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# Maxim

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NORTH HARRIS MONTGOMERY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

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## Changing with the times

# CE has 'something for everyone'

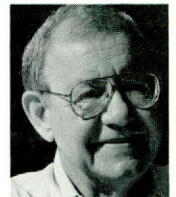
COMMUNITY EDUCATION OFTEN conjures up such images as basket weaving, aerobics and typing classes. But those images are outdated, say North Harris Montgomery Community College District administrators. In the district, community education (CE) complements credit courses and is an integral component of a "seamless" educational journey that continues for a lifetime.

"In my mind, CE is part of a continuum of education," says Nellie Carr Thorogood, vice chancellor of external affairs. "Programs should be planned around a discipline that includes both credit and non-credit (community education) courses."

With the demands and technologies of business constantly changing, developing programs that industry and students need is a big challenge. To meet that challenge, says Gayle Noll, North Harris College dean of community education, the colleges read employment ads, attend computer shows, conduct extensive research

and talk with advisory committees, chambers of commerce and business development committees.

Each of the district's four colleges offers an array of CE courses to help students stay on the cutting edge of technology. The district's colleges also offer mandatory continuing education for such professions as real estate, health care, teaching and counseling.



George Karpos, CE booster

"CE epitomizes the heart of the community college mission, which is lifelong learning," Noll says. "What I didn't need to know last year, I need to know this year. You've got to keep in the loop or you can't remain current."

Among the most successful examples of programs that have helped professionals already in a field is North Harris College's 220-hour environmental technology course for oil and gas professionals. A state-of-the-art computer work station, a wide variety of industry experts who serve as guest lecturers, field trips, projects and seminars make this course extremely popular.

Some CE programs are complete in themselves, requiring no credit-class enrollment to complete entry-level training. Included in this genre is law enforcement, a three-part program that prepares students to take the exam to become licensed peace officers.

Of course, CE isn't *only* vocational. CE courses include dog obedience training, sign language, defensive driving, hypnosis, dancing, bridge and a host of sports. "CE has something for everyone," says Sondra Whitlow, Kingwood College dean of community education.

George Karpos, a 63-year-old retired engineer, says the yoga and weight training CE classes he has taken at Kingwood College have "absolutely" made him feel younger. Karpos also appreciates the college's willingness to listen to suggestions on new courses. "They don't always do what I suggest, but they always listen," he says.

See lifelong learning/page 8

## Shovels poised for groundbreaking



Recent groundbreaking ceremony for Montgomery College - to open fall 1995 at Needham Road and Interstate 45.

Photo by George Hyland

## The 'turning over' of money

# Figures show district's growing economic impact

**I**T MIGHT NOT even dent the federal deficit, but \$254,201,579 is a staggering amount of money to most people. And that figure is especially significant for the communities served by North Harris Montgomery Community College District, because it represents the district's estimated economic impact.

That figure is based on an economic impact study for the college district for fiscal year 1990. The study was conducted by the Gulf Coast Community College Consortium.

The study takes into account such factors as college expenditures, the number of college district employees, the number of students and disposable income.

Dr. Mike Green, associate vice chancellor for research and planning, explains that economic impact results from the "turning over" of money. In other words, a person may pay rent to an apartment complex, which in turn pays its bills to a contractor, which in turn pays its employees, who spend money on food, clothes, transportation and entertainment.

Actually, the economic impact of the district is probably significantly higher than \$254 million, says Green, who notes the study didn't take into account the impact of community education. Community education classes include vocational or skills training, which helps people get or keep jobs.

