



CONNECTION

SUMMER 2011

1 of 12 in U.S. Carnegie Foundation honors Collin College student service, volunteerism



Students and professors at Collin College take civic engagement very seriously, and now their effort has been nationally recognized. Collin College was one of 12 community colleges across the country selected by the Carnegie

Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching for its 2010 Community Engagement Classification.

Last year, students provided more than 15,000 service hours to non-profit organizations. For example, six Collin College professors and one student served as crew leaders for the Plano-based Love Where You Live project, designed to revitalize a city neighborhood. Students from several Collin College organizations including Phi Theta Kappa (ΦΘΚ) honor society, Volunteer Outreach in Civic Engagement (VOICE), the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) worked together on the project painting numbers on curbs, cleaning yards and making home repairs.

Crew leader and VOICE founder Cristina Garcia worked with her team on a home owned by a single mother of three children.

“We found out that the day we volunteered was the owner’s birthday. She started crying and said this was the best birthday present ever. I learned in the Student Leadership Academy that in order to lead you need to serve. It was inspiring to see so many students, professors and staff members working together to help one family,” Garcia said.

Associate Professor of Speech Candace Eldridge and her team painted curb numbers.

“Some people worked each weekend on this project. The LULAC group worked on one house for two months. Most of my students worked all day. Some students thought the owners of the houses didn’t really care about their homes. I think it was eye opening for students to talk with the families and learn that it wasn’t that they didn’t care; they just physically couldn’t do the work. The students just didn’t know there was a need before. Two students even went back the next day to mow a woman’s grass that was knee high. It was great to see them do more than come to school,

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**Collin College
STUDENT
VOLUNTEERISM
2009-2010**

1,170 Student Volunteers

15,716 Hours of Service

Note: Totals include both service-learning projects, associated with coursework, and volunteer service projects from students in campus organizations.



Bursting at the seams: Trustees approve expansion for Spring Creek Campus

To meet the needs of students at the Spring Creek Campus in Plano, the Collin College Board of Trustees approved plans for a new library building. The 85,000 square-foot facility—complete with classrooms, faculty offices, study rooms and a resource center—will open in fall 2012 on the Jupiter Road side of the campus.

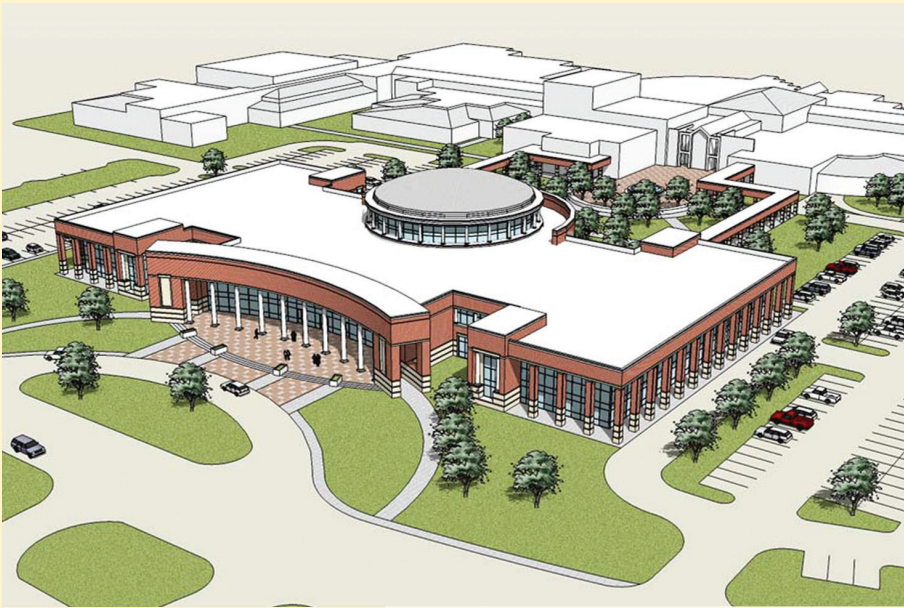
The added space will ease the growing scarcity of classroom space and faculty offices caused by booming student enrollment. Enrollment at Spring Creek Campus alone has grown by more than 4,300 students or 46.7 percent in 10 years. To date, 13,614 students are using a campus meant for 7,000.

