

# THE HILLTOP

A MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF WEATHERFORD COLLEGE

Volume XX : Issue III

FALL 2020

## BEACON ON THE HILL



NEW WORKFORCE AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES  
BUILDING TO BE HUB OF WORKFORCE TRAINING  
FOR PARKER AND SURROUNDING COUNTIES

# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The year 2020 has been crazy, but it has been a fantastic year for both Weatherford College and the Weatherford College Foundation! The collaboration of our faculty, staff, students, alumni, donors, business partners and all our varied stakeholders and partners has lifted Weatherford College to new heights. Thank you for the role that you have played in our collaborative success!

Weatherford College has accomplished too many achievements this year to individually list, but I would like to highlight just a few. We successfully launched our new Bachelor of Science in Nursing program this fall and are expecting our first graduates next summer. Application has also been made with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for approval of a Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences in Organizational Leadership program. We hope to launch that new bachelor's degree program next fall. WC was recently named the second safest college or university in the great state of Texas! For the first time in our distinguished institutional history, all of our NJCAA athletic teams qualified for Academic Team of the Year honors. However, the biggest WC story is likely our new Workforce and Emerging Technologies Building that will be detailed in this issue.

The amazing college accomplishments have been dramatically supplemented by the unparalleled accomplishments of the Weatherford College Foundation. Our generous donors have been amazing! Nan Kingsley recently donated Blue Stem Studios to Weatherford College. We are in the process of making this beautiful building classroom ready and hope to host an open house in the first quarter of 2021. Thanks to the generosity of Nancy and Richard Stuart, we are now the only college in NJCAA Region 5 to have artificial turf on our softball field (Stuart Field). Additionally, we are planning to add artificial turf to our baseball facility, Roger Williams Ballpark, next summer. Foundation President Bob Glenn has single-handedly raised nearly \$400,000 in new permanently endowed scholarships. A record number of student scholarships have been awarded, and the net assets of the foundation are at an all time high.

Despite the magnitude of these incredible collaborative accomplishments during a global pandemic, I am incredibly optimistic that we can accomplish even more in the near future of Weatherford College. We have recently enriched an already high performing Weatherford College Board of Trustees with two new dynamic trustees that will be introduced in this issue. Please enjoy this edition of The Hilltop and know that you will always be a Coyote!



*Tod Allen Farmer*

Dr. Tod Allen Farmer  
President

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# COVER STORY

## BEACON ON THE HILL

NEW WORKFORCE AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES BUILDING TO BE HUB OF WORKFORCE TRAINING FOR PARKER AND SURROUNDING COUNTIES



by Crystal Woerly

After years of dreaming and planning, dirt is moving at the site of the future Workforce and Emerging Technologies Building at Weatherford College.

The three-story, 70,000-square-foot building will allow WC workforce programs to move into the next era of job training with ample room for the college's new robotics program and future projects such as cybersecurity, automation and simulation.

The facility will also house long-time programs including machining, industrial maintenance, cosmetology and workforce health professions programs.

"Our programs have produced quality training for our students, and now the facilities will match the quality of the instruction," said Janetta Kruse, dean of workforce and technical education. "It's safe to say it's a historic moment in the evolution of our college. The three-story training center will offer programs based on local industry needs and will combine classroom learning and skills training with on-the-job training through apprenticeships and partnerships with business and industry."

In addition to the WC programs, Texas Workforce Solutions will be a tenant in the new structure, occupying much of the second floor. It is the first time the state agency will be housed on a college campus, and the partnership will help the college offset the \$27.5 million construction cost.

"It just makes so much sense to come into the fold here at Weatherford College and help support a great facility like this," said David Setzer, executive director of Workforce Solutions North Central Texas, during a groundbreaking ceremony held Oct. 9. "We're really proud to stand with you as we continue to build a great future for the students of Weatherford College, Parker County residents and the rest of your service area."

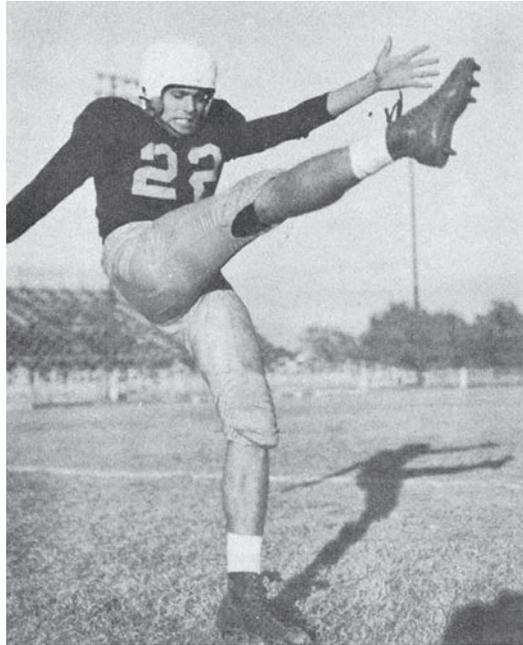
WC President Tod Allen Farmer said having Texas Workforce Solutions on the campus will allow the unemployed to have a seamless transition back into the workforce.