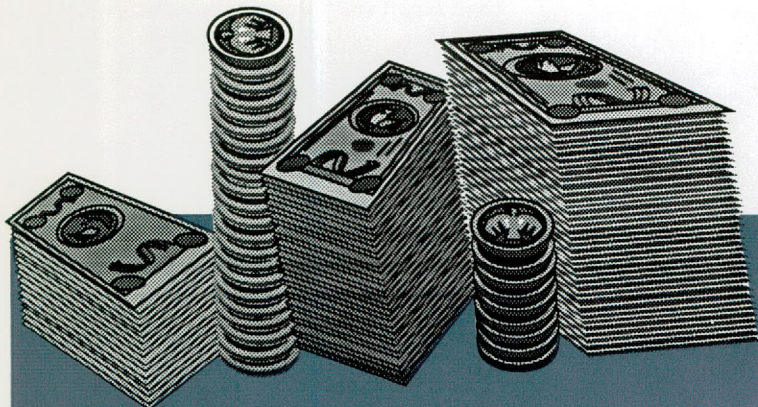
Employee salaries, college contracts and other expenditures along with money spent by students, contribute to the district's economic impact. College employees alone had \$17,569,480 in disposable income.

"People don't think about schools having an economic impact — they think about us having an educational impact," Green says.

As good as \$254 million must sound to businesses, the college district's economic impact is bound to increase as the district grows. "If we add 10 or 20 percent more students, the economic impact will probably increase by that much," Green says. That "if" is a virtual certainty with the opening of Montgomery College's permanent campus in 1995.

Green says the study of economic impact "is not an exact science. But for what it is, it's very good because its intent is to show economic benefits to the community." While the exact amount of economic impact is theoretical, tangible results can be seen in businesses' bottom lines.

"What economic impact means to the business community is dollars in their pockets," Green says. "We help supply the community with spending money." ★



## TOP VALUE:

### Economic Impact of NHMCCD

- Total college expenditures \$23,626,881
- Total disposable income available to college employees \$17,569,480
- Total expenditures by in-service area students \$103,345,394
- Total estimated economic impact \$254,201,579

Source: Texas Gulf Coast Consortium Economic Impact Study



## Message from the chancellor

Dr. John E. Pickelman

### Quality education at affordable prices

**A**MERICA'S POST-WORLD War II growth pressed the capability of the nation's higher education system to provide opportunities for its citizens to attend college. University enrollments burgeoned, limiting access for many who sought post-secondary education. In response, a number of state governments, including Texas, turned to local communities with the proposition that if local citizens would tax themselves to pay for the construction and maintenance of college facilities, the state would assume the operational costs of instruction and student services to support local two-year colleges.

So attractive was the proposition that by the mid-1960s more than 40 community college districts were created in Texas. Today, the count stands at 49 districts with 73 campuses within commuting distance of 90 percent of the state's population. These community colleges enroll nearly one-half of the students in all of Texas' public colleges and universities. Compared to universities, community colleges are still in their infancy. Yet by their contributions to the lives of individuals and the communities they serve, community colleges have been called the most important, uniquely American social invention of the 20th century.

At the North Harris Montgomery Community College District, our commitment to the mission of community colleges is evidenced by a myriad of efforts to enhance the quality of education for our students and the quality of life for citizens in our communities.

We've established advisory committees to help ensure our programs are in step with the latest technological advances. Our innovative programs train students for such emerging careers fields as biotechnology and desktop publishing, and our community education programs provide hundreds of vocational and recreational opportunities.

To increase college availability, we've established branch campuses in Aldine and Conroe, and we're leaders in distance learning opportunities. And our Center for Business and Economic Development continually fosters economic growth by offering customized training and small-business counseling. In future *Maxim* issues, I'll be telling you more about these and other NHMCCD programs and services. ★

# Students leave with more than a diploma

**Q:** *What are your future plans and what is your fondest memory of attending college in the North Harris Montgomery Community College District?*



**Jim Matheson**, who earned an associate of applied science degree in air conditioning and refrigerator repair from Tom Ball

College, is a former oil field worker who was laid off in 1983. He owns his own air conditioning repair business. His fondest memory: "(History instructor) Dr. Bob Eubank. His first question on the first day of class was, 'Who was the queen of country music?' He is a good professor."



