



# ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE SPECIAL EDITION CONNECTION



Fall 2013

## Honors in Action:

# Phi Theta Kappa honor students flex muscles against zebra mussels



TOP ROW (Left to Right): Bitu Behgooy, Mubanga Musonda, Johanna Qvist, Kero Murugeson, Julia Aguiar, Professor Brandy S. Jumper, Candace Eldridge, Kelly Torosian, Vashtai Kekich, Richard Pearce. BOTTOM ROW (Left to Right): Professor Jessica Hargis, Judy Ma, Tiffany Hernandez, Allen George and Robert Monroy.

When Vashtai Kekich was selected to join the Collin College Alpha Mu Tau chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) honor society, she had no idea that she and her peers would impact the community, nor could she fathom the impact one college project could have on her own life. She only knew that she and her family would celebrate her academic achievement with cake.

Kekich attended the first PTK meeting and was excited to get involved. When the discussion turned to the African water crisis, she mentioned the water crisis she had been reading about in the local paper, the one affecting her neighbors right here in North Texas.

Kekich researched the crisis and then arranged a meeting with Jim Parks, executive director of the North Texas Municipal Water District (NTMWD).

Kekich learned that the NTMWD meets the drinking water needs of 1.6 million people, including residents of Collin, Dallas, Kaufman and Rockwall counties. In 2000, the state border between Texas and Oklahoma was redrawn, inadvertently bisecting the water pump station and moving all but one pump into Oklahoma. In addition, Lake Texoma had an infestation of zebra mussels, which, according to the Lacey Environmental Act, could not be transported across state lines. The water district was operating on 28 percent less water, and if the problem went unfixed, there would be a catastrophic water crisis on top of the ongoing drought. To resolve the loss of the Lake Texoma supply, NTMWD is constructing a pipeline extension that would not allow zebra mussels to enter the environment, but it could not go live without an exception to the Lacey Act.

"This is a big deal," Kekich said. "Jim Parks explained water rates and levels. The NTMWD projects 50 years ahead in the water planning process, and Lake Texoma is a big part of that. With Lake Texoma not accessible, we have a huge problem." *continued on page 4*

## Surmounting the past and redefining a radiant future:

# Student awarded largest transfer scholarship in the nation

It started as an ordinary day. Jennifer Buchan's back was comfortably resting on the soft, blue-fabric, passenger seat of the expansive Grand Marquis. Suddenly, she felt the sting of her boyfriend's hand against her face. She began to cough, and to her horror she saw bright red blood splattering the windshield, her jeans and T-shirt. It was the beginning of the end.

"He would just snap out of nowhere. It was like living with Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. I want to tell women that this can happen to you. I am an intelligent person and was reading psychology textbooks in high school, and this guy did not have a beer belly and wife-beater T-shirt. He is the fun-loving guy that everyone adores, even to this day. People who do this seem like normal people, but they

have emotional problems and can treat you so reprehensibly that they feel badly while they are doing it," Buchan said.

### In the beginning

After working diligently in retail for years, Buchan found a guy who wanted to make her life easier and take care of her. They had a whirlwind romance, and he offered to help with bills, so she could work less. She could finally relax and focus on herself. Maybe, she would even have the opportunity to go to college.

They had been together a year without any sign of violence. Looking back, Buchan could see the cracks in the relationship emerging after his mother died. Then, the abuse started and escalated. Toward the end, she had bruises all over her body. If he loved her, how could he do this? *continued on page 7*

## Collin College Phi Theta Kappa Chapter Award-Winning Tradition

Founded in 1987, the Collin College Alpha Mu Tau chapter of Phi Theta Kappa first achieved Five Star status in 2005 and then again in 2007. From 2009 through today, the chapter has maintained this exceptional distinction.

This year, the chapter received nine awards from the Texas Regional Convention and two international awards under the guidance of faculty advisors **Dr. Brandy Jumper**, **Dr. Jessica Hargis**, **Dr. Mark McKnight**, **Dr. Garry Evans** and **Professor Lynette Kenyon**. Awards included the Distinguished Theme Award for Honors in Action for the "It's a Small World: Competition and Geography" and the Paragon Award for New Advisors awarded to Professor Jumper. The Collin College chapter was internationally ranked as one of the Top 100 Chapters and was once again awarded the Five Star status.

Four outstanding students individually reached a five-star level: **Richard Pearce**, chapter president; **Judy Ma**, vice president of scholarship; **Robert Monroy**, vice president of Service, and **Tiffany Hernandez**, historian.