"At Weatherford College, we are serious about helping the recently unemployed get back on their feet," he said. "We are rapidly expanding our workforce programs in an effort to both support our business community and to get Texans back to work. The recently

*continues with BEACON ON THE HILL on page 13.*

**A groundbreaking was held Oct. 9 with dirt ceremoniously turned by WC Board of Trustees members Dave Cowley, Judy McAnally, Lela Morris and Dan Carney; WC Foundation President Bob Glenn; WC President Tod Allen Farmer; Rep. Phil King; David Setzer, executive director of Workforce Solutions North Central Texas; and Weatherford Mayor Paul Paschall. In the center of the groundbreaking lineup was Robo Coyote, the college's universal robot that was programmed to turn some dirt and wave at the audience.**

# MEMORIES



## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

This is a picture from the 1952 Weatherford College homecoming game. Dub Stewart was the football team captain. Lanona Hartness was the football sweetheart. Before the presentation, Dub's current girlfriend said if you kiss her we are through. Dub kissed her, married her, then shipped off to Korea in 1953. After two years in the Army he came back and had twin sons in 1956. After teaching and coaching at Weatherford and Millsap for two years, Dub and Lanona moved to North Richland Hills to work for Birdville ISD. They retired in 1986 from Birdville after 34 years.

Steve Stewart

## SUBMIT A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Do you have a memory you would like to share? Please email a "Letter to the Editor" at [kedwards@wc.edu](mailto:kedwards@wc.edu) or mail to Katie Edwards at 225 College Park Drive, Weatherford, TX 76086.

## FRIENDS WE'LL MISS

**John Wayne Bailey**, 71, of Arlington, passed away June 20. Class of '69.



**Jean Bryan**, 88, of Weatherford, passed away October 12. Jean served on the WC Board of Trustees from 1999 to 2013, was the college's first board member emeritus and was a recipient of the Carlos Hartnett Award, among many other accolades.

**Marie Kathleen Bruton**, 97, of Fort Worth, passed away October 3. Class of '41.

**Winnie Ruth Vick Chastain**, 88, of Weatherford, passed away July 8. Class of '51.

**Roger Leon Coomer**, 77, of Weatherford, passed away July 16. Class of '63.

**James Fredrick "Coach" Dyer**, 85, of Weatherford, passed away July 11.

**Jennifer Nichols Gasca**, 47, of Brock, passed away September 25.

**Cassandra "Cassie" Nicole Grooms**, 21, of Aledo, passed away August 1.

**Charles Doyne Henry**, 89, of Lakeside, passed away June 22. Class of '64.

**Dr. Jeanine Irby**, 89, of Brenham, passed away August 7. Class of '61.

**Aaron Scott Johnson**, 39, of Weatherford, passed away September 22.

**Jean McAnally Morris**, 97, of Weatherford, passed away April 11. Class of '41.

**Marie Neighbors**, 94, of Slidell, passed away June 8.

**Ronald Gene Phillips**, 74, of Weatherford, passed away July 21.

**James Portis Ribble**, 89, of San Angelo, passed away July 30. Class of '50.

**Larry Dean Searcy**, 62, of Weatherford, passed away June 5. Class of '78.

**Lanona Jean Hartness Steward**, 88, of North Richland Hills, passed away August 31. Class of '51.

**Phelba Ala Gilbert Wecas**, 75, of Leavenworth, KS, passed away April 23. Class of '65.

**Gary Williams**, 76, of Weatherford, passed away on September 21. Class of '62.

# WC HONORS ALUMNI AWARD WINNERS



After a more than four-month postponement due to COVID-19, Weatherford College was able to hold its 2020 Alumni Awards Luncheon at the Doss Heritage and Culture Center in late August.

Dr. Tod Allen Farmer, WC president, was recognized as the 2020 Alumnus of the Year and Dr. Jeanine Irby and Col. Thomas MacKenzie were honored as Distinguished Alumni Award winners.

Dr. Irby recently passed away and was memorialized by WC Board of Trustees vice chair and former WC instructor Sue Coody. Due to COVID-19 concerns, Coody issued her remarks via a pre-recorded video.

“She began her higher education in 1959 at Weatherford College studying under professor Jack Harvey who soon recognized her awesome intelligence and encouraged her to pursue additional degrees,” Coody said.

While teaching English at Azle High School, she completed her master’s degree at TCU, and in 1966 she fulfilled her dream to teach at WC where she retired in 2006 after a 40-year career.

“I was privileged to teach alongside her and learn alongside her for 30 of those years,” Coody said. “Her basic teaching philosophy was founded on the principle that everyone could write, and write well if given the opportunity and the necessary encouragement.”

Bob Glenn, the 1997 WC Alumnus of the Year, presented the Distinguished Alumni Award to MacKenzie, his friend and neighbor.

**“MY EXPERIENCE AT WEATHERFORD COLLEGE SET ME ON A NEW TRAJECTORY IN LIFE. ANY SUCCESSES THAT I HAD LATER IN ACADEMICS OR CAREER ACCOMPLISHMENTS BEGAN RIGHT HERE AT THIS NOBLE INSTITUTION.”**

**- DR. TOD ALLEN FARMER**

“You know a lot of us after we got out of high school, we were trying to have a dream of a career or job and never reached that career because of a failure or lack of effort, hard work. Not so of our honoree today,” Glenn said before listing off MacKenzie’s list of accomplishments.