**Elourde Boucher**, a native of France who received an associate of arts degree from North Harris College, says she'll attend the University of Texas in Austin as a pre-med major. Eventually, she wants to be a pathologist. Her fondest college memory: "I had very good friends and teachers — it was a nice school."



**Kristin Lang**, who graduated from Kingwood College with an associate of applied science degree in travel and tourism, plans to continue college in Alabama. Her fondest college memory: "The people in Travel & Tourism at Kingwood College, especially (instructor) Debbie Adams — she's a great person and she cares about each student individually."



**John DuPont** earned an associate of applied science degree in management from Montgomery College, making him one of the first five graduates of the college. DuPont plans to continue his education where he finds employment. His fondest memory: "Building the nature trail on the North Harris College campus."

# It's a Mac, Mac, Mac, Mac world

**V**ERSATILITY IS A valued attribute in almost any field; the more skills an employee has, the more valuable he or she is. Kingwood College applied this axiom to its desktop publishing and computer graphic arts programs by opening a Macintosh computer lab this spring.

The college began training students in desktop publishing in 1991, using IBM-compatible personal computers (PCs). Meanwhile, an advisory committee composed of 20 desktop publishers and professionals in related fields urged the college to establish a Macintosh lab.

The college heeded the recommendations of the advisory committee and now offers Mac courses in both desktop publishing and computer graphics. The response this spring was "overwhelming," said Kingwood College desktop publishing coordinator Elizabeth Chapman, who noted that all six Mac classes were full or near full.

Chapman cited the opportunity for students to gain experience in both PCs and Macs as the

key benefit of the new lab. She noted that although Macs are generally more popular, many businesses buy PCs because they're much less expensive. Consequently, it's important to be able to use both. "You can't just be a Mac or PC expert," she said.

Charlie Braun of Desktop Publishing Bureau and a member of the advisory committee, said the Mac lab is vital "because everything is going Mac these days. Desktop publishing was created with the Mac in mind because it is so graphically oriented and easy to use. The programs on the PC are not nearly as versatile and easy to work with as they are on the Mac. Most of the graphic designers and ad agencies are using Macintosh."

The college offers introductory through advanced level desktop publishing courses. Chapman recommends students take a combination of Mac and PC courses. "I advise them they're limiting themselves if they take all Mac or all PC courses," she said.

Fortunately for computer users, there are now programs that allow a document created on a Mac to be transferred to a PC and vice versa. Kingwood College's computer instruction is on the cutting edge of this emerging technology. "We're one of the few colleges that do cross-training showing how to get a file from the Mac to a PC," Chapman said.

The college's Mac lab contains 14 Macintosh Iici's and two Quadra 950 model computers. Chapman described the Iici model as a "solid workhorse" that has "been proven in the industry to be the most stable and free from problems."

She said the Quadoras are top-of-the-line and capable of using multi-media (graphics, sound and motion in a single presentation) programs. She explained that multi-media is widely used in sales, advertising and training.

It takes more than computers and computer programs to turn out top-notch students, however. Chapman said the college has tried to involve industry experts as adjunct faculty. The desktop publishing and computer graphic arts instructors at the college include a graphic design artist, two advertising desktop publishers and a desktop publishing expert who works for Exxon.

"The overall purpose of the college's (desktop publishing) program is to create the most highly trained, flexible employees possible," Chapman said. "They'll be able to understand a large group of software packages and operate in both (PC and Mac) environments."★

