

THE MESSENGER

McMURRY UNIVERSITY
SUMMER 2022

STUDENT CENTER

NEW BEGINNING
THE REIMAGINED GARRISON
UNITED METHODIST STUDENT CENTER

A MAN OF CHARACTER
McMURRY'S LARGER-THAN-LIFE
STATUE OF GRANT TEAFF

HOLD ON FOR THE RIDE
HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE
PREPARES STUDENTS

McM

1923 - 2023
100
McMURRY
UNIVERSITY



A Time to Thrive

“During our first 100 years, remarkable people and partnerships have developed and given support to McMurry.”

May 2022 Commencement recognized approximately 195 students who were accomplishing their academic goals by completing their baccalaureate or master’s degrees. The ceremony was held in Wilford Moore Stadium so that McMurry could welcome a large number of guests to celebrate with the graduating class.

Our fundraising campaign is continuing for our reimagining of the Garrison Student Center as we have completed our Mabee Foundation challenge and have accepted another \$3,000,000 challenge.

McMurry will be bustling with activity this summer and into our next school year. Summer Orientation and Registration (SOAR) sessions are happening throughout the summer as McMurry prepares for another large class of incoming first-year students.

Planning is underway for the University to kick off our Centennial Celebration year in September. Imagine opening day, September 20, 1923, and the sense of pride and purpose the 19 faculty and 200 students felt as they adopted the high standards that established the institution. Leaders of what is now the United Methodist Church believed in Dr. J.W. Hunt’s vision to build an institution of higher education to provide a better training ground for leadership and, as Hunt proclaimed, “the noble ideals of service.”

As we think about the upcoming Centennial Celebration, I encourage you to remember McMurry alumni who have excelled in science, law, business, education, government,

medicine, dentistry, nursing, the ministry, and nonprofit leadership. During our first 100 years, remarkable people and partnerships have provided support to McMurry, including The United Methodist Church, the City of Abilene, Dyess Air Force Base, First Financial Bank, and Hendrick Health, to name a few. We continue to accept nominations for The Centennial 100+, a group of individuals and organizations, whose influence has established McMurry as a recognized leader in private higher education and without whom, McMurry would likely not be here to celebrate its Centennial.

As we begin to craft a new strategic plan for McMurry’s next 100 years, we will build on the Centennial imperatives set forth in 2014 which emphasize academic excellence, student success, enrollment, financial stability, professional excellence, and accountability.

McMurry’s Centennial vision challenged the institution to be an affordable, student-centered academic institution with an approach to learning that empowers individuals and prepares them to deal with complexity, diversity, and change. Today, we enjoy seeing our successes through our 11,000+ alumni and the impact they have on their communities as educated servant leaders. As our alma mater proclaims, McMurry is truly the *Pride of Our Western Prairies*.

Dr. Sandra S. Harper
President

PRESIDENT
Dr. Sandra S. Harper

VICE PRESIDENT FOR
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS/
DEAN OF THE FACULTY
Dr. Matthew J. Draud

VICE PRESIDENT FOR FINANCE &
ADMINISTRATION/CHIEF OF STAFF
Ms. Lisa Williams

VICE PRESIDENT FOR
INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT
Mr. Michael V. Hutchison '87

VICE PRESIDENT FOR
MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS
Ms. Robin G. Daniels

VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS
& INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS
Dr. Sam Ferguson

VICE PRESIDENT FOR
ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT
Mr. Grant Greenwood

UNIVERSITY CHAPLAIN &
DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS LIFE
Rev. Marty CashBurless '78

EDITORIAL OFFICE

PUBLISHER
Ms. Robin G. Daniels

EDITORS
Mr. Nick Ocheltree
*Director of Integrated
Communications*
Ms. Katelyn Coll Scott '97
Director for Alumni Engagement

ART DIRECTOR/DESIGNER
Mr. Bill Dunham

PHOTOGRAPHERS
Mr. Christopher Bartlett '18
Ms. Sierra Lackey
Mr. Troy Fields

CONTRIBUTORS
Ms. Kim Bonfadini
Ms. Juliana Fabrizio '20

1 McMurry University #125
Abilene, Texas 79697
325-793-4609
mcm.edu
alumni@mcm.edu

THE MESSENGER is published
by McMurry University.
©2022 McMurry University.
The views and opinions presented in this
publication are not necessarily those
of the editors or the official policies of
the university.

TO UPDATE YOUR
CONTACT INFORMATION
325-793-4609
alumni@mcm.edu



SOCIAL.MCM.EDU

THE MESSENGER

McMURRY UNIVERSITY
SUMMER 2022

A PUBLICATION OF McMURRY UNIVERSITY

FEATURE STORIES

- 12 New Beginnings: The Reimagined Student Experience**
The Modernization and Expansion of the Garrison Student Center
- 16 A Man of Character**
Honoring Alumnus Grant Teaff '57 Statue Unveiling
- 20 Storyteller**
Sculptor Dan Brook Capturing A Man of Character

DONORS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

- 9 Forward Momentum**
An Enduring Relationship with First Financial Bank
- 23 The McMurry Experience**
Roger Ward's Experience Motivates His Generosity
- 27 McMurry Fund**
Student Profile: Jalen Meshurle Promise

CAMPUS GOINGS-ON

- 4 Around Campus**
- 6 A Texas-Sized Celebration**
2022 Commencement
- 8 Reflecting on the Past, Looking to the Future**
Previewing the McMurry Centennial

ACADEMICS AROUND CAMPUS

- 21 Hold On For the Ride**
Student-Managed Investment Fund
- 22 A Door-Opening Degree**
Engineering Physics
- 24 Fast-Track Pathway to College**
McMurry Dual Credit Academy

ALUMNI HAPPENINGS

- 10 Alumni Awards**
Annual Alumni Awards Celebrate Achievements
- 25 McMurry Alumni Association**
Future Priorities for Alumni Association Board of Directors
- 26 Alumni Class Notes**
- 26 Friends We'll Miss**

Campus Goings-On

Department of Religion and Philosophy Seeks to Advance Global Christianity Understanding

Bishop Anba Suriel, Ph.D., visits Abilene. McMurry hosted three lectures on “Coptic-Muslim Interactions Across the Centuries” in February. The lectures were presented by Bishop Suriel, who serves in the Coptic Orthodox Diocese of Los Angeles and participates regularly in interfaith dialogues to promote understanding between different religious communities.