MacKenzie joined the U.S. Army right out of high school in 1967 and spent a year in Vietnam as a helicopter pilot where he was shot down by enemy fire multiple times, always escaping serious injury. He left the Army in 1971 and joined the Weatherford Police

Department, working the night shift while taking classes at WC during the day courtesy of the G.I. Bill.

He graduated from WC in 1977 and moved on to the University of Texas at Arlington and then to the Baylor College of Dentistry before rejoining the Army to complete his residency as an oral and maxillofacial surgeon.

After 33 years in the service, MacKenzie retired as a colonel with dozens of medals and awards for his service to his country. He continued working as a surgeon for several years in Wisconsin.

In his acceptance speech, MacKenzie repeatedly thanked his wife for sticking by his side for 49 years and pushing him, helping him to reach his goals.

“Weatherford College gave me several things: strength, confidence and that drive turned into tenacity. And I’m probably the most

*continues with ALUMNI on page 14.*

# Q&A WITH NEW BOARD MEMBERS

The WC Board of Trustees appointed two new board members on September 1. Dan Carney was appointed to Place 5 after the resignation of Elaine Carter. Dave Cowley was appointed to Place 4, left open by the passing of Roger Grizzard.



## DAN CARNEY

**FAMILY:** I have been married to Sandra Carney for 44 years, our daughters are Shannon and Stacey, and our grandchildren are Ashtyn, Callen, Aly and Henley.

**CAREER BACKGROUND:** I served Parker County as felony prosecutor from 1977 to 1984 when we then formed Vick, Chrestman, and Carney. I have practiced law in the same office on the courthouse square for 36 years.

**MOTIVATION TO SERVE:** In 1943 while my Dad served our country in the United States Army Air Corps during WWII, my mom was serving Weatherford College as student council representative. All three of their sons attended WC, as did their grandson Paul Carney and granddaughter Stacey Carney (WC Class of 2009), and now MY granddaughter, Ashtyn Carney Sweatt (Peaster HS 2020), is a WC freshman. My first degree was from WC in 1973. We have deep roots here and in this great institution.

**WC'S GREATEST OPPORTUNITY IN THE FUTURE:** WC is a polished diamond. It is centrally located to a huge population. It is an innovation leader in fields that will give genuine work skills to our young people: robotics, machining, welding, industrial maintenance, cosmetology, healthcare workforce professions, in addition to the academics. WC is preparing young people not just to excel in further education but to offer them real world skills to be successful in this changing world.

**GREATEST CHALLENGES FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES LIKE WC:** To be able to adapt to the needs and demands of a world changing at an unbelievable speed. These new programs and four-year degrees we will now be able to offer are incredibly valuable to this community. We need to attract the best and brightest to have Parker County continue to be the uniquely wonderful place where I have spent my entire life.

**GREATEST PASSION:** The outdoors. I have journeyed to some of the remotest parts of Alaska on hunting and fishing trips at least 30 times. I come from a ranch family and have spent my entire life in the outdoors. We love to travel and to take the kids on active trips fishing, skiing,...almost anything in the outdoors.



## DAVE COWLEY

**FAMILY:** I have a daughter, Stephanie, son-in-law, Chris, and two grandchildren: Lane (14) and Tynzlee (9).

**CAREER BACKGROUND:** 35 years in radio broadcasting. 20 years in marketing and public relations.

**MOTIVATION TO SERVE:** When asked to fill Roger Grizzard's term, I felt an obligation to my friend Roger. But now, it's so much more than that. It's an obligation to this community. An obligation to anyone who wants to further their education. I'm so proud to be a small part of Weatherford College.

**WC'S GREATEST OPPORTUNITY IN THE FUTURE:** The new Workforce and Emerging Technologies Building will be a huge boost for WC. I'm really excited to see what happens with the Blue Stem studios addition. Broadcasting and/or podcasting classes will be an amazing addition to future storytellers at WC. Telling stories is part of what makes us human, so the history of radio and now podcasting is really part of the bigger picture of mankind's progress in storytelling.

**GREATEST CHALLENGES FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES LIKE WC:** I was recently talking with a young man from Aledo who was excited about attending Baylor after graduating next year. He was having dinner with his grandfather. I told him he should get his first two years at WC (at a fraction of the cost of two years at Baylor) to which his grandfather agreed. He (his grandfather, a man in his mid-60s) said he hadn't thought of WC as an option. So, my answer is community buy-in. Awareness. Community awareness that in today's economy, or ANY economy, WC is a clear and simple choice.

**GREATEST PASSION:** Broadcasting. Many people thought in the 1940s that radio was going to die as television became more popular. Radio proved resilient and simply readapted itself. It's hard to kill audio because it stimulates the imagination and unlike visual content, doesn't tell you what you should see. Audio helps us relax and allows us to focus on other things while we consume it. People recall twice as much information if it's presented audibly rather than in writing, so people have always liked audio content for its easy digestibility. Yes...it's a passion.