## Back-to-Back Jack Kent Cooke Scholars from Collin College

**Jennifer Buchan's win**—one of only 73 nationwide—marks the second time in two years that a Collin College student has received the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship **Cameron Woolley**, of Plano, won the prestigious scholarship last year. Woolley is currently attending Southern Methodist University to earn degrees in economics and philosophy, and ultimately he intends to practice law.





# Where are they NOW?

## Celebrating life with a legacy: Collin graduate comes full circle

Rose Lodowski's parents, brothers and sister earned college degrees. Even her friends had framed diplomas mounted on their walls. She longed to earn her degree, but single motherhood squelched that thought into an unrealistic fantasy, so she mentally put it on a shelf for a later time.

Lodowski kept working and eventually remarried and watched her daughter and stepdaughter earn their degrees. In 2008, after 30 years of working in the mortgage business, she was laid off. Lodowski decided the opportunity had finally arrived to dust off the shelf and reach for her dreams.

"The number one thing on my bucket list my whole life was to earn my degree. I was so nervous about going to college that my daughter accompanied me to orientation. However, not once did anyone make me feel uncomfortable. In fact, 60 percent of the students in my classes were nontraditional," Lodowski said.

Collin College was Lodowski's first choice because both her daughter and stepdaughter attended the college and enjoyed their classes. Lodowski earned her Associate of Arts degree, magna cum laude, from Collin and went on to earn her Bachelor of Arts degree in interdisciplinary studies, summa cum laude, from The University of Texas at Dallas.

At Collin, Lodowski fell in love with learning community classes. These unique courses merge two or more disciplines and have at least two professors. She took five of these classes and learned about everything from poetry to astrobiology. Her English professors Dr. Dallie Clark and Scott Yarbrough nominated her for a learning community scholarship.

"It made me feel amazing. When they called and congratulated me, it was like winning an Oscar. It was a thrill to be nominated, but you never dream you will win. I was honored, and it made me work even harder. Letting myself down is one thing, but how could I let down people I didn't even know? I had to make myself worthy of their gift," she said.

Lodowski's diligence paid off. She was awarded a renewable Phi Theta Kappa honor society scholarship to UT Dallas. She was also the first recipient of the Certificate of Scholarly Achievement in Critical Communication at UT Dallas.

"I was unaware and honored that three of my UT Dallas professors submitted my essays for the award. In my head I thought, 'Thank you Professors Clark and Yarbrough for teaching me.' They gave me confidence and inspired me."

### The gift that keeps on giving

The moment Lodowski received her Collin scholarship, she decided when she graduated she would provide another individual with the gift of education. Three weeks after earning her degree from UT Dallas, Lodowski's good friends, Pat and Ann Hussey, were told that their daughter died suddenly of a suspected brain aneurysm. Adrienne Elizabeth Hussey was only 26 years old.

"All the way through my education I was blessed. I always knew I would pay it forward, but when we lost Adrienne, she became my inspiration. She loved learning and always wanted to help others," Lodowski said.

Adrienne opted to donate her organs, and today five people are thriving because of her selfless gift. To honor this extraordinary woman, John and Rose Lodowski created a scholarship in her name, which is enabling students to realize their educational dreams and live richer, fuller lives.

Adrienne, like Lodowski's daughter and stepdaughter, attended Collin College. Passionate about at-risk youth, Adrienne became a Big Sister mentor and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in social work from The University of Texas at Austin (UT) in 2008. While working in her field, she decided to continue her educational journey and pursue a master's degree in sociology.

At three years old, a vibrant Adrienne began taking Irish dance lessons. Her Irish heritage came back to honor her in 2010 when she was named the Texas Rose of Tralee. She was selected to represent Texas in an international competition for Irish women in Tralee, Ireland, and she fell in love with Ireland and its people. In 2011, she earned a Master of Science degree in sociology from UT, and she moved to Ireland.

"I wanted some way to keep Adrienne's memory alive locally. This is a small way we can keep her love of learning and her legacy of helping others alive. Adrienne is continuing to give from the other side."

Lodowski has come full circle. Every day, she hears the swish of her Collin College and UT Dallas graduation tassels swaying from her mirror as she drives. Reflecting back, she has so much gratitude.

"Why wouldn't you give a scholarship? You can honestly help someone make that check mark on his or her bucket list. I never dreamt I would get my degree. I am living proof that dreams do happen. With this small act, through Adrienne's legacy, John and I are helping others to reach their destinies," Lodowski said.

To learn more about donating a scholarship, contact Amy Evans at [aevans@collin.edu](mailto:aevans@collin.edu) or 972.599.3144.