Women’s Leadership Luncheon Celebrates 10th Anniversary

The annual luncheon showcases women’s leadership and announces two Sandra S. Harper Scholarship Awards for traditional and nontraditional students. Viane Lopez Braun, who serves as chair of the Fort Worth Region Board of Directors for



L to R: Dr. Mark Water, Dr. Bryan Stewart, Dr. Phillip LeMasters, Bishop Suriel, Dr. Jeffrey Kinlaw, Dr. John Miller



L to R: Featured Speaker Viane Lopez Braun, Scholarship Recipients Michelle Valentine and Corrine Monje



L to R: Bruce Walker, Sharon Walker, Sylvia Acevedo, Bill Carrothers, Pam Carrothers, Johnson School of Business Dean Paul Mason

First Financial Bank and heads the labor and employment law group for Decker Jones, P.C., in Fort Worth, was the featured speaker to a full room.

2022 Garrison Lecture Welcomes Rocket Scientist Turned Girl Scout CEO to McMurry

Sylvia Acevedo returned to Texas to share and inspire students and guests at the 2022 Garrison Lectures. Ms. Acevedo served as the chief executive officer of Girl Scouts of the USA, chairman of President Obama’s White House Initiative for Educational Excellence for Hispanics, director of Qualcomm and Credo corporate boards, and founder of CommuniCard LLC. Her inspirational words encouraged students to pursue dreams and not be afraid to fail. She shared her acronym for fail – “first attempt in learning.”



Star Wars Day



Spring Thing on the Quad



McMurry student Marbet Cintron shares her book with the AISD magnet school 5th grade classes.



Ring Ceremony



L to R: Mark Odom, Dr. Gary Wilson, Jeanine Bone, Dr. Paul Smith, Carolyn Calvert, Nancy Smith

May the 4th Be With You

Students celebrated Star Wars Day with Popsicles, puppies, and piñatas.

Spring Thing

McMurry Student Government hosted Spring Thing, a week-long celebration where students could de-stress, watch movies, play carnival games, and hang out with friends!

Celebrating the Class of 2022

McMurry Alumni Association hosted *the Official McMurry Ring Ceremony* in Matthews Auditorium. "A Toast to the Class of 2022" hosted by Dr. Sandra S. Harper and the Alumni Association welcomed 2022 graduates to alumni status.

Milk & Cookies Children's Book Exhibition

The Desktop Publishing class displayed their final projects, children's books, in Gypsy Ted Gallery II. The students read their creations to the McMurry Magnet school students while treating them to milk and cookies.

McMurry Celebrates Years of Service

Dr. Sandra S. Harper honored seven retiring faculty and staff at the annual retirement luncheon including Ms. Jeanie Bone, Ms. Carolyn Calvert, Mr. Mark Odom, Ms. Nancy Smith, Dr. Paul Smith, Mr. George Starbuck, and Dr. Gary Wilson. Dr. Smith, Mr. Starbuck, and Dr. Wilson were also honored at Commencement with Faculty Emeritus status. Nancy Smith will continue with McMurry coordinating the Centennial Celebration.

A Texas-sized Celebration with Families in Wilford Moore

After a great year, McMurry University celebrated its graduates in the University's first-ever outdoor commencement ceremony in Wilford Moore Stadium on May 14. One of the largest graduation ceremonies in McMurry's history saw the stadium filled with more than 3,000 families and friends of the graduates.

McMurry President Dr. Sandra S. Harper welcomed graduates and guests, sharing that the University had graduates from Arizona, California, Colorado, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, North Dakota, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, and of course, Texas. She also noted one graduate was from Ecuador.

McMurry alumnus Arthur (Art) L. Pertile, III, J.D., gave the commencement address to the 195 graduates. McMurry also honored distinguished Abilene photographer and historian Bill Wright with an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters.





“

We'll see across the stage during the ceremony budding accountants, actors, artists, authors, biochemists, biologists, business owners, coaches, computer scientists, counselors, criminologists, engineers, entrepreneurs, financiers, fitness gurus, health care administrators, historians, law enforcement officers, managers, marketers, mathematicians, ministers, nurses, nurse practitioners, physical therapists, politicians, psychologists, physicists, scientists, sociologists, teachers, and some who are still deciding what the future holds for them.

– Dr. Sandra S. Harper

”



Reflecting on the Past – Looking to the Future

Centennial Celebration

McMurry College was founded in 1923. Over the next 99 years, the college would become McMurry University, a staple of the Abilene community and a destination for thousands of students from all over the world in pursuit of higher education.



Our Centennial officially begins at the start of our convocation on September 22, 2022. A campus-wide kick-off rally and picnic in the Quad will start the year-long celebration. The celebration will feature student representatives raising the Centennial flag for the first time. Entertainment, food, coffee, ice cream, photo areas with props, a scavenger hunt, games, prizes, and more will keep alumni, students, faculty, and staff engaged! A drone shot of the McMurry community forming a “100” on the lawn will capture the beginning of the yearlong celebration. Activities will continue through October 2023, culminating in a Centennial gala at Homecoming in 2023.

As we look to McMurry’s past, the University wants to honor those who helped shape the institution into what it is today by creating the McMurry 100+. “The McMurry 100+ are individuals, families, and organizations whose impact on McMurry has significantly shaped and transformed this University,” Centennial Executive Director Nancy Smith says. “It is appropriate that during our Centennial when we celebrate our humble beginnings and our growth to a thriving university, we remember those whose influence has literally made this celebration a reality.”

