

## Affordability, challenging courses draw students to Collin to begin college careers

**W**hen Thomas Hoyt decided to go back to school and become a family and addiction counselor, Collin College was his first choice.

Not only was it simpler to balance his work and school schedules by remaining in Collin County, but one look at the tuition compared to other schools made it an easy decision. When he got to Collin College, he knew he had made the right call. The classes prepared him for upper-level coursework at Texas A&M-Commerce, and the college's TransferU program put him in touch with advisers who helped guide him along the way. "It wasn't too long after starting Collin that I was made aware of the path that I needed to take to get my degree," Hoyt said. "[TransferU] was a huge influence in my studies. It helped me

to take just the classes I needed, and to get things transferred."

He called the transfer process "seamless."

Collin College's faculty and staff work hard to make that a common experience for students who want to transfer. While the college is committed to providing career and technical training to students who are eager to enter the workforce, about 34 percent of first-time-in-college, full-time students transfer to a university to complete a bachelor's degree or higher.

Students like Hoyt benefit from articulation agreements between Collin College and individual colleges of study at universities across the state. The agreements designate which courses will be accepted and are applicable toward a bachelor's or other degree. Without those plans in place, students might take unnecessary courses or be forced to take a more expensive class at the university when a comparable course was available at Collin.

"Collin College is constantly working with the universities to build student-friendly articulation agreements," said Dr. Cameron Neal, associate provost of instruction. "We want to make sure students get as many transferable and applicable hours as possible at the community college level so their cost can be kept as low as possible."

Advisers at Collin College receive regular training to ensure they are aware of changes to area universities' programs. Collin College's staff and advisers track hundreds of academic program pathways and are trained on how to determine transfer requirements at other institutions.

Students are encouraged to speak to an adviser and meet with academic planning coaches, faculty members who guide students individually through the academic process.

Local high school students benefit from Collin College's focus on planning as well. College and career counselors employed by Collin College and located in schools throughout the college's service district advise students on the best educational path, whether it travels through Collin College or not. In addition, students in dual credit classes provided by Collin College can earn college credit before even setting foot on a higher education campus. In many school districts, the college offers enough dual credit opportunities for a student to earn an associate degree while still in high school.

Both programs assist students in being more prepared to transfer to a university quickly and effectively. Dawnielle Hinze of Frisco took advantage of dual credit classes late in her high school career and then signed up for Collin's Pre-admission Partnership program with The University of Texas at Dallas. The Pre-admission Partnership program is an articulation agreement in which students are accepted to a partner university while still attending Collin College.

Hinze was happy with the cost savings Collin could provide over a purely university-based education, but, more than that, Hinze said coming to Collin College gave her a chance to experience college closer to home, in a smaller, supportive environment.

"I think that if I had gone straight to UTD, I wouldn't have had the confidence that I could do it," Hinze said. "I needed Collin first – to get those A's and feel like I could make it."

Collin College was the first choice for Hoyt and Hinze. It turned out to be a good one.

For more information, visit <http://www.collin.edu/transferu/>.



## Construction management: Laying the foundation for future degrees, certificates

**C**ollin County's incredible growth has provided an unusual educational opportunity in the form of a new, open-air laboratory filled with cranes, backhoes, and dump trucks.

Armed with blueprints, students in the new construction management program don their hardhats and safety goggles and walk the construction site of the Collin Technical Campus in Allen as plans and textbook images come to life.

"It is a great experience being able to connect everything," said construction management student Adriana Niblett.

After completing an internship with Southern Land Company, Niblett was hired as a project field engineer with the caveat that she would earn her degree in construction management.

"We all agreed that Collin College has a great program," Niblett said. "I love the classes. I am constantly making connections from what I do in the field with what I do in the classroom."



Niblett and her fellow classmates are gaining the skills that the construction industry desperately needs.

"Collin County's population is expected to double by 2030," said Phil Crone, attorney and executive officer for the Dallas Builders Association. "The construction industry is facing a critical shortage of labor nationwide. The shortage is most significant here in the DFW area, where anywhere from 25,000 to 35,000 workers are needed across all construction disciplines."

Gary Frazier, president of CORE Construction, agrees and adds, "Collin College's ability to produce construction management degrees in one of the hottest construction markets in the country will create

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## IT'S GROW TIME!

*Collin College has been hard at work expanding its presence in Collin County. Here's the latest:*

## Collin College, Allen ISD break ground on Collin Technical Campus

Officials broke ground Sept. 7 on the Collin College Technical Campus, a 340,000-square-foot career and technical education facility dedicated to instruction in high-demand, high-wage workforce areas.



Collin College Board of Trustees members and honored guests break ground at the Collin College Technical Campus site in Allen on Sept. 7, 2018. (From left) Trustee Steve Matthews, Trustee Adrian Rodriguez, Trustee Dr. Stacey Donald, Trustee Dr. J. Robert Collins, Collin College President Dr. Neil Matkin, Trustee Dr. Raj Menon, Trustee Jim Orr, Trustee Andrew Hardin, Allen Mayor Stephen Terrell, Allen Economic Development Corporation Board President Michael Schaeffer, Allen Independent School District Superintendent Dr. Scott Niven and Allen ISD Board of Trustees Vice President Amy Gnadt.