**"It made me feel amazing.**

**When they called and congratulated me, it was like winning an Oscar.**

**It was a thrill to be nominated, but you never dream you will win.**

**I was honored, and it made me work even harder.**

**Letting myself down is one thing, but how could I let down people I didn't even know? I had to make myself worthy of their gift."**



**Rose Lodowski**



# ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE SPECIAL EDITION



Below is just a small sample of third party acknowledgements of the academic excellence found at your local college.



Back-to-Back  
**JACK KENT  
COOKE  
SCHOLARS**

Source: Jack Kent Cooke Foundation. See related story on page 1.

Phi Theta Kappa  
**5 STAR CHAPTER**

Source: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. See related story on page 1.

National Science Foundation  
**NATIONAL  
CENTER OF  
EXCELLENCE**

Source: National Science Foundation

**3 U.S.  
PROFESSORS  
OF THE YEAR**

Source: Council for the Advancement and Support of Education and the Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Teaching

**2 TEXAS  
PROFESSORS  
OF THE YEAR**

Source: Council for the Advancement and Support of Education and the Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Teaching

Center for Math & Natural Science  
**ASTEROID DISCOVERY**

Source: National Aeronautics and Space Alliance International Asteroid Search Campaign and the Minor Planet Center, an office of the International Astronomical Union located at the Harvard-Smithsonian

**PRESIDENTIAL  
AWARD FINALIST**  
National  
Higher Education  
Community Service  
Honor Roll

Source: Corporation for National and Community Service

Texas' only  
**CENTER OF  
EXCELLENCE  
in  
NURSING**

Source: National League of Nursing

Psi Beta  
**CHAPTER  
EXCELLENCE AWARD**

Source: Psi Beta Psychology Honor Society

Distinguished Registered  
**RESPIRATORY THERAPY  
Credentialing  
SUCCESS AWARD**

Source: Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care

**SURGICAL TECHNOLOGY  
NATIONAL  
MERIT AWARD**

Source: National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting

**TECH  
TITAN  
FINALIST**

Source: Metroplex Technology Business Council

**ASSOCIATE  
COSTUME  
DESIGNER**  
FOR TONY AWARD WINNING  
BEST MUSICAL

Source: Tony Awards. See Student Highlights on page 6

Model United Nations Team  
**DISTINGUISHED  
NATIONAL DELEGATION**

Source: Model United Nations

**TOP 10  
AWESOME  
COMMUNITY COLLEGES  
IN THE LONE STAR STATE**

Source: Schools.com

Texas' only  
**NAEYC  
ACCREDITED**  
Child Development  
Program & Lab School  
at a community college

Source: National Association for the Education of Young Children

**TEXAS GOLD  
COMPTROLLER  
LEADERSHIP  
CIRCLE  
AWARD**

setting the bar for financial transparency

Source: State Comptroller's Office

**EXCELLENCE IN  
PROCUREMENT  
AWARD**

Source: National Purchasing Institute

**LOWEST TUITION  
in the STATE OF TEXAS**

**Distinguished BUDGET  
PRESENTATION AWARD**  
the highest form of recognition  
in governmental budgeting

Source: Government Finance Officers Association

**CENTRAL PARK CAMPUS LIBRARY  
PROJECT OF DISTINCTION  
NATIONAL WINNER**

2010 Education Design Showcase  
Source: College Planning and Management magazine



# Phi Theta Kappa honor students continued from page 1

Kekich learned that federal legislation was filed to grant an exception to the Lacey Act, but the public was still somehow unaware of the importance of the legislation, so she and her fellow PTK members decided to inform students, professors and the public. The group manned tables at campuses in Plano, Frisco and McKinney. In addition, they created and held a water symposium featuring Parks and Ellen McDonald, a zebra mussel expert and principal at Alan Plummer Associates, Inc.

According to Kekich, the group planned the symposium in 10 days, and she was pleasantly surprised when close to 200 people filled the room. In addition, the students gathered 673 signatures of support.

“My professor told me her friend from the Army Corps of Engineers was there. People were excited. When they took the bill to the Senate, we wanted them to know that the community was behind it, and we thought it was important that Collin College had a voice in this,” added Kekich, who was elected the vice president of membership for PTK. Collin College currently has 770 members in Phi Theta Kappa and has inducted more than 6,700 since the honor society chapter was chartered in 1987.

The bill, signed by President Barack Obama, had a world-class list of supporters including but not limited to U.S. Congressmen Ralph Hall, Sam Johnson, Pete Sessions and Jeb Hensarling as well as Senator John Cornyn and retired Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison at the federal level and Texas Senators Craig Estes and Ken Paxton at the state level.