The list will include names like Dr. J.W. Hunt, founding president, Dr. Virgil Bottom, a renowned physics professor known for his work on quartz crystals during World War II, and Dr. Morris Baker, the first African-American undergraduate at McMurry, who later became a psychology professor and an administrator with the U.S. Peace Corps. All on the list will be honored and featured during Centennial Celebration events.

McMurry is proud to continue fostering a spirit of academic success in students’ that will carry them forward on whatever career path they choose. To celebrate our students academic achievements, McMurry is amping up the annual Academic Conference in Spring 2023. The campuswide event will feature student presentations and research, honor thesis readings, art showings, and more. Faculty and alumni are also able to present their research. All will be welcome for a day of learning and fellowship.

“Our students work on incredible projects and research all year, sometimes for many years,” Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Matthew J. Draud says. “We want to allow them to present to as many in their community as possible. Classes will be canceled for the conference so students, faculty, and anyone else who wants to come can join in on celebrating their achievements.”

Another vital part of McMurry’s history is our relationship with our military community. McMurry is proud to have partnered with Dyess Air Force Base since 1960 to help active-duty military and veterans continue their education. We also offer a special military tuition assistance rate for active-duty members. McMurry’s partnerships strengthen the institution, and we strive to honor them during our Centennial Celebration.

Other Centennial activities include: Homecoming festivities and class reunions, athletic events celebrating Centennial teams, opening of the McMurry Centennial Museum in the Gypsy Ted Gallery II, and the revival of the beloved Iris Garden.

Our biggest project will be the opening of the reimagined Garrison United Methodist Student Center. Construction began on this \$25 million project, scheduled to be completed in Fall 2023.

Forward Momentum for the Next 100 Years

“Cities don’t just grow; they have to be built from the ground up.”

These words introduce the history of First Financial Bank (founded as Farmers and Merchant Bank), and are true for McMurry University as well. The bank was introduced as the Centennial lead sponsor at the annual Women’s Luncheon in March. “First Financial was a natural partner for McMurry when we began thinking about our Centennial Celebration,” says McMurry University President Dr. Sandra S. Harper.



Founding McMurry president Dr. J.W. Hunt and Farmers and Merchant Bank president Henry James turned their shared dream of opening a Methodist college in Abilene into existence. The University’s relationship with the bank has spanned the 100-year history of McMurry since its founding in 1923. Throughout its history, many First

Financial directors have served on the McMurry Board of Trustees. The McMurry School of Business is named after Walter F. Johnson – long-serving president of the bank and McMurry trustee, and Virginia Johnson, community leader and volunteer.

While the University has received many benefits from First Financial Bank’s financial support, the bank has benefited from McMurry graduates who go on to be employed by the bank.

Companies and universities that thrive for 100 years tie longevity to a strong mission and organizational culture. They can implement change and adapt in good times and hard



“Our relationship with McMurry University began when one of our founding family members, Henry James, was instrumental in establishing McMurry 100 years ago. We congratulate the university for passing this outstanding milestone with quality leadership, educators and students. Some of our most valuable senior officers graduated from McMurry and we are proud to continue to hire their students and support the university in any way we can. We have been honored to be their bank for the last 100 years and we look ahead with excitement to the next 100 years to come.”

–Scott Dueser



Thank you to our donors for making school history with the most donations in fiscal year 2022!
\$15,423,695

times. These companies and institutions enjoy close relationships within the communities they serve. Their employees have pride in the company they work for. Their leaders and employees are involved in nonprofits, churches, civic endeavors, schools, and beyond. They share a common vision that continues to move Abilene forward. A sense of family exists within the organizations’ cultural mindset. Both First Financial and McMurry have served as exemplars of integrity, involvement, and economic drivers in Abilene for 100 years.

Dr. Harper shared that ongoing financial support is essential to a thriving university, and First Financial has always been there for McMurry. “It was only appropriate that McMurry invited First Financial Bank to be the lead sponsor of our Centennial”, says Dr. Harper.

The support of organizations like First Financial Bank is mission-critical for McMurry. Corporate philanthropic support adds financial resources for scholarship and capital needs. It contributes to scholarships and endowments that ensure equity in education. This past year, McMurry had its most successful fund-raising effort, securing \$15,423,695 in philanthropic support.

The 100-year relationship between First Financial and McMurry continues to create synergy that ensures the vision and legacy of Hunt and James continue in Abilene and beyond.

Honoring McMurry Alumni

McMurry University honored seven alumni for excellence in their professional careers at the Annual Night of Distinction dinner on April 22. The Distinguished Alumni Award and Young Alumni Achievement Award are the highest honors bestowed on alumni from McMurry and are presented to individuals who have showcased exemplary service and accomplishment in their professional careers and communities. Five alumni were also recognized with Outstanding Alumni Awards in their professional fields.

"It is always an honor to showcase our outstanding alumni," says McMurry President Dr. Sandra S. Harper. "McMurry has produced influential leaders who have made a significant difference in their communities and industries, and we're proud to showcase excellence."

"McMurry University has so many amazing alumni, and the Alumni Awards are the perfect opportunity to celebrate the strengths of our alumni community," says Katelyn Scott '97, director for alumni engagement. "It's an honor to recognize their achievements, their service to the University, and the difference they make in the world. Each honoree is an inspiration and a wonderful example of what one can achieve with a degree from McMurry University as their foundation."

McMurry graduates are nominated each year by faculty, staff, and alumni. This year's honorees represent McMurry's best servant leaders.

The Distinguished Alumni Award was established in 1971 by the McMurry Alumni Association to recognize alumni who have made a significant contribution through achievement and service to their profession, society, and McMurry. Previous distinguished alumni award recipients include Mary Esther Bynum, C. Girvin Harkins, K.O. Long, Art Pertile, III, the Honorable Jorge Solis, Bishop Dan Solomon, Grant Teaff, Shirley Ann Wagley, and Sarah Ragle Weddington.