The project will reflect the award-winning campus designs at the Preston Ridge Campus in Frisco and the Central Park Campus in McKinney. Those designs were based on a vision from the Board of Trustees in which the master plans for future expansion would place libraries as the centerpieces of each campus, with faculty offices and classrooms in the same space, creating a “learning community.”

In 2005, Collin College opened the first such renovation with a state-of-the-art library building in the center of the Preston Ridge Campus in Frisco, with subsequent buildings added around it to enclose a quad-commons area. In 2009, the college unveiled a 70,000-square-foot library in the heart of the Central Park Campus in McKinney to rave reviews, with architecture based on Thomas Jefferson’s design for the University of Virginia. The new facility at Spring Creek Campus will also feature Jeffersonian architecture and the learning community concept.

In addition, the new Spring Creek building will free up space in the existing structure that houses the current library. This 50,000+ square-foot space will be repurposed into campus services, faculty offices and classrooms.

In total, the historic Spring Creek Campus expansion will add 20 classrooms, 36 study rooms, faculty/staff offices and a number of conference and workrooms in addition to the expanded space for library services and resources.

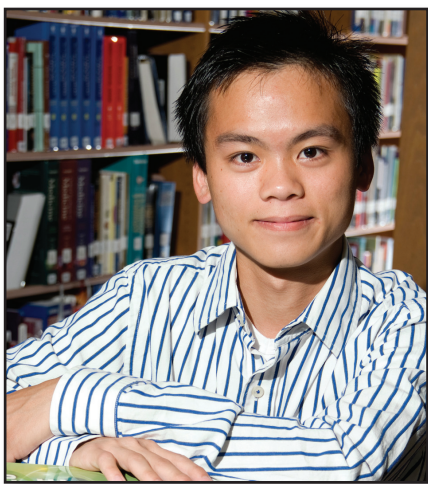


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Need a QR code reader? See your app store.

Also available at:
video.collin.edu/2011scclibrary.html





Vincent Nguyen

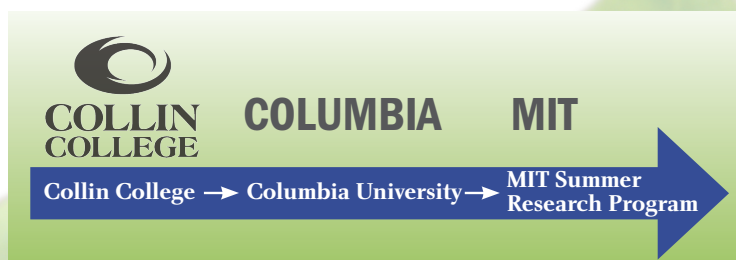
Vincent Nguyen has a gift. He can truly envision his future. He does not doubt. He trusts that with diligence his vision will come to pass. For this magna cum laude Collin College graduate, it is almost as if he has already walked his path in life.

Though he works very hard, he will tell you that many, many people have helped him get to where he is today, including Collin College professors, Columbia University professors and now Massachusetts Institute of Technology scientists.

"I was very fortunate to have a chance to study specifically at Collin College. As a student, you should learn—not to get into medical or pharmacy school—but learn for life knowledge. At Collin, I imagined myself as a physicist and asked Dr. Sherman about space elevators. I thought of myself as a biotechnology researcher when I attended Dr. Kirkpatrick's class and questioned how I would complete a polymerase reaction. This college has a lot of impact on students. You develop a thinking discipline," Nguyen said.

Nguyen did not have difficulty transitioning from Collin College to Columbia University. He felt very academically prepared.

"At Collin, I took Dr. Jury's Organic Chemistry I class, and I came to Columbia and took Dr. Snyder's Organic Chemistry II class. The learning and the mindset are the same. We even used one of the same organic chemistry textbooks at Columbia that was used at Collin."