According to Denise Hickey, public relations coordinator for the NTMWD, in 2011 North Texas had the driest year on record, and the area served by the NTMWD remains on water restrictions due to ongoing drought and the loss of the Texoma supply.

## This just in from D.C. and Austin...



### Congressman Ralph Hall

“It’s easy to take water for granted, but this increasingly scarce resource requires enormous planning to get from its source to your tap. Students at Collin College are enthusiastic about these issues and have done their homework. No problem ever gets solved without the clear will of the people, and having so many people supporting the North Texas Zebra Mussel Act made my job easier in convincing my fellow Members of Congress that this needed to get done. We had to overcome several concerns about invasive species, and our bill created a new model of cooperation among the Army Corps of Engineers, the North Texas Municipal Water District, and local authorities. I’m very impressed with what Collin College students have done on this issue.”



### Congressman Sam Johnson

“I am glad Congress acted quickly last year to eliminate unnecessary red tape and allow the North Texas Municipal Water District to safely resume the transfer and treatment of water from Lake Texoma, ensuring a healthy water supply for more than 1.5 million Texans. We need more folks like Collin College students to be involved in not only the water supply issue, but all issues confronting our community. What these students did to raise awareness and educate their peers is truly remarkable. I commend their efforts, as it is crucial for North Texans to boast of clean and ample water supply.”



### U.S. Senator John Cornyn

“A steady water supply is crucial to the livelihoods of Texans all over the state. The matter is all the more pressing given the historic drought we’re weathering. I’m pleased that we were able to get the North Zebra Mussel Act signed into law, which will allow the Texoma Water Pump to reopen and provide water to more than 1.5 million Texans. And I’m grateful for the hard work of the Collin College students who advocated so strongly for this bill. Their dedication truly helped get this bill through Congress and to the President’s desk for his signature.”



### State Senator Craig Estes

“This is another great example of participation in the lawmaking process, which creates awareness for key issues facing our region and the State of Texas. Actions such as this help encourage legislators to make changes and propose legislation to improve the quality of life and safety of our citizens. Student involvement in drawing attention to the zebra mussel is one of the reasons I authored Senate Bill 1212, the state version of the Zebra Mussel Act. This bill will guarantee that the North Texas Municipal Water District and the Greater Texoma Utility Authority may continue to provide water to the more than 1.5 million people in North Texas.”



### State Senator Ken Paxton

“I applaud the efforts of the Collin College students to engage in policy discussion and promote awareness of the water supply issue in North Texas. Ensuring an adequate and reliable water supply is vital to our growing community and raising awareness will not only educate individuals on this issue, but also provide valuable feedback for elected officials as they work to effectively address the needs of North Texas.”



Jim Parks, executive director of the North Texas Municipal Water District, with PTK member Vashtai Kekich.

“There is awareness at your students’ level that the water supply was an important issue,” said Hickey. “The letters were instrumental in showing support for the district. They should be applauded for that. The group played a supporting role to regain the needed Texoma water supply. If you start getting letters, calls and emails, and awareness is heightened, then any individual will pay more attention to any topic.” (See “This just in from D.C. and Austin” below left)

## An International Competition

With the assistance of the PTK officers, Collin College PTK Vice President of Scholarship Judy Ma wrote an essay about the students’ project, which won regional and international awards. In addition, the awards resulted in the Collin chapter being named one of the top 100 chapters in the world. According to Ma, the Honors in Action Project addressed “The Culture of Competition” by concentrating attention on the theme of “Competition and Geography.” Students examined the issue of how geographical location affects competition for natural resources in communities, with a primary emphasis on water.

After the water symposium, the PTK chapter organized a trip, open to all Collin College students, to the John Bunker Sands Wetland Center. This was the capstone of their research. They were able to learn about natural water filtration and observe, with their own eyes, the reality their community was facing.

Ma will soon transfer to a university to complete her degree in wildlife biology or animal science and says this project was invaluable. She and four other PTK students, including Julia Aguiar, DeVincent Martin, Trang Nguyen and Chista Tatar, were named to the All Texas Academic Team.



Judy Ma

“Because of Phi Theta Kappa, I had the opportunity to be nominated and selected for the All Texas Academic Team. They offer full-ride scholarships including room, board and tuition to Texas A&M University-Commerce or The University of Texas at Arlington. I never would have had that opportunity without Collin and Phi Theta Kappa,” Ma said.