Terry Wheeler '85 is the 2022 Distinguished Alumni Award recipient. Wheeler, an Abilene native, has excelled in business, focusing primarily on health-care management leadership and strategy engagements. He is the retired CEO of Cypress Fairbanks Medical Center Hospital, where he worked for 14 years. As CEO, he implemented a multi-year turnaround program, including a \$60 million campaign to fund a 12-bed ICU, a 25-bed NICU, a new open-heart program, an expansion of the Emergency Department, upgraded imaging services, a designation as a Level 3 Trauma Center, and an Accredited Stroke and Chest Pain Center. Wheeler received a Bachelor of Business Administration in 1986.



McMurry established the **Young Outstanding Alumni Award** in 2011 to recognize alumni who have graduated in the last 20 years, excelled in their professions, and served their communities and McMurry. Previous outstanding young alumni include Shannon Sedgwick Davis, Shaun Martin, and Chris N. Montoya.

Officer Matthew Armbruster '06 was honored with the Young Alumni



Achievement Award for 2022. In 2020, Armbruster was named the Abilene Police Department's Officer of the Year after actions taken during SWAT callouts and resuscitating an injured child. Armbruster is also assigned as an assistant entry team leader to the department's SWAT team and Bomb Squad. He is also certified in Dignitary Protection and has been a part of security details for multiple United States Presidents and their families, as well as other heads of state. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminal Justice while dually enrolled at McMurry and Hardin Simmons University in 2006.

Outstanding Alumni Awards

Five alumni were recognized for achievement in Business, Education, Fine Arts, Math & Sciences, and Religious & Spiritual Life.

Paul Williams '85,

Outstanding Alumni Award in Business, operates several diverse businesses, including his primary business, Ways Company Inc. Williams graduated from McMurry College in 1984 with a Bachelor of Arts in Economics, and earned an MBA from Angelo State University in 2000. Williams is an elder of the Forgiven Ministries in San Angelo, the Coke County Appraisal District president, a County Commissioner for Coke County, and is the judge pro tem for the county.

Carly Kahl '98, Outstanding Alumni Award in Education, is the Statewide Department Chair for General Education and Academics at Texas State Technical College. She is a doctoral student in the History Department at Texas Tech University. She is the adult leader of Venture Crew 260; a coed scouting group focused on building leadership skills in young adults. At McMurry, she earned a Bachelor of Arts in History with a minor in Spanish and a certificate in Servant Leadership from The Servant Leadership Center of the Southwest.



L to R: Carly Kahl, John Landin, David Carver, Dr. Sandra S. Harper, Paul Williams, Matthew Armbruster, Tim Kennedy

John Landin '09, Outstanding Alumni Award in Fine Arts, is the Director of Bands at Abilene Cooper High School, where the band improved their area marching placement by 10 spots last fall. As the director of bands at Coahoma Independent School District from 2013 to 2019, Landin led the band to multiple sweepstakes awards and numerous area marching contests. He enjoys playing trombone with the Big Spring Symphony and local Abilene churches. He graduated from McMurry in 2009.

David Carver '74, Outstanding Alumni Award in Math & Sciences, is the founder of Carver Scientific and inventor of energy storage and generation technologies. He serves as the chief scientist responsible for all research and development efforts and is a director of the company. Dr. Carver is a 1974 graduate of McMurry College with a degree in Chemistry. Dr. Carver received his Ph.D. in Synthetic Organic Chemistry from Virginia Tech, and he holds over 200 issued patents in advanced energy, synthetic organic chemistry, and analytical instrumentation.

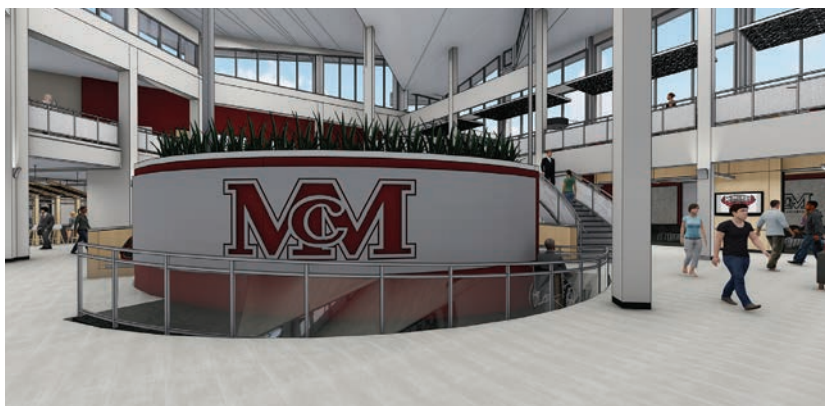
Tim Kennedy '99, Outstanding Alumni Award in Religious & Spiritual Life, serves in Hamilton, Ontario, as a minister to a new interdenominational faith community. He received a Bachelor of Arts in Religion and in Communication from McMurry University in 1999 and attended Princeton Theological Seminary, receiving his M.Div. in May 2003. Following graduation, Kennedy was ordained by the New Mexico Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church and served as University Chaplain and Director of Religious Life at McMurry University for 10 years.

New Beginnings: The Reimagined Student Experience

The \$25+ million expansion of the Shirley L. and Mildred Garrison United Methodist Student Center will enhance campus life as McMurry celebrates its Centennial. What an amazing gift to the campus and Abilene communities!

As a physical representation of McMurry University's identity and direction, the expanded and modernized student center is important not only for how it will serve the University but also for the values that it will represent to our community. Meeting a long list of specific needs and objectives, the center will embody our character and aspirations as we enter our second century. It will strengthen connections within our already tight-knit campus, and it will continue to project McMurry pride to campus visitors and the Abilene community.