Nguyen is a senior in the Columbia General Studies program and plans to graduate in May 2012. When his mentor told him about the MIT Summer Research Program he knew how he wanted to spend his vacation. True to form, Nguyen was one of approximately 45 students selected to attend the research program.

"I had to read five-inch-thick books on each lab technique. Every week, we had a group meeting with graduate students from Harvard, MIT and invited guests from universities like Stanford. Each of us gave presentations on the progress in our research while others asked questions. It was a life-changing experience. It gave me a sense of accomplishment."

While at MIT, Nguyen exchanged greetings with robots, learned about a future propulsion

system for satellites, mixed two tons of concrete to help build a playground for children in Cambridge, and, most importantly, imagined himself as a scientist. He worked from 6 a.m.-12 a.m. in this research program, which emphasized community, academics and research. Nguyen worked closely with the MIT Office of the Dean for Graduate Education. His principle investigator was Collin M. Stultz, M.D., Ph.D. in the Research Laboratory of Electronics and Computational Biophysics. His research topic was "Biophysical Characterization of the Intrinsically Disordered Protein α -Synuclein with Point Mutation A53T."

Essentially, he worked on a mutated protein which is associated with Parkinson's disease. He performed several procedures and tests to grow, analyze and learn how the mutation affects the behavior of the protein. He began to explore a possible correlation between protein aggregation and patients losing physical function.

"This is pioneer work. There is not very much biophysical information on this protein."

Nguyen imagines a world in which he accomplishes his ultimate goal of giving back to society. He sees a brighter future based on a foundation of shared knowledge. Currently, he is picturing himself entering medical school and earning a Harvard MBA and a doctoral degree at MIT. Only he knows for sure what his future will hold. But one thing is certain. "Collin is still my beloved college," Nguyen said.

Goodbye, commute. Hello eCollin.

Perhaps you live 45 miles away, work long hours or have family commitments that deny you an opportunity to earn the college education you crave. Attending college online through Collin College's eCollin program may be the solution.



"Online courses at Collin College have seen tremendous growth over the last few years because they offer flexibility in time and place for those who need it," Dr. Jennifer Summerville, Collin College's associate dean of Distance and Weekend College, said. "eCollin benefits students who want to accelerate their academic progress, re-enter the job market or begin a new career."

According to Summerville, eCollin offers students a variety of different formats including web, blended and hybrid courses.

- **Web Courses** offer students the flexibility to obtain an education via the Internet. Instructional materials, readings, assignments and—in some cases—class discussions may be accessed at home, work or even on vacation.
- **Blended Learning Courses** require some on-campus time and offer the flexibility to incorporate distance learning with on-site instruction.
- **Hybrid Courses** combine regularly scheduled on-campus instruction with online instruction.