Kekich could not agree more. Before graduating from Collin College in May, she received letters from top universities nationwide asking her to apply because of her involvement in PTK. She applied to Cornell, Brown, Yale, Southern Methodist University and the University of Pennsylvania (UPenn). Before she left for the international PTK conference, she received a letter from her top choice, UPenn, for an upcoming interview. On the first day of the international conference, she asked the woman at the UPenn table for any tips for her upcoming interview and discovered this woman was slated to interview her the following week. Her in-person interview had already begun!

An amazed Kekich says she watched as her future fell into place. This fall she will attend UPenn and serve as living proof to her young daughter that with passion, hard work and an exceptional education anything can happen.

“Collin College and Phi Theta Kappa changed my life,” said Kekich. “Without them, this single mom with nothing would not be going to an Ivy League university in the fall.”



# University-bound students flock to perks of Pre-Admission program at Collin College



Demetra Caston's dreams of attending graduate school and transforming her local community as a mental health professional took their first step to fruition through the pre-admission partnerships at Collin College.

Caston, a Collin College graduate who completed her family studies degree at Texas Woman's University (TWU) in May 2013 and recently started graduate school in counseling and development, agreed with most students who use the program. It was the perks of the partnerships that ultimately led her down the pre-admissions path.

"I was able to have conversations about my life goals and determine what would be the best fit for me," Caston said.

## WHAT IS PRE-ADMISSION?

When students apply for pre-admission, they have identified themselves as transferring to a particular university, enabling the transfer institution to assist students throughout their academic career at Collin College and better prepare them for their junior and senior years.

Collin College pre-admission partners include Austin College, Baylor University, Dallas Baptist University (DBU), Southern Methodist University (SMU), Texas A&M University, Texas A&M University - Commerce, Texas Tech University, TWU, The University of Texas at Dallas (UTD) and the University of North Texas (UNT).

"While all partnerships are classified as pre-admission, benefits are different at each institution," said Dr. Colleen Smith, senior vice president of academic affairs and student development. "For instance, Austin College provides faculty mentors and SMU provides pre-admission advising, while UT Dallas locks in tuition rates for students."

Some universities, like UT Dallas, even offer concentration-specific benefits. Individuals interested in health or law careers can enroll in the Comet Connection at UT Dallas and gain the opportunity to meet with their respective advisors each semester along with access to the resource centers.

## THE ROAD TO REACHING GOALS

With so many opportunities for students following their completion at Collin College, such as entering the workforce or continuing toward bachelor's degrees, it is often difficult for students to process choices regarding their future. Fortunately, pre-admission helps to ease that burden.

One day while waiting for a class at the Preston Ridge Campus, Caston met Nikki Young, associate director of admissions at TWU.

"She informed me of how seamless the pre-admissions program was and how TWU would help me achieve my goals," Caston said.

After enrolling in the TWU pre-admission partnership, Caston found visiting with university advisors, guaranteed admission upon completion of her associate degree, opportunities for scholarships and the peace of a smoother transition gave her confidence in her decision and future.

Young, who has served as the TWU Bound liaison for the last six years, said she really enjoys working with Collin College students like Caston.

"They are well prepared, and most of them set realistic timelines to achieve their academic goals," Young said. "I love that I get to connect students with the various university departments that will assist in their transition."

Another former Collin College student, Kim Du Toit, took advantage of the pre-admission resources in his transfer to UNT and described the process as utterly seamless. He recalls Dr. Myra Hafer, the UNT partner representative, giving great advice. "The pre-admissions process was excellent," Du Toit said. "It enabled me to navigate the maze of procedures involved in getting into a university, which I'd never experienced before."

Like Du Toit, Caston said she loved her time at Collin College and the great relationships formed through participating in the Phi Theta Kappa honor society. After graduating in August 2011 with her Associate of Arts, Caston made her move to TWU, where she specialized in family studies and earned admission to a master's program. Down the road, Caston hopes to both work in the industry and return to school to obtain her doctoral degree.

"I plan to specialize in marriage and family therapy," Caston said. "It will allow me to provide services to both my local community and communities at large."

For more information about pre-admission partnerships at Collin College, visit <http://transferu.collin.edu/ub.html>.



Demetra Caston





# Exploring Areas of Study:

# Making students say “I love math!”

Corporate recruiters say mathematics and computational skills are deal-breakers for hiring. As companies struggle to find engineers, computer technicians, programmers and scientists, math can be the secret to success for some of the hottest careers in the nation. Yet, say the word “math” in a public place, and one is bound to hear groans without anyone standing up to champion mathematics with the fervor of Pythagoras and the ancient Greeks.



Steven Maggard

Future Marine Corps aviator and current Collin College student **Steven Maggard** concedes that many people will flippantly say they do not like math or think they are not good at it. “But it’s really the misconceptions they have about math they don’t like,” Maggard said. “Once you clear up the fog, it’s actually quite enjoyable. If you look in daily life, there is math everywhere.”