While occupying the same footprint as the current center, the expansion adds a second floor and increases the square footage from 39,000 to 58,000. The center will feature welcoming common spaces that provide students with a place where they can come together and foster the personal interactions that are a vital part of McMurry's culture. This intermingling of perspectives among the increasingly diverse student body will serve to promote and celebrate meaningful interactions. You can look forward to the following features.



New Student Gathering Areas: The top design priority for the new center is expanded and enhanced spaces for studying in groups or alone, cocurricular activities, or simply hanging out with friends.



Chapel: Central to McMurry's identity as a United Methodist university, the chapel will be enlarged and enhanced to more fully meet the spiritual needs of our students, faculty, and staff.



Spirit Store: The spirit store will carry McMurry apparel, gifts, books, and a selection of other study essentials.



Fitness & Wellness Center: With both exercise equipment and a multipurpose studio, this 5,000-square-foot center will be McMurry's first comprehensive fitness and wellness facility.

Community Area & Kitchenette:

This shared space will serve as a base for students who live off campus or take evening classes to heat a meal, catch the news, or recharge.

Esports Center: A new campus home for McMurry's competitive esports team, the Esports Center will also be used to support academic programs.

Centralized Student Support Services:

An expanded student success suite will centralize services like first-year programming, test prep, advising, career development, and more.





Student Leadership Suite: This space is designed for student government and other leadership programs, clubs, interest groups, and more.

Enhanced Event Spaces: Beautifully appointed event spaces ranging from the 6,000-square-foot Mabee Room to the glass-walled President's Dining Room to a rooftop patio will provide the University and the Abilene community with venues for conferences, receptions, and celebrations.



Clearly visible from beyond the edges of campus, the center will powerfully communicate a sense of pride to visitors, prospective students, faculty members, staff and the Abilene communities. This project would not be possible without the generous support of our alumni and friends who are dedicated to keeping McMurry the best it can be as we enter our second century.



Scan this QR Code to join in and support the **A Time to Thrive Campaign**, or contact **Josh Poorman** at 325-793-4763 or poorman.josh@mcm.edu.



A Man of Character

McMurry's larger-than-life statue of Grant Teaff is an apt tribute for this down-to-earth man whose life's work has been to serve others.



▶ Watch Now

Grant Teaff '57 is widely celebrated as one of the winningest coaches in college football. Along with conference titles and championships, he is just as renowned for his devotion to McMurry University, which he credits for his love of learning, and to his Christian faith, which only deepened after surviving a near-fatal plane crash.

"A man of character" were words uttered by Donell Teaff, Grant Teaff's wife of more than 60 years, when the couple saw the bronze sculpture. Just shy of his 30th birthday, the likeness captures Teaff when he was coach of the 1963 McMurry College (which became McMurry University in 1990) football team. Named *The Call*, it is the artisanship of Dan Brook, a Cisco, Texas-based sculptor who played on Teaff's 1980 Southwest Conference Championship team.

Many know Teaff's storied achievements in football. He was head coach of McMurry from 1960 to 1965, Angelo State University from 1969 to 1971 and Baylor University from 1972 to 1992, amassing a career college football record of 170-151-8, in addition to two Southwest

Conference titles and appearances in eight bowl games. In 2001 he was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame.

But Teaff's acclaim extends far beyond the limelight of the game. He motivated and mentored his players, investing in the young men's lives as if they were his own sons. After he retired from coaching, he taught coaches and teachers how to do the same, which has created a lineage of leaders who are helping young people become what he says, "God intended them to be."

"We're given certain skills, talents, and abilities, and it's up to us to utilize those and the wisdom that God gives us," Teaff believes.

Early Influences Shape a Resolute Young Man

Teaff grew up in Snyder, Texas, about 80 miles northwest of Abilene. He says he learned the value of hard work from his father, who during the Depression managed Stinson Motor Company, a car dealership, gas station, garage, bus station, truck stop, and tourist court.

"I saw him being able to juggle all those things, which was very good for me coming up because I realized you can do it, but you have to be able to

concentrate on each one separately," explains Teaff, who describes his father as very personable and capable of building a strong business through his relationships.

From his mother — who never thought her son was going to be on the team that loses — he learned the power of a positive attitude. When Teaff was in high school, inspired by Edward Everett Hale's poem "I Am Only One," he began saying these words each morning, a practice that he continues to this day: **“**

**I am only one, but I am one.
I can't do everything,
but I can do something.
That which I can do,
I ought to do
That which I ought to do,
by God's grace, I will do.**

”

"It is essential to start the day with a positive attitude that will allow you to achieve success," Teaff affirms. This positive attitude led him to McMurry.

A 'Great Decision' Kicks Off a Lifelong Relationship with McMurry

In January 1953, Teaff transferred to McMurry on a football scholarship. He played offensive tackle and linebacker for three years. He says the greatest things he learned from his coach, Wilford Moore, were discipline, hard work, and the role of respect in relationships.

"McMurry was a great decision. I met my lifelong friends there. I got a great education and had the most wonderful educators," Teaff recalls. "Their inspiration really ignited my

desire for education, and I've tried not to let that stop."

Teaff earned his bachelor's degree in physical education and master's in administrative education. His senior year, under coach Doug Cox, McMurry had one of the best records in Texas, 8–2, and won the Texas Conference title.

A Playbook That Goes Beyond X's and O's

Teaff knew he wanted to become a coach when he was around 13 years old. He embraced the opportunity to bring people together, teach the players, and inspire the fans.

"I really admired my high school coaches," Teaff says. "I loved the game of football and felt it had given me so much, and if it could do that for me, it was a sport that could do that for others."

After working at Lubbock High School as assistant coach with Moore (his coach at McMurry), Teaff returned to his alma mater. At 26, he was one of the youngest head coaches in college football. But Teaff didn't just coach. Leading by example, he taught his players values, the importance of commitment, and to believe in themselves. He made them stronger physically and mentally. Under his guidance they raised their grade averages. And he saw his team through one of the most harrowing nights of their lives.