Built along State Highway 121 east of Exchange Parkway and scheduled for a fall 2020 opening, the three-story campus will offer programs in automotive service and repair, construction, health care, and information technology and manufacturing, as well as general academic classes, student support services, green spaces, cooperative project areas, and covered parking.

Designed with the input of local professionals in each program's career field, the campus will prepare students to enter the job market with current training on the equipment they will use in their industry.

Collin College is also partnering with area school districts to expand career and technical education offerings, enabling high school students to enroll and earn technical dual credit and industry certifications prior to high school

graduation. Allen ISD funded a portion of the construction with the agreement that the school district can use specified classrooms and labs during the regular school hours to expand dual credit opportunities for its students.

Collin College will use the space when Allen High School classes are not in session, providing night and weekend educational opportunities for other students.

### Partners

Allen ISD                      McKinney ISD  
Frisco ISD                      Plano ISD  
Allen Economic  
Development Corporation

### Project Manager:

AECOM – Adrian Grimes, Program Director

### Architect:

Perkins + Will – Tony Schmitz, Sr. Project Manager

### Construction:

McCarthy – Jeff Wagner, Project Executive

## Ribbon cutting for Public Safety Training Center in McKinney



Collin College and local officials cut the ribbon on the Public Safety Training Center in McKinney. Pictured from left are: Fire Science Academy Director Pat McAuliff, Collin College Board of Trustees member Dr. Raj Menon, McKinney Fire Chief Danny Kistner, Trustee Dr. Stacey Donald, McKinney Police Chief Greg Conley, Trustee Fred Moses, Texas Rep. Scott Sanford, Board of Trustees Chairman Dr. J. Robert Collins, Collin College President Dr. Neil Matkin, Allen Police Chief Brian Harvey, Allen Mayor Stephen Terrell, McKinney Mayor George Fuller, Law Enforcement Academy Director Scott Donaldson, Trustee Andrew Hardin and Trustee Steve Matthews. The ribbon cutters are flanked by Collin College Law Enforcement Academy and Fire Science Academy cadets.

On Sept. 28 Collin College celebrated the opening of the Public Safety Training Center, a 25-acre first responder training facility, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and open house. The center provides reality-based training for Collin College's law enforcement and fire science academies and active public safety personnel. The first classes started in fall 2018 training up to 420 students.

Built in cooperation with the cities of McKinney and Allen, the 128,000-square-foot center is one of the most advanced public safety training facilities in North Texas.

The Public Safety Training Center is located at 3600 Redbud

Boulevard in McKinney, allowing public safety agencies throughout the county to train near the cities they serve. The location makes training more convenient and cost-effective, while allowing departments to quickly respond to emergencies that may occur in their service area while training.

### Partners

City of Allen  
City of McKinney

### Project Manager:

Collin College – Dr. Bill King, Exec. Director of Facilities

### Architect:

PBK Architects – John Shriver, Principal

### Construction:

Core Construction – Matt Ludlow, Sr. Project Manager

## Collin College breaks ground at Wylie Campus site



Collin College Board of Trustees members and honored guests break ground at the Collin College Wylie Campus site, Friday, Oct. 19. (From left) Trustee Dr. Stacey Donald, Trustee Dr. Raj Menon, Trustee Jim Orr, Trustee Adrian Rodriguez, Trustee Steve Matthews, Collin College President Dr. Neil Matkin, Trustee Dr. J. Robert Collins, Wylie Mayor Eric Hogue, Trustee Fred Moses, Senator Van Taylor, Wylie ISD Superintendent Dr. David Vinson and Wylie ISD Board President Mitch Herzog.

Officials broke ground Oct. 19 on the Collin College Wylie Campus, a 339,000-square-foot facility that will offer a comprehensive educational experience in southeast Collin County and for residents of Rockwall County, which is in the college's service district.

Sitting on just under 100 acres, with approximately 44 acres donated by the City of Wylie, the new, modern campus will be located along Country Club Road across from the Wylie Municipal Complex. Phase one of the Wylie Campus development includes three multi-story instructional buildings that will function as the library, campus commons, and

student center – the latter of which will include conference center facilities.

Serving approximately 7,500 students when fully occupied, the Collin College Wylie Campus will provide specialized facilities for science, engineering, information technology, fine arts, education, and health care programs.

### Partners

City of Wylie  
Wylie ISD

### Project Manager:

AECOM – Jeff Hagerich, Campus Manager

### Architect:

Page – Dick Robinson, Project Manager

### Construction:

Skanska – Todd Reeves, Project Executive



# Veterans History Project one of many student service learning opportunities

When John-Robert Frederick Fox signed up for his speech class he had no idea that he would be part of a veteran oral history project that will serve as a national legacy.

Fox enrolled in a service learning class. Collin College's award-winning service learning program engages students in valuable experiential learning through service opportunities that benefit the community. In 2016-17 the college's students completed more than 24,000 service learning hours.