# WC ALUM READY FOR THE BIG SCREEN

by Rick Mauch

Like many actors, the road to his dream is a long one for Joshua Davis, and it's a road that included an inspirational and influential stop at Weatherford College.

Davis, who attended WC from 2013 to 2017, is pursuing a career in acting. He's off to a pretty good start, already having secured roles in some major productions.

And wouldn't you know, finding those roles meant going back on the road - literally.

"I actually just packed my car and drove to Atlanta with nothing but my dreams and talent," Davis recalled. "I signed up with a casting agency and I have been cast as a featured extra and a stand-in for actors."

Only 25 years old, Davis has already worked in the much-anticipated sequel to an Eddie Murphy classic, "Coming 2 America." He's also a part of the production of "Aretha," which is, of course, about the late Queen of Soul, Aretha Franklin.

"Legally I cannot go into too much detail, but I was a featured dancer in 'Coming 2 America' and 'Aretha' is still in the works," he said. "I did submit an audition for a showcase with some big names. If I am cast in this project it would be an amazing opportunity."

He also had some auditions scheduled with Tyler Perry Studios. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, that was put on hold.

*continues with BIG SCREEN on page 14.*

## WC RANKED SECOND SAFEST COLLEGE CAMPUS

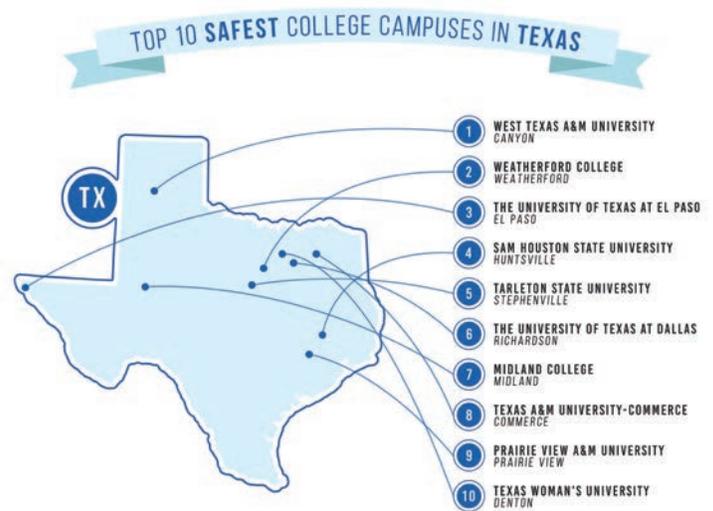
Weatherford College is listed as the second safest college campus in Texas according to data compiled by YourLocalSecurity.com.

"I am very proud of this accomplishment for Weatherford College," WC Police Chief Paul Stone said. "Of course, being one of the safest campuses in Texas is something that is accomplished by the entire campus not just the police department. We have a tremendous campus community that is active in making this campus safe. The faculty, staff and students are all part of making this campus one of the safest in Texas."

The website, operated by ADT Security Services, pulled data from public crime reports as well as campus safety and security data for institutions with a minimum of 5,000 enrolled students. They then analyzed the data to determine the rate of violent crimes, property crimes, hate crimes and crimes against women.

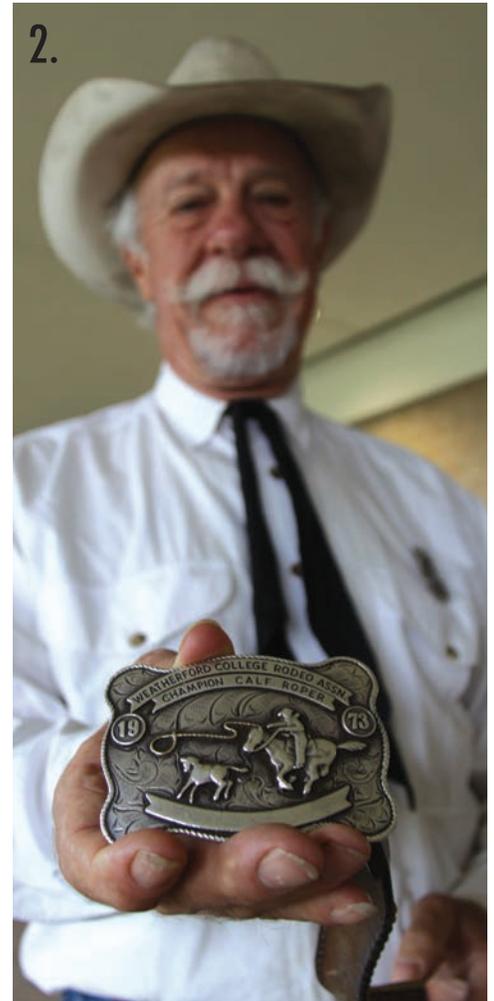
The average violent crime rate per 1,000 people for the top ten safest colleges in Texas is 2.26, far lower than most state's campuses. The annual violent crime rate for the state as a whole is 4.11, based on FBI data from 2018.

Weatherford College didn't report any hate crimes or crimes against women in 2019 at any of the WC campuses. WC came in second overall in the state behind West Texas A&M.