"We Pray It Not End On This Night"

It was Sept. 28, 1963, after McMurry narrowly lost to Northeast Louisiana State College in Monroe. The dispirited team boarded a chartered DC-3 plane for the trip back home to Abilene, Texas. But nothing went as planned — including four significant failures, any one of which could have ended in tragedy.



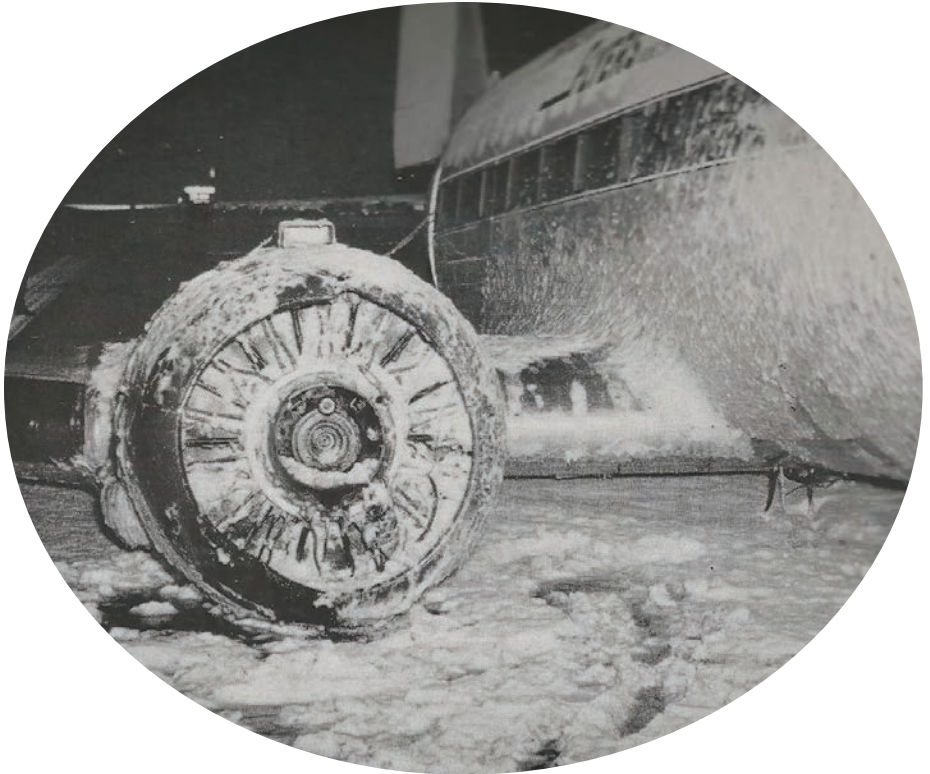
Donnell and Grant Teaff, 1955

The first unusual thing that Teaff noticed was the plane “moaning and groaning” down the runway, clearing the end of the tarmac in the nick of time. Once in the air, it didn’t get any lift, clipping the tops of trees. The elevators, hinged flaps that are critical in landing and takeoff, were locked.

The pilots circled back and made two aborted landing attempts. On the first, the plane bounced on the runway and turned sideways before somehow becoming airborne again. On the second – with destroyed landing gear and a blown tire – the props hit the asphalt. Sparks flew. The pilots managed to turn up the nose of the plane and ascend.

With a damaged electrical system and loaded with fuel, they then headed to Barksdale Air Force Base in Shreveport, Louisiana, to attempt a “belly landing,” which involves landing the bottom of the plane on a runway prepared with a layer of fire suppression foam. During the 30-minute flight to the base, a player asked Teaff to pray for them. In the darkness, Teaff said a “fervent” prayer: “Surely, God, you have a plan, a purpose and a will for our lives. We pray, God, that it not end on this night.”

They arrived at the base and landed – but astoundingly, there was no foam on the runway. The plane bounced on the ground three times. Sparks engulfed the cabin. A prop dug into the concrete and tore away. The right engine burst into flames. The wing started to burn. Miraculously, the plane – exceedingly hot – did not explode. Everyone survived unscathed.



**Making It Make Sense:
A Brotherhood Is Forged**

On his first night home, Teaff was overwhelmed by all that had happened. The team had just endured an experience that most people would never dream of, and he wanted to create something for them that would be meaningful yet fun.

“That’s about as close to death as you can get without getting there. I have to make something out of that,” Teaff remembers. “You can’t take life for granted.”

With the team’s involvement, he created a club with a card that depicted its name: The Brotherhood of the Indian Belly-Landing Experts. (In 1963, McMurry’s sports teams called themselves “Indians.”) The red card – the printer’s closest color to maroon – included the names of the 28 players and three coaches on the flight, along with the date of the crash, and a Bible verse. But there was a small problem. The printer wasn’t able to fit the name of

the club on the business card-size format. Teaff told him to abbreviate it by using the first letters of each word.

The card read “B.I.B.L.E.” The Scripture that Teaff chose was Romans 8:31:

“

**If God be for us,
who can be against us?**

”

Of the providence of surviving this flight, Teaff is pensive: “I think there was a reason and a plan and a purpose for this experience, and I’ve tried to fulfill that as I live my life. I try to make every moment count. I don’t coach 66-100 players anymore, but I have my family, my responsibility to my community, and I take that seriously. I feel it’s one of the opportunities that I was given on that very fateful night.”



L to R: Grant Teaff, Donell Teaff, Dianna Brook, Dan Brook



Teaff teammates sharing memories.



Grant Teaff Plaza

The Sermons We See

Teaff believes it's not what you say, it's how you live your life. His many books and speaking engagements for coaches and teachers explain how to mentor students, guiding them to set goals, develop a positive attitude, and acquire leadership skills, something he sees as increasingly vital in our frenetic culture. Above all, Teaff, who received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from McMurry in 1975, shares his skills for igniting students' enthusiasm for lifelong learning.