Kim Nyman, Fox's speech professor, first began working with the Library of Congress's Veterans History Project in 2009. The project collects and preserves firsthand interviews and narratives of U.S. military veterans from World War I through the present. Since 2012, all of her classes have had the opportunity to work on the national project.

"The students have completed hundreds of interviews," Nyman said. "One student interviewed her grandfather in the early stages of Alzheimer's. Other students have interviewed World War II veterans who have since passed on."

Fox, who plans to go into international business, says service learning classes are valuable because they provide real-world opportunities.

"It was a humbling experience to interview Chuck Morgan," Fox said. "It gives you a whole other perspective on another person's life. Not every veteran has the same experience. Each person has his or her own story. The project made going to class more interesting and fun, and there is a sense of community because you spend so much time working together."

Reflecting on the experience, Fox says listening to Morgan's stories changed his perspective.

"What impacted me the most was that you shouldn't be taking life so seriously and to consider all your options," Fox said. "With working hard and going to school it made me wonder when I last hung out with my family or friends and experienced something new."

Morgan retired as a first lieutenant in the Army. He received an ROTC scholarship and was commissioned as an officer.



Retired U.S. Army First Lieutenant Chuck Morgan (left) is pictured with Collin College student John-Robert Frederick Fox, who interviewed him for an oral history project about military veterans.

"The military was a real good deal for me," Morgan said. "I started in artillery and went into transportation and then continued in the Army Reserves for a couple of years. This project preserves personal history. We live in the digital age and can capture multiple firsthand experiences."

"It will be hard to argue with those facts 50 years from now. Projects like this stabilize history for the future."

While Morgan describes the service learning project as a legacy for society, he notes that the personal aspect is priceless.

"I like the idea that there will be a legacy that my kids and my kids' kids will have," Morgan said. "Had I not been asked, that valuable piece of my history would not be there for my kids."

For information about service learning at Collin College, visit <http://www.collin.edu/academics/servicelearning/>.

## Leadership classes, programs provide 'power to influence'

If you ask Caroline Long what it means to be a leader, she will tell you about servant leaders, who lead by example, and the value of allowing others to contribute. She will also share stories about Collin College's Leadership



Caroline Long

Empowerment and Development (LEAD) camp.

"We spent 15 hours together at Lake Texoma," said Long, who enrolled at Collin in 2017. "It was so intense that it was almost like a catalyst for friendship. You can't afford not to do this because you develop great, lasting relationships, learn about leadership, and make connections

with professors and staff. It will change your perspective and your idea of how everything works at Collin."

LEAD camp offerings range from breakout sessions on leadership characteristics to interactive games, but the camp is just one of many leadership opportunities at

the college. Students can take Leadership Development Institute (LDI) classes that integrate leadership principles into standard course material. Students learn about leadership via in-class discussions, videos and presentations, and guest speakers. They also have opportunities to interview and write reports on leaders and attend Collin College board meetings.

The college also offers LEAD events throughout the year including StrengthsQuest (an online talent assessment platform), leadership workshops, a ropes course, an escape room experience, Leadership in the Movies, and Alternative Spring Break, providing volunteer opportunities. Students can even earn a Certificate of Leadership Development.

Long, who plans to earn a bachelor's degree in molecular biology, said her new leadership skills have been helpful in her roles as a student ambassador and as a leader of a small group in her church.

"Now, I am ready to listen to other people and evaluate what they say in an unbiased way," Long said. "I love the certificate because it is something you can work toward, and you are surrounding yourself with people who want to be leaders."

Toluwani Ogunbayode recently earned his leadership certificate and has taken LDI classes. He plans to earn an associate degree in business, a bachelor's degree in agricultural economics and a master's degree in public service and administration. Ultimately, he hopes to work on policies that improve the economy.

Ogunbayode remarked that learning about characteristics of historical figures like George Washington was interesting and beneficial.

"The LDI classes helped me understand that leadership is the power to influence," Ogunbayode said. "Now, I lead by example. I don't see leadership as delegating. Yes, I have my own preferences, but I want to hear what everyone has to say before I make suggestions. Companies want ready-made leaders, and this is a chance to work on your leadership skills. Even with our busy schedules, I would encourage any student to take a leadership class."

For more information about LDI classes, visit <http://www.collin.edu/academics/ldi/index.html>. For more information about LEAD camp and activities, students can go to **Cougar Connect** and search for LEAD.



Toluwani Ogunbayode



# Calling all community members:

## JANUARY

Jan. 19

### Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Power Leadership Breakfast

8-10 a.m.

#### Plano Campus Living Legends Conference Center

Join students and community members for this year's celebration. Sponsored by the college, the 2019 theme is Intelligence + Character = True Education. The event will feature a panel discussion with education, community, and elected officials, as well as a student performance and a free breakfast.