Infographic provided by ADT Security Services

# WEATHERFORD COLLEGE AROUND CAMPUS



1. The City of Weatherford/WC roundabout at the intersection of College Park Drive and Martin Drive was selected as the American Public Works Association Texas Chapter Project of the Year for projects costing less than \$2 million. The roundabout was constructed via a partnership between the City of Weatherford and the college with the city constructing the project and WC taking responsibility of landscaping. Pictured with WC President Tod Allen Farmer is Manny Palacios, Jr., director of transportation and public works for the City of Weatherford and a WC alumnus.

2. While on campus for a donor photo with the Parker County Sheriff's Posse, member Calvin Allen showed off his WC calf roping champion belt buckle he won as a student in 1973.

3. Students returned to campus Aug. 24 for the first day of the Fall 2020 semester. With COVID-19 precautions in place, classroom capacity has been limited and masks are required inside buildings and in outdoor areas where social distancing is not possible. To

accommodate students, additional online and hybrid classes were added to this semester's course offerings.

4. WC equine students have the opportunity to work with weanlings thanks to a partnership with Bonds Ranches. The foals arrived at the campus ag property just a few days after being weaned, and other than receiving vaccinations and medications, had not been handled before the students started working with them. This partnership provides WC students hands-on experience that will make them successful in future equine careers.

5. The WC Foundation held its 20<sup>th</sup> annual golf tournament at Canyon West Golf Club on Oct. 1. The JRJ Construction team came in first place with a score of 53. Funds raised by the tournament benefit scholarships for WC students and other support of WC.

6. The WC Jazz Orchestra, under the direction of Fredrick Sanders, performed at the Parker County 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony held at the Heritage Park Amphitheatre the morning of Sept. 11.



Photo by Melissa Whiteman



7. The Accreditations Commission for Education in Nursing recently conducted site visits for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (initial accreditation) and Associate Degree Nursing (continued accreditation) programs.

8. Kodey Hoss was recognized as All-Around Cowgirl for the 2019-20 season at the annual WC Alumni Rodeo in October.

9. At an event at Stuart Field in October, the WC Foundation and WC President Tod Allen Farmer thanked several donors who have made significant gifts/pledges to the “Fields of Dreams” campaign for artificial turf. Pictured are (9a) Imperial Construction, represented by Jon Jones; (9b) Richard and Nancy Stuart; and (9c) Lightfoot Mechanical, represented by Stephen Lightfoot and Vickie Lightfoot.



by **Rick Mauch**

Weatherford College has turned to former professional golfer Jesse Speirs to revive the school's golf program when it returns to competition in the 2021-22 academic year.

Speirs, 33, is no stranger to the area, having played for TCU from 2005 to 2007 before transferring to Ole Miss.

He said the opportunity to bring back the WC golf program was introduced to him by WC President Tod Allen Farmer and Athletic Director Bob McKinley.

The program at WC once competed on a national level, and Speirs is excited about getting them back to that status as quickly as possible.

"Obviously, my goal is to build a competitive team from the start. Coaching is new to me, but I will learn as quickly as possible and lead WC golf back to the national stage," he said.

While playing at TCU, Speirs helped the Horned Frogs advance to the NCAA Central Regional Tournament in 2006-07 and was the No. 1 golfer on the squad. He was also named All-Mountain West Conference.

After 2007, Speirs transferred to the University of Mississippi, where he was also the team's No. 1 player in 2008 and led the Rebels to an NCAA regional berth that same year. He posted three top-five tourney finishes and six top-10s. He is also a member of the school's Wall of Fame.

"It wasn't something I wanted to do. TCU, from the time I was 13 years old, was the school I wanted to play for," Speirs said of his transfer. "I was fortunate to have that opportunity. I learned a lot from both schools and have made lifelong friendships from each. I wouldn't change anything."

Speirs then spent a decade playing professionally with many highlights, including:

- Shooting 63 in the first round of the Waterloo Open in 2010
- Advancing to the second stage of the European Tour Qualifying School in 2011
- Winning the Greater Bangor (Maine) Open championship in 2011
- Competing on the Challenge Tour in 2011
- Advancing to the second round of the PGA Qualifying School in 2012
- Tying for second in the Maine Open in 2012
- Competing on the PGA Tour Canada from 2012-15
- Competing as a member of the Web.com Tour from 2016-18 and ranking third in driving distance in 2017
- Competing on the PGA China Tour from 2018-20

"It was definitely an experience. The traveling was a beating," Speirs said of touring and playing in China. "The golf courses over there are some of the most challenging courses I have ever played."

But he said he always had an affinity for Texas and its golf talent.

"I have always loved Texas, especially the DFW area. There are so many great golf courses here, and, most importantly, a lot of talented young golfers," he said.

And now that he's a coach, something he did not envision as recently as a couple of years ago, he hopes to tap into some of that young talent in building the program at WC.

Jesse and his wife, Sabrina, are expecting their first child in a matter of weeks.

*To learn more about Coach Speirs check out [wcathletics.com](http://wcathletics.com).*

**Photos courtesy of PGA Tour Series – China.**



# WC FOUNDATION AWARDS RECORD AMOUNT OF SCHOLARSHIPS

A record number of privately-funded scholarships have been awarded for the 2020-21 academic year by the Weatherford College Foundation, surpassing the previous year by more than 15 percent.