### Step 1: Embrace the Math in “Real Life”

With a similar mindset to Dr. Rosemary Karr, who won U.S. Professor of the Year in 2007, Collin College math professors Chip Galloway and Julie Turnbow know a strong math foundation creates a solid groundwork for many things in one’s daily life, from issues as pivotal as the intensity of an earthquake to whether basketball players will make their shots based on the distance, force and angle thrown.

Basic and intermediate math, Turnbow says, are essential to the completion of many tasks in the typical adult life, such as calculating discounts, taxes or tips. She remembers one of her students who saved thousands of dollars

by merely double-checking the work of his mortgage financier. “He found a .0025 error,” Turnbow said. “That’s a quarter of a percent. It doesn’t sound like much, but in the long run it was a \$10,000 error over the life of the loan.” In respect to history and entertainment application, Galloway has studied the relationship between math and the areas of music, art and religion extensively.

“Many people don’t know this, but back in the time of Pythagoras, music and math were the same thing,” Galloway said. “They weren’t separated. Music was actually considered to be a branch of math. The underpinnings of music are very mathematical.”

He also references the Richter scale, used to measure the intensity of earthquakes. The scale’s formula is based on a logarithm. Similarly, and quite relevant to Maggard, Turnbow said many of her veteran students note the use of trigonometry, sine and cosine, when firing weapons in the military.

### Step 2: Seize Careers using Math

Maggard said pursuing a career in the military was actually the reason he chose to focus his studies in math. “One of the Marine Corps aviator requirements is a bachelor’s degree in mathematics, engineering or physics,” Maggard said.

Maggard said math relates to aviation because it is used to plan flights and account for how much fuel a plane needs. This requires calculating flight speed and length. The math behind the air pressure and wings allows the plane to lift off the ground.

“Understanding that helps you know how you need to control the plane to be able to fly it,” Maggard said.

In addition to careers in the military and opportunities to teach, math majors can pursue careers in a range of areas. Actuarial work, insurance, engineering and the sciences are common.

“Several years ago, the National Security Agency (NSA) hired more math Ph.D. graduates than anybody to do cryptology and code breaking,” Galloway said.

### Step 3: Say “I’m Good at Math” Proudly

Galloway believes understanding the math behind things helps one to understand the world around them better. It is not about whether one is “good at it” on the first try. Maggard said in the classroom Galloway often rearranges the order of the textbook work to flow more with the logic of the problems. He builds brick upon brick. Turnbow and Maggard believe that those who say math is boring simply have not had the opportunity to see the big picture of what can be done with math.

“I’m very big about practice when it comes to math and liken it to a sport, like weight lifting,” Turnbow said. “If I walk by and just look at the weights, I’m not going to gain any benefit from that. Math is the same way. They need to get beyond the feeling and not use it as a crutch or an excuse,” Turnbow said.

In the classroom, Turnbow uses tools such as singing the quadratic formula or jazz hands and disco dancing when explaining even and odd functions.

If students are struggling, the professors suggest visiting the Math Lab on their respective campus, attending office hours, watching Khan Institute videos or hiring a private tutor.

Most of all, these Collin College math professors try to communicate their own excitement about math to their students. “I discuss interesting things, like math history, and am always trying to relate how math relates to everything, even things like art and music,” Galloway said.

Maggard said he understands math can be a difficult subject for some students. However, he encourages them not to give up.

“I understand struggling. Integrals weren’t easy for me at first, but after a lot of practice, they became fun. Once you get beyond some of the basics, and you can see the application, it really makes a difference.”

For information on mathematics at Collin College, visit <http://www.collin.edu/academics/programs/mathematics.html>.

## Faculty & Staff HIGHLIGHTS



Dr. Rod Coltman

The national Intercollegiate Tennis Association named **Dr. Rod Coltman** the Assistant Coach of the Year. Dr. Rod Coltman serves as Collin College’s assistant tennis coach as well as a professor of philosophy.

Radio/TV Professor **Celidh Charleson-Jennings** was featured on *Good Morning America* as she showed Bob Woodruff how to teach a service dog new tricks in conjunction with the release of her new book *The Possibility Dogs* under her pen name Susannah Charleson.

**Adam Miller**, professor of philosophy, has been appointed co-editor of a new academic book series titled “Groundwork: Studies in Theory and Scripture” for the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship and Brigham Young University Press. In addition, Dr. Miller’s fourth book, “Speculative Grace: Bruno Latour and Object-Oriented Theology,” was just published by Fordham University Press in the “Perspectives in Continental Thought” series.