*'You can't just be a Mac or PC expert.'*

*Elizabeth Chapman, desktop publishing coordinator*

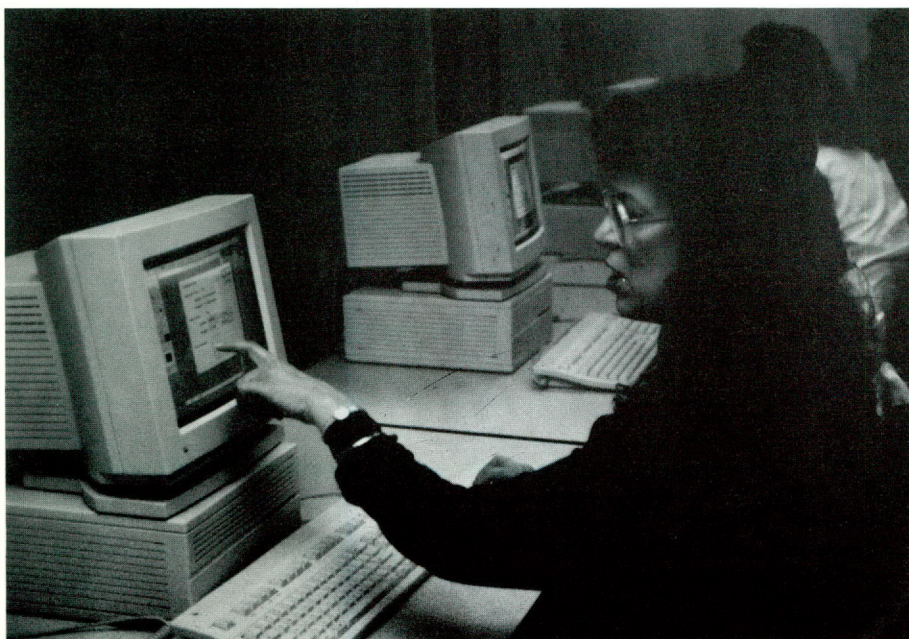


Photo by LaNae Ilseeng

*Kingwood College's Macintosh computer lab opened this spring.*

*Montessori childcare***Shaping  
the lives  
of small  
children**

Photo by Mike Warren

*Angelina Michalak (middle) and Bernadine Landin work with a child at Michalak's Montessori child development center.*

**N**ORTH HARRIS COLLEGE has taken a leap into the 21st century by investing today in tomorrow's most important asset — children. With more parents of small children either choosing to work or being compelled to do so because of economic necessity, child-care centers are playing a larger role than ever in shaping the lives of children during their most important formative years.

Montessori-based child care — named after 19th-century Italian physician Maria Montessori — is a popular concept in day-care centers, but until recently Montessori training to care for small children (infant to age 3) was available in private training centers. North Harris College is meeting a community need by offering an associate's degree program with infant and toddler specialization, accredited by MACTE (Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education) and affiliated with the American Montessori Society.

The college began Montessori training in 1989 with a community education pilot program. The success of that program led North Harris College to begin a credit program in 1990, says instructor Sue Thornton. "We had numerous Montessori schools approaching us and asking why the program wasn't offered for credit."

Although Montessori training is available locally at private centers, Thornton says there are several benefits in taking Montessori training at North Harris College.

"You earn a college degree (associate of applied science) and the possibility of transferring to a four-year college," Thornton says. "The idea that you come away from (Montessori training) with a degree, that's totally unique."

Another plus is the sharing of ideas with more students.

"The classes are taken with peers who have diverse opinions and backgrounds, making it a richer learning environment," Thornton says. "It wouldn't happen that way in a private school."

Angelina Michalak, a 1990 graduate of the program who opened her own Montessori-based child development center last year, says her training at North Harris College emphasized developing a child's mind, body and soul.

"The most important thing I learned at North Harris College was, in whatever endeavor you proceed in, there should always be respect for the child," she says. "Children are sometimes seen as being unable to do many of the things they are quite capable of doing. Never underestimate the ability of children."

According to Michalak, Montessori child care emphasizes a continuous development of children from birth to adulthood. The term "work" is used for even small children's activities because they're continuously learning how to become independent.

To accomplish that goal, Michalak equipped her Montessori center with such items as child-height sinks, tables and chairs, and pictures that are eye level for a child. There are also plenty of mirrors, which allow children to learn by observing themselves and help Montessori teachers observe the children in order to evaluate where the children stand developmentally.