So far, \$336,000 has been awarded with more remaining to be distributed. During the previous academic year, the foundation allocated \$290,500 in scholarships to WC students.

“Despite a most challenging year with the COVID-19 interruptions, our foundation donors stepped up to the plate and again provided the necessary resources to assist many, many students,” said Bob Glenn, WC Foundation president. “I am so grateful to those donors who are willing to share as we continue to indeed change lives through educational opportunities.”

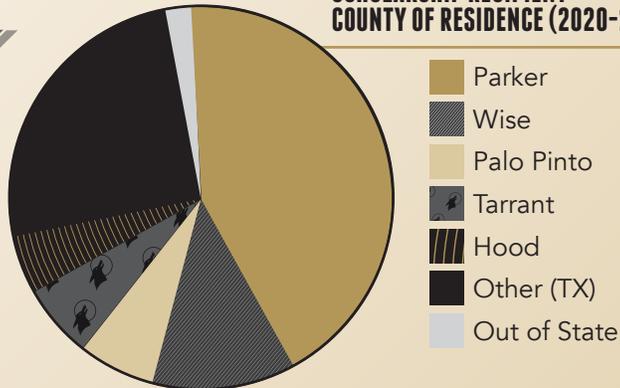
The increase in scholarship allocations comes on the heels of the foundation crossing the \$10 million mark in total net assets for the first time in late 2019.

Established in 1978, the WC Foundation exists to raise funds to benefit the college and its students.

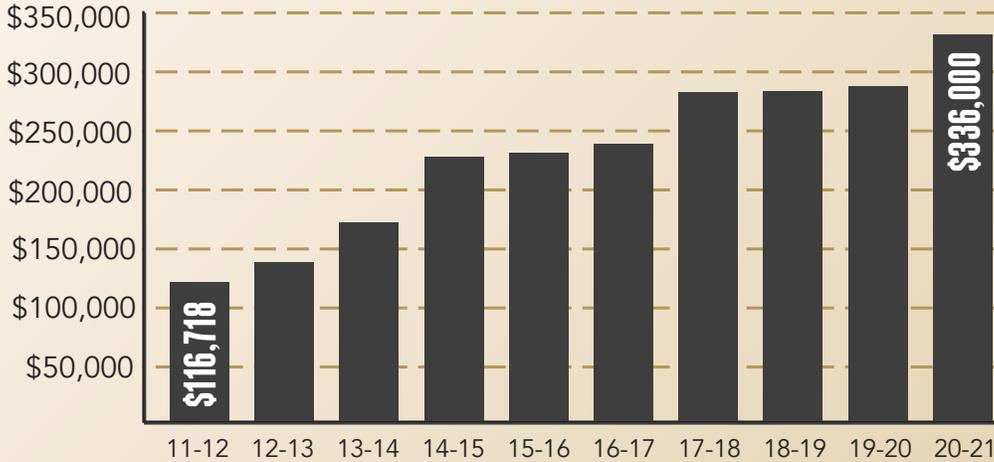
WEATHERFORD COLLEGE FOUNDATION

## SCHOLARSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT COUNTY OF RESIDENCE (2020-21)



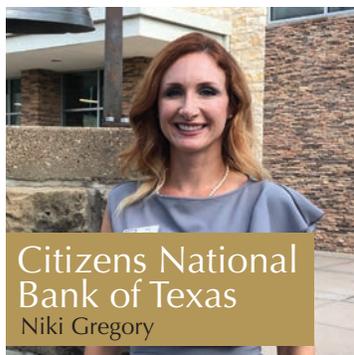
AMOUNT OF SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS AWARDED



# 152

NUMBER OF SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED SO FAR

# FOUNDATION WELCOMES NEW SCHOLARSHIP ENDOWMENTS



Citizens National  
Bank of Texas  
Niki Gregory



Parker County Sheriff's Posse



Community National  
Bank & Trust  
Wade Julian



Leo & Prissy Neely



Ron & Tammy McBee



Wilkinson-Long Scholarship  
Karen & Joe Wilkinson



Optimist Club of Weatherford



BentOak Capital  
Wayne Garrett, Brandon Garrett

## CLASS NOTES

**Tracey Adkins** was named 2019-20 Teacher of the Year at Horizon Elementary School in Madison, Alabama. Tracey, a Mineral Wells native, has taught second grade at Horizon since 2011.

**Jonna Banks** won the Republican run-off election for Palo Pinto County District Clerk in July.

**Neda Benitez** ('15) has joined the Center for Educational Excellence at Tarleton State University as an instructional designer. Neda previously served as specialist at WC's Education Center at Granbury.

**Mike Carter** ('73) and **Zack Spurlock** ('19) are now alumni coordinator and admissions specialist, respectively, at

Clearfork Academy, a substance abuse treatment center for adolescents in Fort Worth.

**Weston Decker** has been selected to the University of Texas System Student Advisory Council. Weston is a student at the UT Medical Branch at Galveston and is one of two UTMB students on the council.

**Benjamin and Morgan Harris** welcomed Charlotte Grace Harris into the world on September 1.

**Dr. Molly Clark Harris** has been promoted to dean of student affairs at Grayson College. Harris previously served as assistant to the president.

