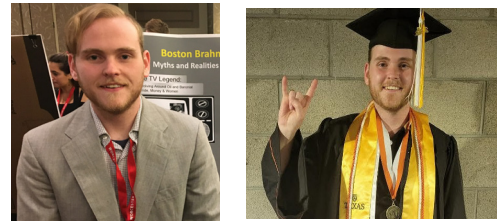




It is hard to resist again including Emmalea Shaw, now Emmalea Cunningham (2017), in this column. This past May, the University of North Texas Science Center at Fort Worth conferred on her the degree of Doctor of Physical Therapy. She also passed her National Physical Therapy Exam and is now a licensed physical therapist of the state of Texas. She has recently married Ford. The couple will live in Round Rock.



Matthew Chambers (2019) placed 1st and 2nd in two McGraw Hill Poster contests, won two Eckman Awards, and helped guide two-award winning NTCC-Honors films. He graduated from the University of Texas at Austin in chemistry last spring with a certification in German, and is graduating this summer with a degree in government. He is helping with the chemistry lab at NTCC and will soon be applying for medical school.

## Alacritous Alumni

Bang! If you witnessed the Talco fireworks, you witnessed a strong community effort that involved Morgan (Capps) Hale (2016). In 2019, our former Caldwell-Coca-Cola-Chitsey winner graduated with a BSN from East Texas Baptist University. She also married Eli Hale, the brother of another former NTCC Presidential Scholar, Brooke. Morgan now works as an RN at UT Health, Pittsburg.



Ricky Huitema (2014) was our first Terry Scholar, and our first engineering student to win first-place in the Northeast Texas Poetry competition. In fact, he was such a competitor that he placed in all four of our poster and poetry contests. Along with Matthew Jordan, Huitema completed his engineering degree at Texas Tech, and now works as an electrical engineer at Priefert's in Mount Pleasant.



Katelyn (Cox) Lester (2021) won our Eckman Award three times, and wrote an award-winning essay on the father of the Webb Society of Texas--Walter Prescott Webb. The state Webb Society has been a source of many conferences and awards for us. The daughter of the Tanzania missionary married Tate Lester, and now will be living in Scroggins with their baby, Henry.



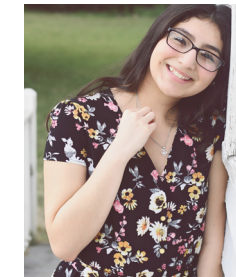
Like Katelyn, Olivia Griffin (2019) began her time with us as a devout, sweet, backseat kind of person, who suddenly delivered up a major work of scholarship, and began to win everything. Griffin came in first in the Texas State Caldwell contest for



her pioneering essay on Justin Dart, publishing it. She is now teaching English, and learning Arabic on the North African coast.

June, 2022

# ALACRITY



### Aaliyah Merced Avellaneda wins NTCC's Eleventh Jack Kent Cooke

Avellaneda, featured above in the center photograph with former Jack Kent Cooke winner, Brenda Godoy, graduated from Mount Pleasant High School during the dark spring days of the COVID epidemic in 2020. The summer that followed saw a precipitous spike in COVID cases in Mount Pleasant, and Avellaneda's family was not spared. Her first college semester took place mainly live at NTCC, but it was a time of social distancing, and masks. Avellaneda with an interest in law, education, and legislation persevered, and for her freshman honors project decided she would like to do a study of Mount Pleasant's own Lieutenant Governor, Bill Ratliff. She read his biography, and asked if she could interview the former Texas Ticketsplitter. Such a request during the COVID fall involved NTCC President Clinton, and a willing Ratliff. Three spaced people met wearing masks in the beautiful Biggers room at NTCC. What followed was perhaps the most historic student interview the college has known. Avel-

laneda had an impressive grasp of Ratliff's life, and the Governor gave it his all.

Avellaneda's final essay treated the approach of the politically mysterious Ratliff as an antidote to national polarization. She won \$400 and a first-in-the-state Caldwell for her essay, and then, in poster form, a Britt Award of the Great Plains Honors Council. She also won two Eckman Awards her first year for the highest seminar averages and became NTCC's 4th Dr. Jerry Wesson Scholar as the top academic sophomore (With Dr. Wesson above). In the 21-22 year, she won two more Eckmans, the first student in our history to reach that milestone, wrote the top seminar essay in the fall, presented in Orlando at the National Collegiate Honors Council, and won the \$150K JKC!

On hand at our NTCC victory dinner for Avellaneda, provided again by generous patrons, was former JKC winner Brenda Godoy. Ironically, Godoy had just won a second JKC and will attend Medical School in Fort Worth.

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NORTHEAST TEXAS  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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### Our Thanks to Mt. Vernon Donors



Whatley Employee Enhancement Fund (WEEF) grants have enabled more and more of what has made honors at NTCC distinctive. This year, honors faculty members applied for 4 WEEF grants. All were bestowed. The funds facilitated our poster contest (p. 3) and travel for 3 of our students to the Great Plains Honors Council (p. 2). They will further enable our film effort as well as the poetry contest in September. We are particularly thankful this year that all these gifts came from a network of Mount Vernon donors! First, we again thank Jerald and Mary Lou Mowery (below) for their remarkable help, both for our filming, and the poster contest (p.3). We also thank Beverly Kelley for again helping us, in this case with the GPHC effort, and also Brad Sears for funding the Poetry Contest.



## 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 Secretary:** Delbra Anthony

### Like to Help?

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



*Want more information?*

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

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

In this  
Edition:

Spring  
Happenings

Regional  
Vanguard

Alacritous  
Alumni





We are humbled by the generous gifts we continue to receive from donors no longer living in our section of Texas, donors who in some cases have given from the beginning. Most notable in this category are Karen Harmon, and our former NTCC president Dr. Charles Florio.