Jan. 22-Feb. 13

### "The Alternative Processes"

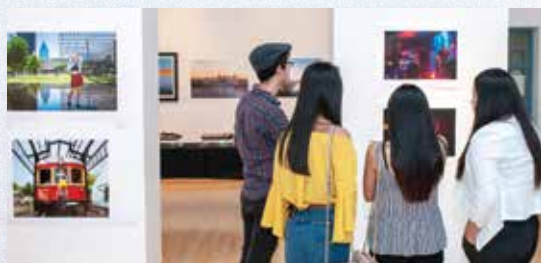
#### THE ARTS gallery at Collin College Plano Campus

Reception: Thursday, Feb. 7

Texas Photographic Society and Collin College collaborate to host The Alternative Processes & Integrated Media Competition, a juried group exhibition that will focus on imagery derived from alternative photographic processes and historical printing methods, as well as photographic image-making techniques that incorporate traditional media such as printmaking, ceramics, or painting.

For gallery hours, visit

[www.collin.edu/departments/artsgallery](http://www.collin.edu/departments/artsgallery)



### Continuing Education Personal Enrichment Courses

Want to expand your skills or explore a new interest without earning credit? These classes are designed for you. Earn an Interior Design Concepts Certificate; try photography; let your inner artist emerge in Drawing, Watercolor and Oil or Acrylic Painting; sign up for the Entrepreneurial Certificate Series and learn everything from How to Start and Operate a Small Business to Accounting and Record Keeping; learn French, German, Arabic, Italian, Japanese, Mandarin, Portuguese, Spanish, or American Sign Language.

Classes start every month

To learn more, visit [www.collin.edu/ce](http://www.collin.edu/ce)

### Seniors Active in Learning (SAIL)

Seniors Active in Learning (SAIL) is a community of lifelong learners who participate in organized study, discussion, and social events through Collin College.

Listen to guest speakers or sign up for classes. The 2019 lineup includes history, literature, bridge and mah-jongg, brain health, book discussions, math and science, current events, and aging health and lifestyle.

For details, visit

<http://www.collin.edu/sail/>

## Check Out Our Libraries

Hubs for collaboration, innovation, and enrichment, the Collin College libraries are located in Plano, Frisco, and McKinney. Community members, residents of Collin County 16 years and older, can check out materials from the collection of 5,000 audio books, 220,000 circulating books, 25,750 DVDs (including 500 Great Courses) and 6,600 music CDs.

To learn more, visit

<http://www.collin.edu/library/>

## Dignity Initiative

Offering film screenings, panel discussions and expert speakers, The Dignity Initiative works to raise awareness and inspire action on issues of violence against and oppression of women. The free spring 2019 lineup includes Laramie Gorbett, human trafficking specialist who will focus on the role of agencies to stop trafficking and gender violence; "Unshackled," a Reader's Theater Presentation; a gender violence panel presentation; In Her Shoes Workshop, an interactive gender violence seminar; and a self-defense symposium.

To learn more, visit [http://](http://www.collin.edu/community/dignity/)

[www.collin.edu/community/dignity/](http://www.collin.edu/community/dignity/)



## Summer Camps

Looking for a cool camp for your middle or high school daughter or son? Collin College offers a wide selection of camps. This year's lineup includes nurse camp, Collin Summer Dance Festival, jazz camp, culinary and pastry camps, cybersecurity camp, robotic camp, and more.

For details, visit <http://www.collin.edu/community/summercamps.html>

## FEBRUARY

Feb. 6

### In the Heat of the Night Auteur Film Series

7 p.m.

#### Frisco Campus Conference Center

Released in 1967, *In the Heat of the Night* follows Philadelphia Detective Virgil Tibbs, played by Sidney Poitier, as he investigates a murder in a small, racially charged Mississippi town. Presented in conjunction with African-American History Month, the movie exemplifies this year's Auteur Film Series theme, "Mavericks and Misfits: Outsiders in Cinema." Chosen around a new theme each year, the Auteur Film Series challenges its audience to explore subjects through the cinematic arts.

For more information on the Auteur Film Series, visit

[www.collin.edu/academics/auteurfilms](http://www.collin.edu/academics/auteurfilms).



Feb. 8

### Guitar Festival Concert

7 p.m.

#### Living Legends Conference Center Plano Campus

Open to guitarists of all skill levels, the festival features guest artists Elliot Frank and Mitch Weverka, and artistic directors Dr. Fernand Vera and Olga Amelkina-Vera. It also includes faculty and student concerts.

Feb. 20-March 20

### Phil Shore (solo exhibition)

#### THE ARTS gallery at Collin College Plano Campus

Reception: Thursday, March 7

Phil Shore's artwork is informed and influenced by his travels and the study of the archaeological artifacts from Ancient Greece and the relationship between humans and the environment. He is an artist and an educator who divides his time between living rurally in Michigan and residing in an urban setting in Texas. Mr. Shore received his master of fine arts from the University of Notre Dame and his bachelor of fine arts from the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University.

For gallery hours, visit

[www.collin.edu/departments/artsgallery](http://www.collin.edu/departments/artsgallery)

## MARCH

March 5-10

### Footloose

#### Collin Theatre Center John Anthony Theatre Plano Campus

Adapted for the stage from the classic movie musical about a rebellious outsider struggling to break free in a town where dancing has been banned, *Footloose* will feature a first-ever collaboration between the Collin College theater and dance departments. The show features music from the original film and new songs written for the stage.