**Jeremy Molinar** was listed as one of the "40 Under 40 Rising Stars" by the Fort Worth Business Press in July. Jeremy is CEO of Molinar Property Group, a general contracting, property development and construction management firm.



Congratulations to WC alumna **Charlsta Reynolds Smith**, who celebrated her 100th birthday in August!

# THANK YOU

to the following donors who gave recent gifts to the WC Foundation (as of October 16, 2020)

Amy Adams  
Anonymous  
Dr. Arleen Atkins  
Brent and Elizabeth Baker  
Brian Barnard  
Lin and Tiffany Bearden  
Karen Benson  
Bent Oak Capital  
Brandt Engineering  
Christel Brenner  
Sheryl Brown  
CBRE  
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Community National Bank  
& Trust  
E.A. and Brenda Connel  
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Courtney and Jason Estes  
Ezelle Ashworth Trust  
First Financial Bank  
First Financial Trust And Asset  
Management Co  
Fort Worth Community  
Credit Union  
Gray Cleaning Services  
John and Cathy Ann Gurica  
Lisa Haley  
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Gary and Jeanie Hobbs  
Wayne Hodges  
HUB International Insurance  
Dr. Alexander Ibe  
Jacy Guynes State Farm Insurance  
Suzanne Jary  
Johnson Controls, Inc  
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Foundation  
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Ian and Julie Monroe  
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Marion and Susan Morrison  
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Network For Good  
North Side Baptist Church  
Janice Odom  
Parker County Sheriff's Posse  
Evelyn Payne  
Lynn Peters  
Tonya Piehl  
Donald and Francis Plumlee  
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Texas Bank Financial  
Texas Book Company  
Rhonda and Leonard Torres  
Staci Tyler  
United Rentals  
Jon and Dottie Vandagriff  
Ronald Walker  
Wayne Hodges Trailer Sales  
Weatherford Optimist Club  
Jo Ellen Welborn  
Morris and Judy White  
Joe and Karen Wilkinson  
Thomas and Karen Williams  
Bob and Sammie Gay Williams  
Kathy Williams  
Wanda Woodruff



## BEACON ON THE HILL *from page 3.*

unemployed are going to receive the type of training that will allow them to quickly move off of public assistance programs and back to tax-paying jobs that pay family-sustaining wages.”

To make room for the new facility, Couets Hall was demolished this past spring while Huckabee Architects put the final touches on the design plans. Construction of the new building is being undertaken by Imperial Construction of Weatherford.

In addition to classroom space, the new facility will host a several training rooms and presentation rooms to accommodate groups of all sizes from around the community.

“This will be a facility where the community can gather to support life-long learning in an ever-changing environment,” Kruse said, “all made possible through partnerships based on collaboration, trust and cooperation.”

State Representative Phil King also spoke during the October groundbreaking and highlighted the state’s standing as the number one exporter in the country, the producer of 40 percent of all crude oil in the country and as the number one job creator in the country as of 2019.

“We’re in good shape, and the Weatherford College service area is sitting right in the fast growth area [of the state],” King said. “If you are willing to come to this new structure and you are willing to work hard, this kind of opportunity will open doors for you like nowhere else in the United States.”

## ALUMNI *from page 5.*

tenacious person you know. But I didn't do this alone," MacKenzie said. "I'm proud of being an alumnus of Weatherford College because it started here."

Lin Bearden, Weatherford banker, WC alumnus and former WC board member, introduced President Farmer as the 2020 Alumnus of the Year.

"Our alumnus of the year was clearly a rising star within the Texas A&M University system, most recently serving as the chief of staff for the president of Tarleton State University," Bearden said as he outlined Farmer's many leadership roles at Tarleton.

While at Tarleton, Farmer wrote two professional books, submitted numerous journal publications and reviewed scholarly works. He became known around the state of Texas for educational leadership and was a noted speaker, consultant and professional development mentor for many.

"Two words often used to describe his work: focused and effective," Bearden said. "In less than three years our alumnus has already dramatically impacted the Weatherford College universe."

Bearden listed several WC achievements during Farmer's short tenure as president so far: philanthropy has exploded, the construction of a new Workforce and Emerging Technologies Building in

partnership with Texas Workforce Solutions has begun, five new sports are in the works, WC now offers a Bachelor's of Science in Nursing degree, the college reached All-Steinway status in less than one year and much more.

"A college, as we've heard today, with extraordinary synergy in all ways—growing, thriving, adapting despite a worldwide pandemic; flourishing when others are suffering; expanding, making new partners daily with donors, other institutions, state agencies and business leaders," Bearden said. "You can call it luck, good timing, a great community, a beautiful campus, a good economy, tradition, loyalty, whatever you want to call it. I call it leadership."

As Bearden predicted, Farmer passed on credit for the recent WC successes to the faculty, staff, students, community members, donors and board members.

"Collectively, they are the change agents that are making this world an even greater place one person at a time," Farmer said. "I will tell you with sincere personal humility that I gladly give Weatherford College all that I have to give as a leader, and yet at times, it is woefully inadequate. The success of Weatherford College is truly a team effort."