## Our Beneficent Benefactors



As of this writing, there are still those catching COVID in Northeast Texas. The disease put a damper on our Thank You Dinners. However, we have generous anonymous donors who funded a special dinner to announce the winning of the Jack Kent Cooke to Aaliyah Avellaneda with her family present. We are

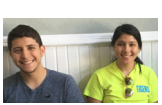


thankful too for gifts that have sparked academic competition among our best students. Another out-of-town anonymous giver has now covered the twenty \$100 Eckman prizes we have been able to award every semester since 2017 (p. 3). As noted on the college blog, we have other in-class student awards as well.

## Star Sophomores

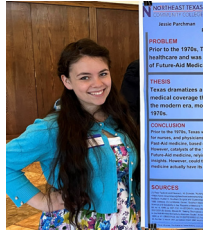


The 2020-2022 cohort had stellar moments. The Zoom conference of the State Webb Society in 2021 announced one lower-division winner from their ranks after another--Avellaneda, Risner, Hernandez, 3 of the 4! Brian Ramirez and Cade Bennett teamed up to play key roles in two films that won a Webb Chapter Award, and a Caldwell Award. Israel Perez, and John Rodriguez provided key contributions, both years. Jack Kent Cooke winner--Avellaneda (p.1) gave the group a major award at the Great Plains Honors Council. The 2020-22 cohort sent more scholars to the National Collegiate Honors Council than any other, featuring more representatives than any other community college in the United States, or university in Texas! Four will have published articles, refereed, by university professors in Texas--Avellaneda, Hernandez, Perez, and J. Rodrighuez. Hilda Rodriguez was the Chitsey winner.



Bennett was a state vice president of PTK. Risner headed the NTCC student body, and Brian Ramirez led Phi Theta Kappa. As freshmen, they were the only cohort in our history to win all 4 McGraw Hill poster awards.

## Regional Vanguard



Skylar Fondren (left) became the 8th student in our history to win a Britt Poster award of the Great Plains Honors Council. Jessie Parchman pioneered NTCC's presence at NCUR. Avellaneda won a Coca Cola Bronz, nationally. Lower Left: NTCC Webb presenters at UT-Austin. Jessie Parchman and Maiko Estrada won 2nd and 3rd in the upper university division of the state Caldwells! Top right: NTCC won its fourth group Caldwell Award for its film on Carroll Shelby. Cade Bennett starred as Shelby, and Victor Diaz produced the film. Right: Six presented at the GPHC in Wichita. .



## Spring Happenings



We thank Drs. Jim and Paula Archer, and others for our 29th wonderful day trip, last September to Dallas. We took in Starbucks, an encounter with SMU organist, Benjamin Kolodziej, The North Park Center, the Dallas Arts district, and Allen-Americans hockey where we appear on the ice, above. To the right we see the winners of the annual McGraw-Hill poster contest, Skylar Fondren #1 (\$400), Maxime Risner (\$300), Victor Diaz \$200, and Bekah Contreras (\$100). Our 14th!

### Winners of the 14th-Annual McGraw Hill Poster Contest



We thank Jerald and Mary Lou Mowery, Casey Slaght of/and McGraw Hill, and nine local judges!

Aaliyah Avellaneda (top left below) became the first student ever to win four \$100 Eckman Awards, for having the top GPA in each honors seminar, and overall. She along with John Rodriguez (bottom right below) was named an All-Texas Scholar by Phi Theta Kappa. Our other Eckman winner, Hope Kelly, (top right below) became an honors student in the spring, and immediately rocketed up to number one in the Stat-Psych Seminar. She was home-schooled while her father served as a missionary in Mexico. Jordan Chapin (lower left below) became our 10th winner of the Chitsey Award for an honors student who most exceeded expectations.



## Deo Gratias! “Films and Subversive Play” By Dr. Andrew Yox, Honors Director

Two anomalous incidents come to mind as I consider my 28 years of teaching at NTCC. One involved a night class. It went 2 hours over, from 6 to almost 11 p.m. The students were thrilled and wanted the class to go on. Another enigma: one late-Thursday afternoon, during the summer, I saw students crammed into a classroom, hollering and shouting with delight. The first case? A sociology class that simulated gambling. The second? The table-top club, overseen by Professor Julie Ratliff.

Both appear to be examples of an extreme kind of student engagement called “subversive play” by Mark Carnes. In his Harvard-University-press-published book, *Minds on Fire*, Carnes details worlds of learning where students take charge, and compete to form their own hierarchies. I am indebted to Drs. Rose and Fulgham for passing on this book. Young people, throughout American history, according to Carnes, have tended to shortchange their studies, in favor of Subversive Play. In the 1840s, it was theatre and debate clubs; in the 1920s, fraternities, and hazing; in the 1960s, demonstrations; in the early 2000s, Facebook and beerpong. Like those who reveled in the medieval feast of fools, students love to create counter-worlds of their own, experimenting with new values and personalities.

I have to thank our donors, especially, our film donors, the Mowerys, for enabling what in honors has become an

attempt at channeling Subversive Play into something that I believe is useful to the students, and the community. Our films have become an outlet for student expression, role inversion, leadership, and creativity. They may indeed be a kind of hybrid. Students are not completely in charge, though by late July, woe to the professor who gets in their way, (During film week, my most essential role lies in procuring food, logistics and lodging for the set). What is subversive also tends to get edited out. Our films admittedly are controlled experiments with student leadership, but they also have led to a windfall of awards, research, and presentation possibilities for our students. The intrigue with film-making has also attracted significant community participation. I marvel at the brilliant musical evocations of triumph and excitement that Kenny Goodson, for example, has created for our films.