Stage Adaptation by Dean Pitchford and Walter Bobbie. Music by Tom Show. Lyrics by Dean Pitchford. Tickets: \$15-\$20

See [www.collintheatrecenter.com](http://www.collintheatrecenter.com) for show times





# Save the Date!

March 21

**The Elephant Man**  
**Auteur Film Series**  
**7 p.m.**

**The Angelika Film Center in Plano**

Severely deformed, brutalized, and forced to perform in freak shows, John Merrick is freed to live a more normal life when a compassionate doctor takes on his care. Based on a true story. Chosen around a new theme each year, the Auteur Film Series challenges its audience to explore subjects through the cinematic arts. This year's theme is "Mavericks and Misfits: Outsiders in Cinema." Learn more at [www.collin.edu/academics/auteurfilms](http://www.collin.edu/academics/auteurfilms).

March 25-27

**Book-in-Common Author Visit**

Join students and community members and read this year's book-in-common *Death in the Air: The True Story of a Serial Killer, the Great London Smog, and the Strangling of a City* by Kate Winkler Dawson. Don't forget to mark your calendar to meet the author and attend the book signing on Monday, March 25-Wednesday, March 27.

Various times and campuses—visit <http://www.collin.edu/academics/bookincommon/>

**APRIL**

April 3

**Knowledge Is Power**  
**1-2 p.m.**

**Frisco Campus Conference Room**

The Knowledge is Power lecture series examines current and relevant topics through the lens of two or more academic disciplines. Past Knowledge is Power lectures have explored the birth of rock 'n' roll, the sociological influence on nutritional intake, cybercrime and its legal impacts, and the human cost of war on those caught in the crossfire. This spring's topic will be announced soon.

Check [www.collincollegenews.com](http://www.collincollegenews.com) beginning April 3 for more information. Admission is free.

April 4

**"The Aloha State: Saying 'Hello' and 'Goodbye' to the Hawaiian Islands"**

**Passport to the World**  
**2:30 p.m.**

**Central Park Campus Conference Center**

Explore America's 50th state from the comfort of a college campus with the Passport to the World program. Join Drs. Lisa Kirby and Melody Miyamoto as they share their reflections on this beautiful island state, its geography and history. Learn more at <https://www.collin.edu/academics/passport/>.

April 12-13

**InterACTION Dance Concert**  
**John Anthony Theatre**  
**Plano Campus**

Hosted by Collin Dance Ensemble, this concert features student, faculty, and guest choreography and will highlight the student dancers in the performance ensembles. This spectacular spring production embodies the collaborative nature of dance and will captivate your mind, body, and spirit. Tickets: \$10-\$15.

See [www.collintheatrecenter.com](http://www.collintheatrecenter.com) for show times



April 16

**Juno – Auteur Film Series**  
**7 p.m.**

**Living Legends Conference Center**  
**Plano Campus**

Midway through high school, independent-minded teenager Juno finds herself unexpectedly pregnant and turns to her family and friends to find out what she should do.

Chosen around a new theme each year, the Auteur Film Series challenges its audience to explore subjects through the cinematic arts. This year's theme is "Mavericks and Misfits: Outsiders in Cinema." Learn more at [www.collin.edu/academics/auteurfilms](http://www.collin.edu/academics/auteurfilms).

April 17

**Guitar Artists Showcase**  
**7 p.m.**

**THE ARTS gallery**  
**at Collin College Plano Campus**

The guitar studies program at Collin College presents a concert of traditional guitar music in the intimate setting of the Collin College art gallery.

For gallery hours, visit [www.collin.edu/departments/artsgallery](http://www.collin.edu/departments/artsgallery)

April 24-May 15

**Collin College Student Invitational**  
**THE ARTS gallery**  
**at Collin College Plano Campus**  
**Reception: Thursday, May 2**

This annual student exhibition features recent works of art in all media by a select group of returning students nominated by members of the arts faculty of Collin College.

For gallery hours, visit [www.collin.edu/departments/artsgallery](http://www.collin.edu/departments/artsgallery)

April 26-27

**OneSound Pop A cappella**  
**7 p.m.**

**John Anthony Theatre**  
**Plano Campus**

OneSound will perform current pop hits with new pop acappella arrangements.

**MAY**

May 3-4

**Expressions Vocal Jazz**  
**7 p.m.**

**John Anthony Theatre**  
**Plano Campus**

The vocal jazz group Expressions will perform a spring concert featuring music rooted in jazz, but including Brazilian, R&B, classical, and pop influences.

May 2-12

**Baltimore**

**Collin Theatre Center**  
**John Anthony Theatre**  
**Plano Campus**

A timely drama about divisions we create for ourselves, "Baltimore" is the story of a racially-charged incident that drives a wedge between resident adviser Shelby's first-year students. As Shelby finds herself in the middle of a conversation she does not want to have, the pressure to address the controversy mounts from residents, the new dean, and even her best friend. Shelby must decide if she will enter the fray or watch her community burst at the seams. Produced by special arrangement with Playscripts, Inc. Tickets: \$10-\$15.

See [www.collintheatrecenter.com](http://www.collintheatrecenter.com) for show times

May 9-10

**Dances at 7**  
**7 p.m.**

**John Anthony Theatre**  
**Plano Campus**

This end-of-the-semester dance concert features Collin dance students performing a variety of dance styles including modern, jazz, ballet, hip-hop, and ballroom.

