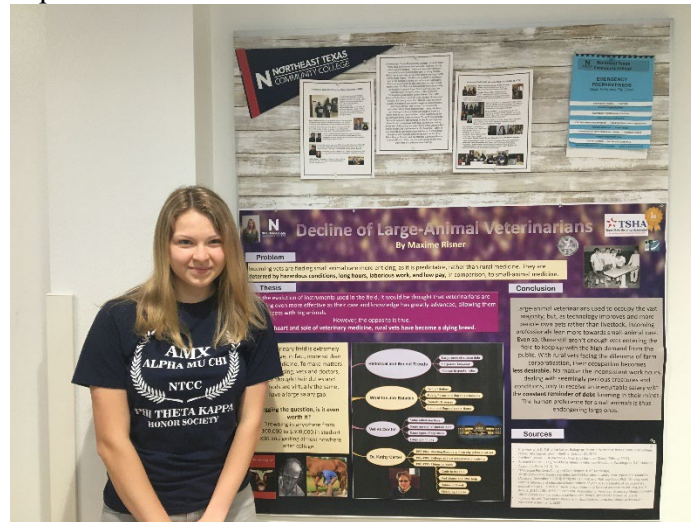
West Side of the Foyer during the 2021 Contest

Brian Ramirez, the film producer of NTCC's recent film on Bo Pilgrim, and an Alpha-Mu-Chi documentary on sightlessness, ranked first in the contest, and won \$400 in cash, plus a McGraw Hill coupon for \$175. Ramirez adopted the idea of father Leopold's significance in the Mozart story to explain opportunities for filming in Northeast Texas. He showed concretely how heavy collaboration between donors, professionals, the NTCC staff, and students worked to attain a level of cultural influence. Ramirez is a freshman from Mount Pleasant.



Ramirez's Work now hangs on the northwest wall of the Humanities building

In second place for \$300, was **Maxime Risner's** work on the decline of rural veterinarians. This Caldwell-Prize winning effort featured scholarship arising first from an interview with NTCC's Dr. Kathy Carter, a former veterinarian. Risner noted that the human preference for smaller animal pets makes moving into the more dangerous and costly field of large animals a counter-intuitive proposition for veterinarians. Risner hails from Winnsboro.



Maxime Risner and her poster, now also displayed on the northwest corridor of the Humanities Building at NTCC

Cade Bennett placed third and won \$200. His work featured the “golden ideas” of capitalism in Texas. Bennett argued that though capitalism creates inequalities, it also creates globally significant innovations. In the case of modern Texas, a state noted for the quality of its free enterprise, these ideas include the development of the integrated circuit which gave rise to the era of digitalization, artificial heart technology which addressed the twentieth-century's leading cause of death, and fracking, which now accounts for fifty percent of the nation's oil and gas production. Bennett is NTCC's Cypress Bank Scholar, and lives in Naples.

Finally, **John Rodriguez** came in fourth with his work on Hispanic Quietism in Texas. Rodriguez noted how the idiom of accommodation and reluctance to interfere has worked for Hispanics in Texas in a way superior to more confrontative approaches, such as those of Hispanics in California. In a quieter but still decisive way, the Mexican element has influenced the core of an emergent Tex-Mex culture. Rodriguez is an NTCC Winkle Scholar from Mount Pleasant.

The continuing concern with COVID-19 led organizers to suspect that community judges would not be as numerous this year. In fact, the total number of judges in the 2021 contest—fourteen--tied the 2018 conference for the most ever. 2021 marked the tenth year that both **Dr. Wayne Renning**, and **Dr. Jerry Wesson** have judged these contests, a shared record among all the judges in the history of the contest. Other judges included **Dr. Elaine Beason** of Mount Pleasant, **Suzanne Boatner** of Mount Pleasant; **Lisa Ellermann** of Region VIII;

Edward Florey of Mount Pleasant, *Brenda Godoy*, former NTCC Presidential Scholar and Jack Kent Cooke winner and now Community Health Worker; *Jerry Hearron* of Mount Pleasant; *Chuck Johns*, NTCC Board of Trustees Chairman from Pittsburg, *Jerald and Mary Lou Mowery* of Mount Vernon; *Maryna Otero*, Languages Other Than English Department Chair at Mount Pleasant High School, *Andrea Reyes*, Honors and PTK Coordinator who also adjudicated the contest, and *John Wilhite* of Mount Pleasant.

Perhaps our region's most talented polyglot, *Maryna Otero*, noted that she "was impressed by the beautiful posters that clearly showed the significant investment the students have made into scholarly activity. I felt like I have read at least eleven empirical articles and learned more in 60 minutes than I have in the last couple of weeks! *Dr. Jerry Wesson*, former NTCC Vice President and Mount Pleasant municipal judge, noted "this year was the best ever. I am so excited to hear these students, and even though it was more difficult for me to get around this year, and I had to rest a time or two, I thoroughly enjoyed the experience."

This year though the contest is open to all high school and collegiate students in the region, every contestant was a member of Honors Northeast, the NTCC honors program. Besides the winners, other contestants included: *Carolina Alcocer-Salas* from Winfield, *Aaliyah Avellaneda* from Mount Pleasant, *James Dickson* from Pittsburg, *Jalyn English* from Bogata, *Nallely Gutierrez* from Mount Vernon, *Dorali Hernandez* from Mount Pleasant, *Jansen Laney* from Daingerfield, *Katelyn Lester* from Scroggins, *Israel Perez* from Mount Pleasant, *Maritza Quinones* from Mount Pleasant, and *Hilda Rodriguez* from Mount Pleasant.

Casey Slaght who works in the corporate Office of McGraw Hill in Iowa facilitated yet another contribution of this premier education corporation to the contest. Friends of honors such as the *Mowerys* also made it possible to have a lunch after the contest, which was attended by seven of the judges, seven of the students, and three honors professors.



The Group that lingered after the Lunch at Nardellos: Top across to bottom: Cade Bennett, Jansen Laney, James Dickson, Brenda Godoy, Israel Perez, Brian Ramirez, John Rodriguez, Dorali Hernandez, and Andrea Reyes

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