The Official Community Newsletter for Collin College

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.

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, 15,614 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.

FACT

Spring Creek Campus now has a larger student body than Stephen F. Austin State University!

www.collin.edu/connection

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.

Scan with smartphone for a virtual tour.

Need a QR code reader? See your app store.

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

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www.collin.edu/connection
Where are they NOW?

Educational clairvoyance and Parkinson's disease

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.

“Attending 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 hefty black 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.
Collin College’s chapter of Sigma Kappa Delta (national honor society) won more awards at the international conference than any other chapter. Named a Distinguished Chapter, the group is now 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 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 Brandeis University.

Jennifer Morgan Cooper, student at Collin College’s Student Association, was nominated by the Plano ISD Diversity Advisory Council for Outstanding Advisor for Collin College’s chapter of Sigma Kappa Delta, the group is now the Distinguished Chapter, 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.

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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.

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.

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.

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 Sellers 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.

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**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](http://online.collin.edu/orientations.html).

3. Understand online learning before taking a class. Take the SmarterMeasure quiz at [tinyurl.com/4owy8vg](http://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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**Student Volunteerism**

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.

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

**FREE Podcast: Historical Giants**

Scan with smartphone for podcast.

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

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**old edition**

Hello eCollin

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/](http://www.collin.edu/academics/csce/).