Free Admission  
(Scholarship donations accepted)



May 11

**Spring Instrumental Jazz**  
**7 p.m.**

**John Anthony Theatre**  
**Plano Campus**

This concert will feature the Jazztet, Big Band, and Expressions combo in a variety of traditional and contemporary jazz and big band music. Audiences will hear a range of styles including bebop, Latin, and fusion.

May 29

**Opera in a Box**  
**7 p.m.**

**John Anthony Theatre**  
**Plano Campus**

Students in the opera ensemble will perform spotlights, parodies, and figaros from a variety of operatic works.



# Let's talk taxes

*A candid interview with Founding Board Member Dr. J. Robert Collins*



Dr. J. Robert Collins

college's approach to budgeting and tax rates.

**Collin College has the second lowest tax rate among community colleges in Texas. Historically, the college's tax rate has always been low. What is the board's philosophy when it comes to the tax rate?**

We have an overall philosophy of being fiscally conservative. That has allowed us to be careful about spending. We are also organized to be fiscally conservative and to maximize our spending effectively. Consequently, we've been able to address growth and keep our tax

With the Collin College Master Plan rapidly moving forward, *Connection* asked Dr. Bob Collins, current chair and a founding member of the Board of Trustees, to offer a historical perspective on the

rate low. Our rate is less than 5 percent of the total combined overall tax rate burden on the average Collin County property owner.

Collin College has three sources of revenue: funding from the state as a part of the overall higher education tax allotment; revenue from student tuition; and revenue from taxes assessed and paid in Collin County. The state component of our revenue has been steadily declining over many years. Fortunately, the growth in the county has helped to pick up the slack occurring in state funding.

**How does Collin College expect to maintain a low tax rate given the growth outlined in the district's Master Plan?**

The growth impact of the tax revenue we receive is always delayed. This means that new people arrive in Collin County and it is more than a year before we begin to see the tax revenue from the population growth. Yet we need to provide the educational facilities to accommodate growth—and the investment is needed now. The voters of Collin County

approved a \$600 million bond program in 2017 that will fund the building of new campuses and facilities to accommodate the growth in the county. We will be able to keep our tax rate low in part because new residents moving into the county help increase the overall revenue that funds the debt from the bonds. We have performed multiple analyses and forecasts that support being able to keep our tax rate low while accomplishing this aggressive master plan.

**Talk about the most recent tax rate set by the board. Some might see it as a rate increase, but isn't there more to the story?**

There absolutely is more to the story. In 2017, we had forecast a tax rate of 0.08122 dollars per hundred valuation. This is what we presented during the bond campaign and is what we originally planned for 2017-18.

However, we did not sell bonds as we had originally forecasted and consequently did not need the debt portion of the 0.08122 rate for the 2018 fiscal year. We reduced the debt component of the rate, which dropped the total rate to slightly less than eight cents per 100. At the same time, we clearly stated that bonds would be sold and that in 2018-19 the rate would need to go back to what we had forecast during the campaign: .081222. When we approved that rate for 2018-19—and remember, it was the exact rate we had originally forecast for the previous year—some people claimed we had gone back on our word and were misleading taxpayers. In truth, it was simply delayed by one year and during that year taxpayers benefited from a lower rate than originally anticipated. Misinformed statements to the contrary serve to mislead people and do not represent the truth about an institution and county that are among the finest in the nation. Our tax rate is exactly where we said it would be.

**Tax rates aside, the college has a history of fiscal responsibility. What is the budgetary approach that makes that possible?**

We try to plan ahead so that we don't get hammered by unexpected maintenance costs, employee health care costs, or other budgetary surprises. We are also organized to keep our non-teaching labor costs as low as possible. We do this by not being duplicative in such costs as student services, human resources and financial services. We do not allow each campus to establish its own set of "silos." At the same time, we try to regularly look at growth forecasts, both in numbers of people and costs in general, and make best efforts to plan for them. We also work hard to ensure our legislators know our needs and we try to stay ahead of what we believe the Legislature will be doing.

From the very beginning we have emphasized an organizational philosophy designed to prevent the college from becoming top-heavy. We vest a great deal of responsibility in the office of the president of the college. From the beginning we have informed the president that our objective is not to become the best college in Texas; it is to become the best college in the nation, and we are approaching that today.

## NSF awards Collin College \$3.7 million IT grant

The National Science Foundation recently awarded a \$ 3,755,825 million grant to Collin College to support the national project "Information Technology Skill Standards, 2020 and Beyond."

This four-year grant will address the critical need for IT workers and provide up-to-date, future-facing skills standards. The initiative will facilitate curriculum development for two-year and four-year programs that offer applied information technology degrees as well as benefit smaller employers for use in identifying talent. The skills standards will focus on the knowledge, skills, abilities, tasks and performance criteria that employers expect from workforce job candidates.

"The pipeline funneling workers into information technology (IT) jobs is far too narrow, and we simply do not have enough employees to meet the growing demands of this field," said Dr. Ann Beheler, Collin College executive director of Emerging Technology Grants and principal investigator for both the Information Technology Skill Standards grant and a National Convergence Technology Center grant.