"Our children are growing and developing, and as they change, we change the environment," Michalak says. "We set things up to help children help themselves."

Pat Nillen, a North Harris College student who works for Michalak, says, "I decided I wanted to learn about something I love — children." She says the most important thing she has learned at the college is that children "start learning from the second they're born."

Nillen and Michalak, who are both parents, believe nothing can take the place of a parent's personal care for a child. But they are firmly committed to Montessori's theories of helping children develop and feel they are making a positive impact on the lives of many children.

"Because parents can't stay at home," Nillen says, "I feel that I'm making a difference." ★

## Meeting community health care needs

# Nursing shortage prompts college-hospital partnership



Photo by George Hyland

*Tomball College nursing instructor Lisa Reents (second from left) supervises nursing students (from left) Becky Herzog, Barbara Peterson and Debra Tappley as they "treat" a special, realistic mannequin that is part of the equipment in Tomball Regional Hospital's nursing lab.*

**A** UNIQUE PARTNERSHIP between Tomball College and Tomball Regional Hospital is paying incalculable dividends to nursing students, the hospital and the community.

The partnership began during a nursing shortage in 1989. With the nearest nursing program located at North Harris College, Tomball Regional Hospital administrators saw a need to provide a nursing program nearer to the Tomball area.

Tomball College lacked the necessary nursing lab, however. That's where Tomball Regional Hospital helped, remodeling a former aerobics room into a lab. The hospital also hired a part-time lab instructor.

The hospital finished remodeling the lab in January 1991, in time for the spring semester. The lab includes classrooms, video equipment, instructional videos, medical equipment, hospital beds and a \$3,000 mannequin that students can give injections to and practice a variety of other nursing tasks.

"Whatever the students or instructors need, I'll make it available," says Barbara Oliver, Tomball Regional Hospital director of education. "We all work really well together."

The part-time instructor is Sandy Babbitt, a North Harris College graduate who is also a staff nurse for Tomball Regional Hospital. "The fact that she's a practicing, hands-on nurse is an asset to the college," Oliver says.

After students learn such skills in the lab as putting IVs together and the proper methods of bathing a patient, they are assigned one or two patients to gain practical experience by doing the work of a staff nurse.

"The lab allows the students time to obtain expertise with their psycho-motor skills and put that together with their cognitive knowledge, so that when they go into the patient's room they aren't afraid and they can perform with some expertise," says Julee Mathena, coordinator of Tomball College's associate degree nursing program.

Oliver says the staff nurses at Tomball Regional Hospital welcome the presence of the students. "The nurses really enjoy having the students," she says. "I feel like the students and staff always have a good rapport."

In addition to the lab and instructor it provides, Tomball Regional Hospital also offers a \$1,500-per-semester scholarship to any student in a registered nursing program. The only string attached is that upon graduation, students agree to work in the hospital for one year.

The hospital places no restrictions on how the money is spent. "If a student needs the money to make a car payment, that's OK," Oliver said. "The purpose of the grant is to break down those financial barriers that might keep a student from enrolling."

Oliver says the grant is available to students attending other colleges, although most of those who have applied for it have been Tomball College students.

"The hospital wants students because that helps them keep them abreast of new information," Mathena says. "It's a way to meet the health care needs of the community and still be a part of the community. Because the college doesn't have the money (to provide a lab), the hospital is providing the resources and, in return, hopefully the students will stay in the community." ★

# Montgomery College's first year a success

**O**NE YEAR AFTER its creation, Montgomery College has established itself as a viable and vibrant center of learning.

The college, which was created May 20, 1992, began with 47 sections taught in McCullough and Conroe high schools last fall. In December, Montgomery College moved into its first home, the Conroe Center, an 18-classroom facility in the Pinehollow shopping center. Groundbreaking for the college's 100-acre permanent campus, located on Needham Road at I-45, took place in July with opening slated for fall 1995.