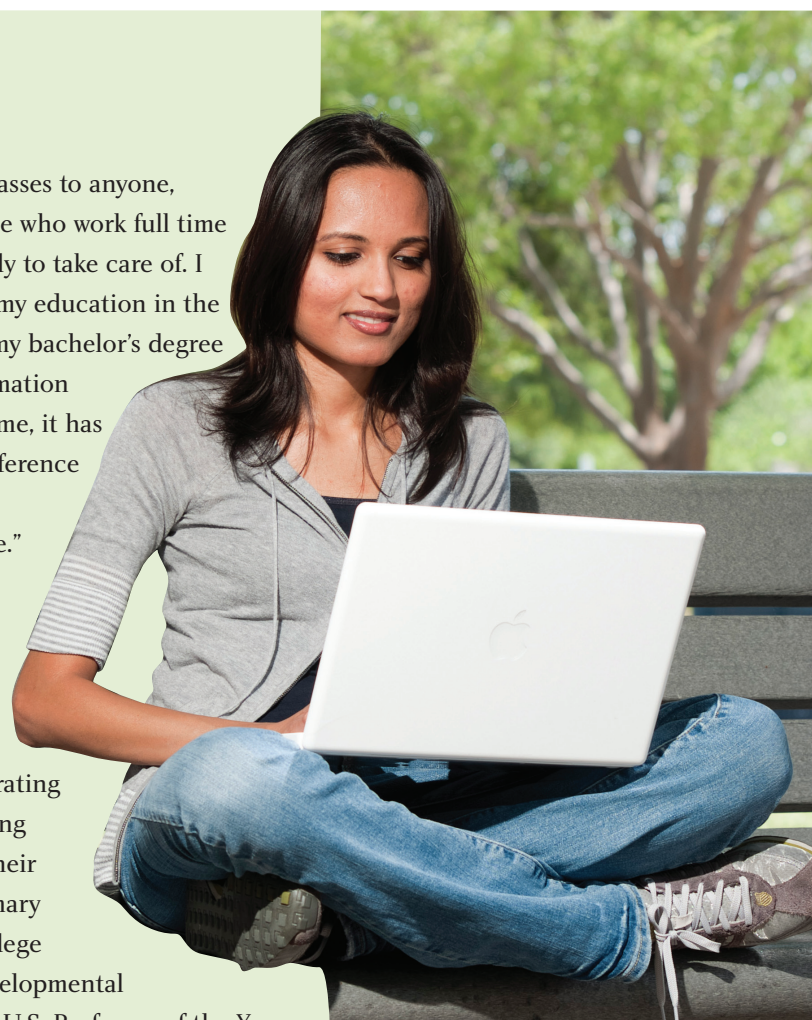
Among the students taking advantage of eCollin is Susan Meadows, who has enjoyed this convenient way to take classes since 2008. A single mom who not only works from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. everyday, but also has the demands of taking care of an 8-year-old son, she finds that eCollin is the perfect solution to getting a quality collegiate education on her terms.

"Being able to take online classes has been great for me," Meadows explained. "I have taken almost all my classes online, and I would recommend

taking online classes to anyone, especially people who work full time and have a family to take care of. I plan to further my education in the future and get my bachelor's degree in Health Information Technology. To me, it has made all the difference in being able to finish my degree."

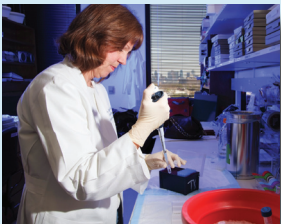
"Teaching online helps students to meet their educational goals while operating under the existing constraints of their lives," Dr. Rosemary Karr, Collin College professor of developmental math and 2007 U.S. Professor of the Year, said. "Many of our students work full time, have families and confront other responsibilities. The online environment allows a degree of flexibility for the student and provides access to college that might not otherwise exist."

For information on degrees, certificates and programs offered via eCollin as well as courses and orientations, see collin.edu/ecollin.



Student & Alumni Highlights

Rosemary Wilson, biotechnology graduate, and **Steven Connell**, former biotechnology student, were listed as authors of an article published in the journal *Cell*. The article highlights research on a test that may indicate whether individuals have Alzheimer's disease before they notice physical symptoms. Based on the same research, tests may also be available for Multiple Sclerosis and Parkinson's disease as well as pancreatic and breast cancers. *Cell* is a highly respected publication of exceptional research in molecular biology, biochemistry, cancer research and cell biology.



Rosemary Wilson



Steven Connell

Collin College's **Mock Trial Team** placed 12th at the fifth annual Justice Louis Brandeis Mock Trial Invitational at Brandeis University against teams from Harvard, Brown, Tufts, Cornell and other universities. Student **Dzana Ahmetovic** won a Top Witness Award. Collin College placed ahead of Boston College, Boston University, Holy Cross, Elon University and, the host university, Brandeis University.



Mock Trial Team

Student **Shanna Richardson** was awarded the prestigious Dallas Area Paralegal Association scholarship. Students from all of the area paralegal programs are allowed to compete for this scholarship up to \$2,500.