He encourages students to take opportunities seriously. "It's so easy when you're college age to sluff off something because you think it will never mean anything to you. But you never know what it will mean to you," Teaff stresses. "Take seriously the way people treat other people, how they conduct themselves, and what their purpose in life is. You see that at a university like McMurry. You see that in the lives of the people who serve there."

The Call: Homage to a Life of Service

On April 22, 2022, the sculpture of a young coach Teaff, which pays tribute to the 1963 football team, was unveiled. Among the 250 people in attendance were two of the B.I.B.L.E. team members, Bill Grissom and Eddie Thompson, along with Teaff's wife, Donell; youngest daughter, Layne Teaff Pittman; friends; and McMurry family.

Grant Teaff was chosen because he exemplifies McMurry's core values of service, leadership, and professional success. The Grant Teaff Plaza is situated on the west side of Radford Auditorium.

Of the 7-foot-tall likeness of himself and the honor that it bestows, Teaff says, "I do not take this statue as something that's honoring me but is honoring students who played for me, the coaches who worked for me, the teachers and professors who taught us, the administration.

"McMurry meant so much to me as a student," he continues. "I am extremely honored. I pray that I'm worthy of it, and I intend to be for the rest of my life. I am who I am today because of McMurry University."



Sculptor Dan Brook honors his coach and mentor.

Storyteller

With equal parts technique and intuition, Dan Brook captures the spirit of Grant Teaff at the dawn of his career in a bronze statue located in the heart of McMurry campus.

The artwork is a coming-full-circle moment for the sculptor, who met Coach when he was 19 years old. Inspired by Grant Teaff's book *I Believe*, he said he wanted to play football for a man like that, and he did. Now 40 years later, Brook is helping honor Teaff, one of the most important people in his life.

Pursuing a Place on Teaff's Team

Dan Brook grew up on a ranch in Oklahoma, a member of the Muscogee Nation. He says he gets his love of books and literature from his mother and his artistic talent from his Native American father. At a young age, Brook discovered a natural talent for sketching, drawing upon the rural surroundings and his rich culture.

Brook attended Baylor University to play football for Grant Teaff. Coach Teaff remembers Brook as a true student of the game and meticulous about everything he was involved in, describing him as someone who has character. Mutual respect abounds between Teaff and Brook.

Preserving a Moment in Time

The statue of Teaff, which took more than eight months to compose, commemorates McMurry's 1963 football team. The Cisco, Texas-based sculptor considers it one of the best pieces he's ever done.

"There's no difference now in how he approaches life as opposed to way back then," Brook says of Teaff. "His character has been completely consistent, which is why I chose to somehow show that in the statue."

Dressed in a suit with the McMurry emblem on his lapel, Teaff is one



month shy of his 30th birthday, his age when he and his team survived the plane crash. Titled *The Call*, Brook says the pose "depicts the moment he surrendered his life to coaching young men and pointing them toward Christ – the moment of his calling."

"His shoulders are at an angle as if he just turned to look up," Brook describes. "I tried to capture that instant when he surrendered."

Positioned on the west side of Radford Auditorium, some who attended the unveiling commented that it looked like the installation and building were done at the same time, and that was exactly what Brook was looking to accomplish as he honored his mentor.

When describing his work, Brook invokes the "eloquence in broken English" of Chief Joseph when he said, "I will fight no more, forever"; for Brook, "I will tell a story once, forever."

The story of Teaff is told in the perdurability of bronze, which only becomes more beautiful and interesting as the patina continues to change. A metaphorical medium for one who has inspired so many.

Hold on for the Ride

Hands-On Experience Prepares Students for Investment Management Careers.

The Johnson School of Business (JSOB) is recognized as one of the brightest spots in McMurry's academic program lineup, but there's a group within JSOB that precious few students are even aware of, and their success navigating pandemic-related market challenges over the past two years has been extraordinary.

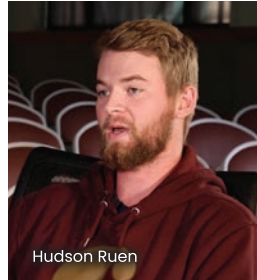
The McMurry Student-Managed Investment Fund (SMIF) began in 2012 as a student-led program encouraging young JSOB investors to take control of both their own financial futures and funds within McMurry's endowment.



Professor Glenn Webb

"The original corpus was around \$750,000, and over many years students have grown it to \$1.8 million," says Glen Webb, adjunct professor of Business & Law and faculty liaison for SMIF's student members. "The students in SMIF have just been outstanding young men and women. A real credit to McMurry University."

What makes that "corpus" (or total combined investment amount) so valuable and unique is that it reflects real dollars in the McMurry endowment. Students are tasked with making decisions as a group about the direction of the investment fund, and those decisions don't always comport with what the market looks like at the time. McMurry students apply and are selected to be part of a SMIF course during the fall and spring semesters.

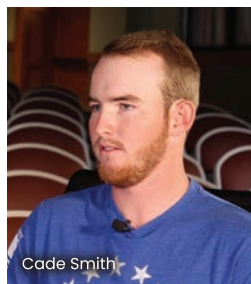


Hudson Ruen

Junior Hudson Ruen remembers one such strategy session. "Last semester we were

anticipating rising inflation and interest rates. We made the decision to sell stocks and put \$300,000 into our TIPS account – treasury inflation-protected securities," Ruen says "That was a really smart move now. It brought our total up and helped us save a lot of money."

The backgrounds of each student investor are varied – in terms of where they grew up, as well as their family upbringing. Cade Smith found his way to the program after learning more about the financing services provided by his family's Clyde-based farm equipment company, Smith and Sons.