Recently, Montgomery College President Bill Law took a look back at some of the progress made during the college's first year.

Law says Montgomery College, during the spring semester, offered "about the right number of (credit) courses," and the number of students enrolled, 895, is also within the range he expected.

During its inaugural year, the college offered a wide variety of courses, ranging from biotechnology to sociology. "We tried to sample our market in as broad a manner as possible," Law says, noting that fall offerings will include improvements in the business curriculum and foreign-language classes.

Montgomery College also went out of its way to make sure as many courses as possible that were listed in the schedule were held, even when few students were enrolled. "We only canceled a minimum of courses," Law says. "We felt the need to develop a following. I feel very strongly that for adult learners, you have to give them the highest certainty the class will be held."

Law places a strong emphasis on the importance of the college's Academic Support Center, where he

says students can get extra help and support beyond the classroom.

"Many people need extra help to get to college-level skills," Law says. "The Academic Support Center has computers and other materials to help students focus on their specific needs. Our highest priority for next year is to have the Academic Support Center staffed full time."

Law is also enthusiastic about Montgomery College's innovative, streamlined registration process. Early in a semester, the college provides enrolled students with an advisory profile, containing their placement test scores, past grades, holds and lists of the upcoming semester's courses. The students are also given registration forms. They can then get the required sign-offs from advisors during the semester, complete the forms and drop them in Conroe Center's "Express Input." "It gives them a chance to resolve problems long before registration starts," Law says.

Because all the college's instructors at this point are adjunct faculty, Law has made special efforts to provide them with extra training and help. Workshops have been held on student learning and retention. Adjunct-training expert Dr. Patricia Eggers of Lincoln Land Community College in Spring-

***'Our highest priority for next year is to have the Academic Support Center staffed full time.'***

*Bill Law, Montgomery College president*

field, Ill., presented a seminar focusing on outcomes, evaluation and communication with students.

Other aids for instructors have included evaluations, a handbook, memos with helpful information and informal meetings to share ideas.

Other Montgomery College first-year highlights include:

- The beginning of an adult education program. "The key was getting started, because we know what a need there is," Law says. The college began its adult education program with one Adult Basic Education and one General Equivalency Diploma (GED) course. Law believes a college setting is a positive learning environment for those who did not finish high school, and he notes that many GED graduates move on to college and become excellent students.
- Industry training. The college has worked closely with North Harris Montgomery Community College District's Center for Business and Economic Development to provide customized training. The college taught technical writing for a petrochemical firm and computer applications for heavy industrial and real estate companies. ★

## A brief review —

Creation of Montgomery College	May 20, 1992
Conroe Center: college opens with 18-classroom temporary facility	December 1992
895 students enrolled	Spring 1993
Academic Support Center; Adult Education Program; Industry Training	Spring 1993
Groundbreaking: 100-acre campus Needham Road at I-45	Summer 1993

# Lifelong learning

Continued from page 1

Another component of CE is adult education, including GED classes. North Harris College recently held its first commencement for GED graduates and also awarded three of the graduates college scholarships. "We're trying to build bridges between GED students and the college credit programs," Noll says.

CE isn't only for adults. Kingwood College, for example, offers summer programs for 7- to 17-year-olds, including baseball, softball, soccer and tennis camps. The youth programs are so popular that "we get calls in January," Whitlow says.

And CE is truly a family affair at Tomball College with the Youth College program. Parents and grandparents can enroll with children to learn such subjects as Russian, Spanish, cartooning, sign language and country and western dancing.

As the district grows, the CE programs at the colleges will also grow. Noll says the district is always looking for new ideas for classes and for outstanding instructors to teach them.

"The sky's the limit," Thorogood says. "We'll only be limited by our own ideas." ★

# Maxim

North Harris Montgomery Community College District

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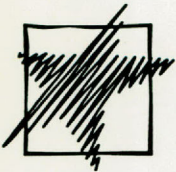
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