He also reflected on his first day at WC walking up the hill in June of 1985 shortly after graduating from Weatherford High School.

"I honestly wondered if I had what it took to be a successful college student. I came from a very humble background and struggled tremendously just to graduate from high school," he said. "I was immediately welcomed by warm, caring professors, and, although I was intellectually challenged like never before, I found that with a tremendous amount of hard work on my part and the support of my caring professors, I did have what it took to succeed in college."

His time at WC sparked what he called an "insatiable appetite for learning." After completing his associate's degree at WC, Farmer majored in marketing at Tarleton State University, earned a Master of Education degree from Tarleton in 1998 and a doctorate in educational administration from the University of North Texas in 2005.

"My experience at Weatherford College set me on a new trajectory in life," Farmer said. "Any successes that I had later in academics or career accomplishments began right here at this noble institution."

"And then, 31 years later, my dream did come true. I was able to return to my beloved alma mater as president. I will tell you that the last two-and-a-half years at Weatherford College have been the greatest years of my life. There is no place on Earth I'd rather be than right here." 📍

## BIG SCREEN *from page 7.*

"I am still hopeful!" he exclaimed.

Like many actors, Davis experienced a halt to many opportunities because of the pandemic, but that hasn't dampened his spirits.

"A lot of job opportunities were put to a stop, which means no acting, and more importantly no income," he said. "For a lot of actors we have been having to put our goals to the side and make do with what we can get our hands on. It is a bumpy road but things can only go up once they're down."

Following his days at WC, where he earned an associate in arts degree, Davis performed for two years with the Granbury Theatre Company before taking off for Atlanta, where he now lives.

"It's tremendously exciting," said James Brownlee, WC director of theatre. "Joshua

was a student of both myself and Nancy McVean (longtime and now retired WC theatre director), so we're both very proud. A common misconception is that art isn't a real profession, yet there are thousands of artists out there proving that quite simply isn't true. Joshua is one of those, and it's an incredible honor that he's a WC success story.

"He is tenacious, beyond talented, and as much as I miss him, I hope he feels me beaming with pride from afar."

Davis does not come from an acting family. However, he said his parents have always been supportive of his dream.

"My parents have supported me since I was a child and always wanted me to go for it, from me putting on shows in our living room to watching me perform on a stage," he said.

And he credits his time at WC for its role (no pun intended) in helping him have

confidence in pursuit of his dream.

"The amazing people I got to work with really trained my skill," he said. "To this day, I use so many techniques on the stage as well as in the shop building sets."

"Honestly I've met so many fantastic people at WC. From my roommates in the dorm to everyone I've met on stage. I can confidently say that anyone I have met and befriended at WC has definitely changed my life for the better."

In addition to acknowledging McVean, Brownlee and others, Davis was also quick to thank Kris Allen, his theatre teacher at Mineral Wells High School.

"He is the foundation of my skill. Without him I would not have attended WC or pursued any of my dreams."

"Coming 2 America" is scheduled for release on December 18. 📍



Photo courtesy of the Cincinnati Reds.

## FORMER COYOTE SHINES IN FIRST MAJOR LEAGUE SEASON

Former Weatherford College baseball player Tejay Antone made his major league debut with the Cincinnati Reds in July and posted one of the best seasons among 2020 Major League Baseball rookies.

The pitcher posted an impressive 2.80 earned run average over 13 games, striking out 45 batters in 35 and 1/3 innings.

Antone became the fourth former Coyote to advance to the majors, including German Duran (Texas Rangers), Jake Arrieta (Baltimore Orioles, Chicago Cubs, Philadelphia Phillies) and Ryan Brasier (Los Angeles Angels, Boston Red Sox).

The Reds drafted Antone out of WC in the fifth round of the 2014 Major League Baseball Amateur Draft, making him the highest pick in Coyote baseball history. He worked his way through the minor leagues over the next six years, including a lost 2017 season due to Tommy John surgery. He advanced to Cincinnati's Triple-A affiliate in Louisville, Kentucky, in 2019.

The Mansfield Legacy High School product transferred to WC from TCU, earning All-Conference honors and setting a WC school record with 99 strikeouts in 84 and 1/3 innings pitched in 2014.

# "FIELDS OF DREAMS" TURF CAMPAIGN

The WC Foundation is seeking donors to help complete WC's artificial turf project. Stuart Field is complete, and now it's time to do the same for Roger Williams Ballpark! All gifts over \$1,000 will be celebrated on signage at the baseball/softball complex. For more information, contact Brent Baker at [bbaker@wc.edu](mailto:bbaker@wc.edu) or 817-598-6275.



 **WEATHERFORD  
COLLEGE  
FOUNDATION**

# PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS 2020



Dr. Tod Allen Farmer hosted his annual Presidential Address and Luncheon on Friday, Oct. 9, in the Alkek Fine Arts Center. WC Board member Lela Morris was presented with a Presidential Core Value coin and Erin Davidson, WC's director of food services, was presented with the Presidential Service Award. WC student ambassadors and athletes welcomed guests as they arrived. Chaeun Lee performed on one of WC's new Steinway grand pianos and WC alumnus Quamon Fowler performed with the WC Jazz Orchestra.