"It is an honor to be selected to lead this NSF grant which will enable us to focus on the technical content and employability skills that industry needs and serve as a liaison disseminating that information nationally to two-year and four-year educational institutions," said Beheler.

Collin College will lead the project and is partnering with educational team members from across the country, including Suffolk Community College in New York, Lake Washington Institute of Technology in Washington State, and Lone Star College in Texas. In addition, the project team will work with skills standards experts throughout the United States. According to Beheler, over the lifetime of the grant, the project will involve at least 400 subject matter industry experts from businesses of varying sizes and more than 200 educators selected nationally from educational institutions of varying sizes.



As part of the dissemination process to national educators and employers, the project will offer several workshops across the U.S. and assist with the application of the new IT curriculum standards within historically black colleges, Hispanic serving institutions, tribal colleges, and colleges committed to active veteran programs such as Collin College.

Recognized as a national leader in the field of information technology and communications, Collin College is home to the Convergence Technology Center (CTC), which was founded as a regional center in 2004 and was named a national center in 2012.

For more information, visit [www.connectedtech.org](http://www.connectedtech.org).





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## Construction management continued from page 1

great opportunities for the graduates and help produce qualified applicants for the many construction firms operating in North Texas. This degree program will provide a better candidate for firms to recruit from. CORE, like other national contractors, recruits from numerous college campuses across the country. To have a local program that we could support, mentor, and recruit from is a benefit to all of us."

Though the first class of construction management students will graduate before the Collin Technical Campus is completed in 2020, they remain the pioneers. The students who follow in their footsteps, on more solid ground, will have the opportunity to earn degrees and certificates in many proposed workforce programs ranging from automotive services to physical therapy assistant.

But students do not have to wait until 2020 to take workforce programs at Collin College. The college is currently home to many credit workforce programs such as Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning; welding; computer networking; and electronics engineering technology. Students, like Diana Acero, can also earn noncredit workforce certificates at the college.

"The construction project management series was the best choice that I made for my professional life here in the U.S.A.," said Acero, who served as an architect in Colombia and is currently an architect designer for PDMS Design Group.

"As a professional architect you must be on the leading edge of construction technologies and trends and always be fresh with your knowledge," she added.

Students and companies appreciate the college's close ties with businesses.

"Collin College has worked with industry leaders from day one to ensure that course content is directly compatible with employers' needs," Crone said. "By 2050 more than 3.5 million people will likely call Collin County home. Most of the buildings and homes where these people will work and live will be built by future leaders like those emerging with a construction management degree from Collin College."

Niblett and her classmates are looking forward to that future.

For more information about the new construction management program contact Craig Johnson, professor of construction management, at [cajohnson@collin.edu](mailto:cajohnson@collin.edu).

## Working at Collin College: Why employees are in it for the long term

Every October, Collin College honors employees who have reached five, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30 years of service. In October 2018, 25 professors and staff members celebrated either 25 or 30 years in the district. Dozens more celebrated 15 or 20 years.

The college district's employees tend to stick around.

It is no wonder Collin College was named one of Dallas/Fort Worth's Best and Brightest Companies to Work For® three years in a row by the National Association for Business Resources. The college was also honored nationally by the organization in 2018.

For many longtime employees the mission to make a difference in students' lives is a primary motivator.

Collin College Bursar Deanna Brown, a staff member for 15 years, had worked primarily at non-profits before coming to Collin and said she believes in the benefits conferred by an education.



Deanna Brown

"Helping students achieve their educational goals was one of the reasons I was attracted to apply at Collin," Brown said, adding that she continues to learn every day she works for the college.



Tony Howard

Tony Howard, one of the first professors hired by the district in 1986, said he is energized by the experience of working at Collin, whether he is teaching bright college freshmen or students in SAIL (Seniors Active in Learning). He also appreciates the flexibility that the college offers to improve work/life balance and the camaraderie of working with "like-minded, intelligent folks."

Collin's Vice President of Human Resources Floyd Nickerson said, "It boils down to the people, more than anything else. We have people who want to be here and want to make a difference."

Of course, Nickerson also noted several other reasons the college is a great place to work. The district does salary comparisons for faculty and staff yearly on a rotating basis and consistently offers general pay increases to remain competitive in Collin County and beyond.

The district also offers exceptional health insurance, retirement planning, paid holidays, professional development opportunities, and other incentives at levels on par with other educational organizations. The district goes farther, though, by offering programs like a sick leave pool through which employees can donate their unused sick days to help a coworker suffering from a catastrophic illness or injury.

"That is not something you see everywhere," Nickerson said. "Our employees make that happen."

With support like that, who wouldn't want to stick around for 30 years?