Barbara Lusk

**Barbara Lusk**, professor of psychology, published an article titled “Building a Better Brain” in the *APA Monitor*, the monthly magazine of the American Psychological Association.



Celidh Charleson-Jennings with Bob Woodruff

*The Journal of Microbiology and Biology Education* published a manuscript by **Donna Cain**, professor of biology, on the “Impact of a Service-Learning Project on Student Success in Allied Health Microbiology Course.”

**Rebecca Boatman**, professor of art, was selected to exhibit at the National Education for Ceramic Arts in Houston, the largest international art conference. Her exhibit “Concentric Transmissions” celebrated the life of Texas Woman’s University professor John Brough Miller.

**Scott Yarbrough**, professor of English, recently published a book of collected poetry through Ink Brush Press. The collection is titled *An Adam Infant Sort of Dropped: True Myths*.

Associate Professor of English **Joan Reese** is one of five poets included in an anthology, *Versus*, published by Pure Slush Press from Australia. Fifteen of her poems were featured. In addition, her fiction was nominated for 2012 “Best of the Net” by *A-Minor Magazine* and her poems are currently in *Thrice Magazine* and *Unshod Quills*.



Joan Reese



Michael Gromatzky

The McKinney Chamber of Commerce named Vice President of Organizational Effectiveness and Human Resources **Kim Davison** as one of McKinney’s Top 25 Women in Business for 2013.

Chief of Police **Michael Gromatzky** is profiled in the article “Focus on Learning Keeps Unit Expanding, Officers Growing Professionally,” published in the *Campus Security Report*.

**Norma Allen**, associate vice president of human resources and organizational effectiveness, has been appointed to the Western Region Board of the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources.



Norma Allen



# Student awarded largest transfer scholarship

continued from page 1

“When you believe that things are meant to be, it is dangerous. It makes your emotions always front-and-center. You have to separate from that and stop the cycle. I want to help people like me who think they are invincible and too smart to get into a relationship like that.”

## One life chapter ends and another begins

It took that day in the car and the hiding afterward, so no one would see her black eyes, to give Buchan the strength to leave. Estranged from her family, she was isolated.

“I let go of the abuse and hard times, but it was so hard to have Christmases alone,” she said, as the tears welled up in her eyes.

A friend gave Buchan a copy of *The Alchemist*. The book motivated her to pursue her dream of education.

“I am not a religious person, but I felt like it was telling me to go for the dream and that the journey is what matters. I realized what was holding me back was—me.”

While working several jobs, Buchan began taking classes at Collin College in 2011. She earned an A in every class. She soaked up each word her professors said, enjoyed the dialogue with her peers in honors courses and reveled in the intersecting connections between her classes. She had a love for writing and was publishing her work. She joined the Phi Theta Kappa honor society and was named a Collin College Emerging Scholar.

“I love Collin College. I am passionate about it because I have had fabulous professors, and I have a high standard for professors. Professor Lisa Kirby changed my life. The ideas she conveys explode in my head. In each of her English classes, every student writes four to five essays. Students get up and shout, ‘I am a writer!’ Can you imagine how wonderful that was for me?”



Jennifer Buchan

## The future beckons

However, another hurdle was looming in Buchan’s path. She did not have the financial means to continue her education at a university. Her Collin professors recommended her for the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship, which is the largest private transfer scholarship for community college students in the nation. Months later, the college’s chairman of the board and president surprised her in class with the news that she had won! Buchan was one of only 73 college students nationwide awarded the prestigious scholarship.

Judged by a panel of distinguished university faculty and admissions professionals, the scholarship is given to students who demonstrate academic ability and achievement, financial need, self-confidence, resilience and the desire to engage in and contribute to the world.

Buchan will receive up to \$30,000 a year to complete her bachelor’s degree. The scholarship helps students with tuition, living expenses, books and fees for the final two to three years of courses required for baccalaureate degrees. Buchan plans to transfer to Austin College or the University of North Texas to pursue degrees in English and history. Ultimately, she aspires to become a writer, earn a doctorate and teach. As she continues her educational journey, she will write about her experiences in an effort to educate people about abuse. She hopes her words will take the stigma away from those who have shared her experiences and help save others from an agony they need not endure.

“I want to break down the label barriers. Being a victim of abuse doesn’t make you weak, and I am so much more than a victim. I let the past go, and it got more and more exciting every day. It keeps getting better. It has been 14 years of having almost no family, being an orphan of sorts, and that is weird and hard to explain to people, but this award made me feel more whole, and those low moments faded. It was a big wake up call for me because I realized I was achieving my dream. It is a really exhilarating time in my life. I am excited about what is around the next corner.”