Ruth Sanchez, art student, was chosen to participate in the prestigious 17th annual El Corazón Exhibition at the Bath House Cultural Center.

Collin College's **International Student Association** and **Middle Eastern Student Association** were nominated by the Plano ISD Diversity Advisory Committee for its Diversity Leadership Award.

Jennifer Morgan Cooper was awarded first place in the Literary Analysis competition at the national conference of Sigma Kappa Delta (national honor society for English).

Collin College **nursing students** had a **97.3** percent passing rate on the National Council Licensure Examination. The state average was 89.3 percent passing rate.

A new student group **Writers' Bloc: The Collin Literary Society** held an end-of-semester book drive to benefit the Celina Public Library. Students, faculty and staff at the Central Park Campus donated almost 300 books, DVDs and other materials for the new Celina Public Library.

Nursing student **Sheri Sellars** was elected to serve as the north regional director for the Texas Student Nurses' Association.

Gwendolyn (Wendy) George received the national Coca-Cola student scholarship.



Wendy George

Collin College's **Phi Theta Kappa** honor society won more awards at the international conference than any other chapter. Named a Distinguished Chapter, the group is now the **third ranking chapter in the world** and the highest ranking chapter in Texas. Also several students were honored individually—**Gregory Shimko** as Distinguished Member, **Katie Ye** for Distinguished College Project and **Naziya Rehman** for Distinguished Honors in Action Project.

Collin College's chapter of the **League for United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)** took home an armful of awards from its District III Convention. **Francisco Luevano** was named the Young Adult Man of the Year and **Cristina Garcia** was named the Young Adult Woman of the Year. Also, the Collin College chapter was named the **Young Adult Council of the Year**.



The Collin College LULAC chapter at the District III Convention in Garland. Pictured are (from left) Deandra Sanchez, Alfredo Carpitenteyro, Francisco Luevano, Cristina Garcia and Marco Delossantos.

Faculty & Staff Highlights



Dr. Don Weasenforth

Dr. Don Weasenforth, dean of Developmental Education, published "Asynchronous Instructional Audio Feedback in Online Environment: A Mixed Methods Study" in the March 2011 issue of the *Journal of Online Learning and Teaching*.

Mark Garcia, lab instructor, is a co-author of an article published in the international journal *Nature Structural and Molecular Biology* titled "Evidence for rudimentary telomere capping by G-quadruplexes in *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*."

Donna Hatch, professor of nursing, was elected to the board of the newly formed Texas League for Nursing. She also will serve as chair of the Communication Committee. Additionally, **Dr. Nell Ard**, director of nursing, was elected to serve on the By-Law Committee for the League.



Donna Hatch



Frank Mayhew

Frank Mayhew, professor of history, was honored as the recipient of the Horizon Award as outstanding advisor for Collin College's chapter of Phi Theta Kappa honor society.

R. Scott Yarbrough, professor of English, published his poem "Vein-Face Dolls with Eyes" in the spring edition of *Karamu/Bluestem*, the national literary journal of Arts and Letters of Eastern Illinois University.

Joan Reese, associate professor of English, published two poems "Vignette for Spring" and "Self-Portrait" in *Corium Magazine*. Two other poems, "Luminaria" and "Release," are forthcoming in *Used Furniture Review*. Her poem "Soir Blue" is forthcoming in *Blue Fifth Review*. A piece of creative nonfiction, "May You Live in Interesting Times" was accepted for publication in *Gloom Cupboard*. Also, Reese's book review of poet Brian Turner's *Phantom Noise* was published in *Connotation Press*.



Joan Reese

Gov. Rick Perry appointed **Stephen Harris**, instructor with the Collin College Fire Academy, to the Texas Radiation Advisory Board. The board advises the state on radiation issues and reviews the rules, policies and programs of state agencies that regulate radiation.



Dr. Mounir Errami

Dr. Mounir Errami, associate professor of biology, was cited as one of the developers—along with the Virginia Bioinformatics Institute—of text analysis software that helps detect plagiarism in biomedical literature in an article from *The International Journal of Life Science Methods*.