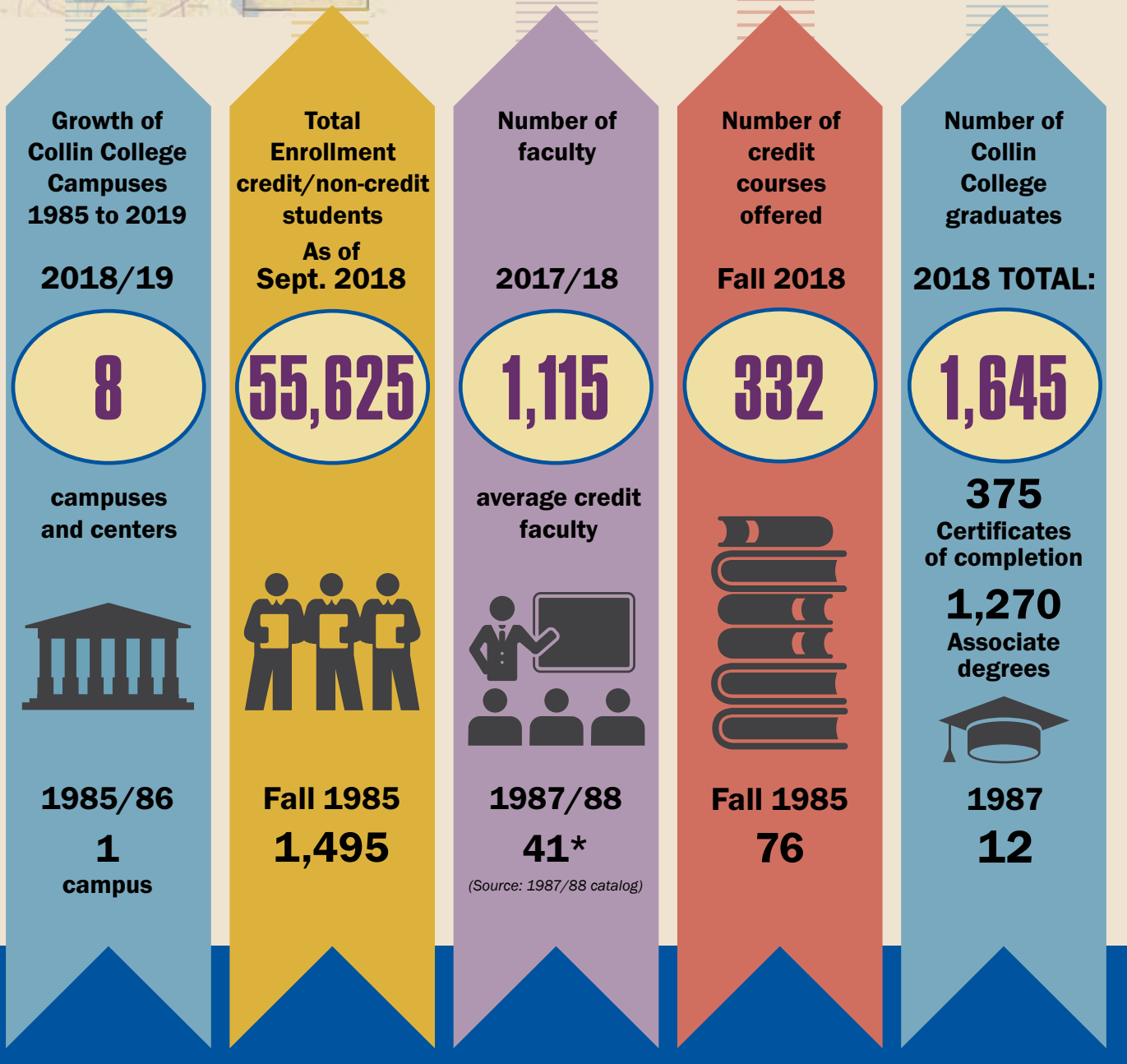
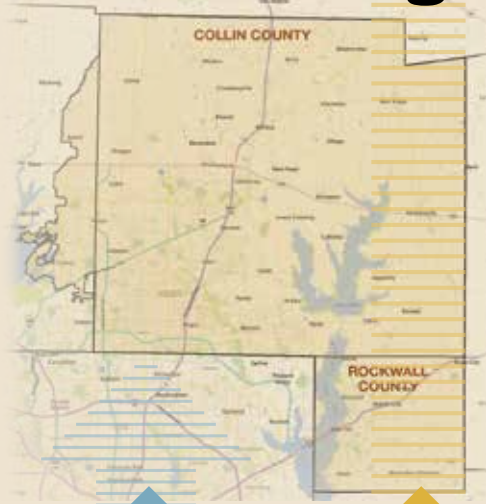
For information on current employment opportunities, visit [www.collin.edu/hr](http://www.collin.edu/hr).



Collin College is

GROWING!

In fact we've been growing by LEAPS and BOUNDS since classes were first offered in the fall semester of 1985



Collin College HIGHLIGHTS

Recognizing trustees, students, faculty, and staff

Collin College is very proud of its trustees, students, faculty, and staff as well as the many achievements they earn over the year.

Check out some of the awards, honors, and other accomplishments that champion the college's core values .

Visit [www.collincollegenews.com/inbrief](http://www.collincollegenews.com/inbrief)



Collin College Core Values

- Learning
- Service and Involvement
- Creativity and Innovation
- Academic Excellence
- Dignity and Respect
- Integrity

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