# Student & Alumni HIGHLIGHTS



Thomas Charles LeGalley

Former Collin College theatre student **Thomas Charles LeGalley** served as the associate costume designer for the Tony Award winning Best Musical “Kinky Boots,” which features music and lyrics by Cyndi Lauper.

At its state convention, Collin College’s **Student Government Association** won second place in the video competition and honorable mention in the statewide essay competition.

At the National Association of Teachers of Singing competition, Collin College student **Justin Duncan** won first place in the Musical Theatre Division for Colleges and received the “Anne Weeks Jackson Award” as Outstanding Male Singer in the Musical Theatre Division against 212 student entrants.

**Thor Rushing** won the U.S. Army’s Best Warrior Competition. He credits Collin College and Professors Jean-Marie Dauplaise and Dr. Kerry Byrnes for helping him reach the top with his written essay and public speaking.



Brian J. Smith

Former Collin College theatre student **Brian J. Smith** appeared in an episode of CBS’ *Blue Bloods*, titled “Devil’s Breath.”

The **Collin College Men’s and Women’s Tennis team** both finished third in their national tennis tournaments. This marks the highest finish in the history of the women’s team at the Division I level. Player **Clorinda Wessels** was named the 2013 Women’s Intercollegiate Tennis



Patrick Clynes and Donovan McSeveney

Association Player to Watch. She is ranked in the Top 5 in both women’s singles and doubles rankings. For the men’s team, **Patrick Clynes** and **Donovan McSeveney** won the Flight 1 doubles making them the top two-year college men’s doubles team in the country and first team All Americans. **Oscar von Koch** was the Flight 3 singles national runner-up and second team All American.



Collin College Men’s and Women’s tennis teams

Student **Angelique Campbell**, Collin Women’s Basketball, has been announced as a winner of the 2012-2013 National Junior College Athletic Association Award for Exemplary Academic Achievement. Also, the Women’s Tennis Team was named as 2012-2013 NJCAA Women’s Tennis All-Academic Team. To be recognized for exemplary academic achievement, a student must hold a 3.6 GPA or better; All-Academic Teams must have a 3.0+ team GPA.



Angelique Campbell







Thank You



David Dewhurst  
Lieutenant Governor of Texas



Craig Estes  
Texas State Senator



Jodie Laubenberg  
Texas State Representative



Ken Paxton  
Texas State Senator

The Board of Trustees and District President Cary A. Israel, along with the faculty, staff and students of Collin College, would like to extend sincerest gratitude to our state legislators for their advocacy and leadership during the 83<sup>rd</sup> Texas Legislature. The support of our outstanding elected officials resulted in visionary initiatives, overall increased funding for community college students and restoration of some health care and retirement benefits for hard working employees.

We offer special thanks to Representative Jodie Laubenberg for taking the lead to propose expansion of health care baccalaureate degrees at Collin College in order to ease the shortages in our state. The college also recognizes the foresight of Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst for recommending Collin College to be represented on a legislative interim study committee that will deliberate the issue of some community colleges offering baccalaureate degrees in health care and other high demand fields. With 53,000 students annually and more than 2,500 employees, Collin College is committed to offering stellar academic programs as well as meeting the critical demands of our local workforce. We thank you for allowing us to maintain the highest standards of academic excellence!

Mac Hendricks  
Board of Trustees Chair

Nancy Wurzman  
Board of Trustees Treasurer

Adrian Rodriguez  
Board of Trustees, Place 4

Stacy Anne Arias  
Board of Trustees Vice Chair

Dr. J. Robert Collins  
Board of Trustees, Place 8

Tino Trujillo  
Board of Trustees, Place 7

Jenny McCall  
Board of Trustees Secretary

Andy Hardin  
Board of Trustees, Place 9

Larry Wainwright  
Board of Trustees, Place 3

Cary A. Israel  
District President



Van Taylor  
Texas State Representative



Jeff Leach  
Texas State Representative



Scott Turner  
Texas State Representative



Scott Sanford  
Texas State Representative



inside this issue

Honors in action..... 1

Student awarded largest scholarship in the nation..... 1

Where are they now? ..... 2

Academic excellence ..... 3

This just in from D.C. and Austin... 4

Pre-Admission program..... 5

Faculty & staff highlights ..... 6

Exploring areas of study ..... 6

Student & alumni highlights ..... 7



POSTAL CUSTOMER

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
US Postage  
PAID  
Plano, TX 75074  
Permit #275