The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) announced that Collin College received the **Distinguished Budget Presentation Award**.

Lupita Tinnen, chair and professor of photography, was named the Young Adult Advisor of the Year.

Congratulations to the Doctors!

EJ Hanford, professor of environmental science, earned her doctoral degree after she successfully defended her doctoral dissertation at Texas State University. She will present the results of her dissertation at the Natural Hazards Research and Applications Workshop in Boulder, Colorado, in July. She also was awarded a Certificate in Epidemiology as part of her interdisciplinary program in Environmental Geography.



Dr. EJ Hanford

Lisa Reed, associate professor of English, successfully defended her dissertation to earn her doctorate from Texas A&M University-Commerce.

Christine DeLaTorre, professor of management and marketing, successfully defended her dissertation and earned her doctorate in public affairs from The University of Texas at Dallas.



Dr. Christine DeLaTorre

Alicia Huppe, associate dean of recruiting and programs for new students, successfully defended her dissertation to earn a doctorate in higher education administration with a minor in computer education and cognitive systems from the University of North Texas.

Did You Know?


5

Top 5 ways to ace online college classes

1. Put regularly scheduled time on your personal calendar and keep to that time. Treat your online courses like they are on-campus courses.
2. Take an Online Student Support Center Orientation. This shows what to expect in eCollin. See online.collin.edu/orientations.html .
3. Understand online learning before taking a class. Take the SmarterMeasure quiz at tinyurl.com/4owy8vg to find strengths and weaknesses before enrollment.
4. Online courses are not easier. Plan for the same degree of rigor as classes on campus.
5. Keep up. Most online courses have regularly scheduled assignments and tests. It's easy to get behind!

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FREE Podcast: Historical Giants

Collin College created a special campaign and podcast series to share lessons from the collegiate classroom. Scan the barcode below with your smartphone to hear Collin College professors and deans explain the legacy left for society by three groundbreaking scholars.



Scan with smartphone for podcast.
Need a QR code reader? See your app store.
Also available at:
collin.edu/news/audio.html.

This semester’s featured scholars:

Dr. Jonas Salk
biologist who developed the polio vaccine

Salvador Dalí
Spanish surrealist painter

Ayn Rand
Russian-American novelist, philosopher, playwright and screenwriter

Student Volunteerism

continued from page 1–

go to work and go home.”
Volunteering dovetails perfectly into Phi Theta Kappa District II Regional Officer Mike Aali’s philosophy about his role in the world.

“My personal mission in life is to help and lead others. This project made me more humble and cognizant of people’s suffering. I didn’t know how bad it could be because I don’t have the financial or physical issues. In spite of that, they are happy with who they are, and it brought fulfillment in their lives knowing that people care about them.”

Aali believes you get nothing but benefit when you volunteer.

“You may discover something about yourself you never knew. Students have a mission to make good grades but also to become well-rounded people. Collin College wants to see scholars who can help each other and the community.

“Volunteering is important because not everyone within the community can help themselves. We have to learn to help each other. If everyone was isolated and people only helped themselves, think of what the world would be like,” he added.

Travis Angelle will be the first in his family to earn a college degree, and his degree will come with abundant volunteering experience. In addition to the Plano-based project, Angelle helped build a Habitat for Humanity house in Wylie.

“What fascinated me was the use of technology when it comes to building homes. I didn’t know half of the tools existed. I knew how to hammer and do sheet rock. Building a house was a completely different thing for me. A father and daughter were helping build the house while we were there. It was a good experience seeing them work on their soon-to-be house.”

Angelle said he tells fellow students not to underestimate volunteering because they will get a lot out of the experience.

“I would volunteer again in a heartbeat because it feels good. It was eye opening that people build houses by hand—regular people like you and me. I stepped back after three hours of building a porch and thought, ‘I can’t believe I did that.’ I was honored and privileged to be able to help.”

To learn more about civic engagement at Collin College, visit www.collin.edu/academics/csce/.



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