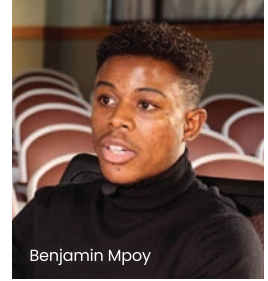


Cade Smith

"They told me the total portfolio for the class was around \$1.8 million, and my jaw about hit the floor," Smith recalled. "I had no idea they'd be letting students control that amount of money, and I think that's a cool thing about McMurry – they give us

the opportunity to engage with that large scale of money – real money."

That focused engagement is what drew in Benjamin Mpooy, a student from South Africa with a



Benjamin Mpooy

vibrant entrepreneurial spirit. Mpooy's achievements include developing an innovative new dating app and starting his own clothing brand.

"Last semester, I was able to spectate. I would show up to meetings online and see what [the students] would do. I did that a few times until I realized 'OK, this is what I want to do.' And so I was able to apply for the class next semester." He noted that several members of McMurry's faculty helped steer him toward what he now considers essential coursework in pursuit of his business degree.

Webb challenges students,



"If you want to see the absolute best of McMurry, you need to come to the Student-Managed Investment Fund.

It will give you great confidence in the type of students we're attracting and graduating.

I love McMurry and the students...

I believe in its mission.





L to R: Dr. Sandra S. Harper, Dr. Tikhon Bykov, Dr. Alicia Wyatt and Mr. David Upshaw

Engineering Physics: A Door Opening Degree

A long-awaited upgrade is coming to the Finch-Gray Science building this fall, two years after the Title V grant made it all possible.

McMurry University will begin offering a new advanced degree in Engineering Physics at the kickoff of the Fall 22 semester. This forward-thinking investment into our thriving Physics department is yet another “feather in the cap” for a science division that has exemplified McMurry’s values.

In September 2020, McMurry University was awarded a Title V Grant from the U.S. Department of Education that enabled the creation of the Engineering Physics major, along with making investments into our existing science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) programs. Crucially, the grant also expanded STEM support for Hispanic students, a key focus of McMurry’s efforts to bring more students with diverse backgrounds into the sciences.

Celebrations were in order on Friday, April 29, with a ribbon-cutting announcing the completion of student study spaces and physics lab equipment supporting the new degree program. Tikhon Bykov, Ph.D., chair of the Physics Department at McMurry University, was on hand to lead alumni, board trustees, students, faculty, staff, and others through a tour of what’s to come this fall.

“It is difficult to overestimate the importance of this renovation project for the current and future success of McMurry Physics and Engineering Physics programs, as well as our sciences programs in general,” Dr. Bykov says during his prepared remarks. “The space that we are dedicating today is a result of the hard work of many people who have invested their time and effort into creating the original vision, working through design details, and participating in many meetings with architects and contractors.”

Bykov’s work as activity coordinator was crucial in setting up the curriculum for this new degree, and that approach to hands-on learning was evident during the following tour. One particular station featured 3D-printing equipment for creating objects from various plastics or resins. Students were on hand to describe the experience of applying engineering physics theorem to a tangible object that could be modeled and tested. Bykov shares that the focus on technology enhances the student learning experience and will have an impact on setting graduates up for success.

“This interdisciplinary field of study will prepare engineers who are well versed not only in their chosen engineering field but are flexible enough to take on a variety of technical professions in our quickly changing world,” Bykov says. “We may not know today what tomorrow’s professions will look like, but we are confident we can provide our students with important physics, math, and engineering educational experiences that will allow them to succeed in their future at McMurry and after graduation.”

Roger Ward's McMurry Experience Motivates Him to Give Back

When Roger Ward graduated in 1967, there were only six students majoring in physics at McMurry. He studied under Virgil Bottoms, Ph.D., a physics professor whose work helped develop quartz crystal production in the United States during World War II. When Ward was considering his options for college, he said Dr. Bottom told him, "McMurry is not very fancy, but you'll get a personalized experience." Ward would graduate cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Physics from McMurry and Master of Science in Physics from Purdue University.

"Talking to Roger Ward, you would always hear about the importance of educational opportunity," McMurry physics professor Tikhon Bykov, Ph.D., says. "Those who are given such an opportunity and take full advantage of that opportunity will succeed in life."

Learning about quartz crystals from Dr. Bottom enabled Ward to research and develop quartz crystal devices for HP Laboratories. In 1979, he became vice president of research and development for Colorado Crystal Corporation and later served as president and CEO of Quartzdyne, Inc.

"I wanted to give back what Dr. Bottom had given me," Ward says. He felt the best way to honor Dr. Bottom's legacy was to give to McMurry's science programs.

The Ward-Bottom Science Scholarship is for students from towns with a population of less than 25,000 in Texas and majoring in one of the natural sciences. The scholarship covers 50 percent of expenses related to attending McMurry.

"The most exciting aspect of Roger Ward's generosity is the scholarships that enable students to thrive in our programs," McMurry biology professor Joel Brant, Ph.D., says. "These scholarships are substantial and will allow students to focus on their collegiate experience without worrying about the

“

Through his generosity, Roger has positioned the sciences to continue their legacy of excellence for generations to come. For that, McMurry is truly grateful.

– Dr. Sandra S. Harper

”

finances. They will have the greatest impact on our science departments.”

Ward urged students to focus not only on the foundational parts of science but also how they communicate.

“It's important to get the students involved in the real world,” Ward says. “What does the world need, and what can these students prepare themselves for?”

Along with the scholarship, Ward's donations have given McMurry professors the ability to take students on graduate school tours and purchase a variety of equipment to enhance student learning experiences, as well as start a 3D-printing lab years before the technology was widely accessible.

“Roger Ward has devoted the last 25 years of his life giving opportunities to McMurry students,” Dr. Bykov says. “All of these opportunities were and continue to be essential for the success of our students.”



L to R: Dr. Sandra S. Harper, Roger Ward, Dr. Tikhon Bykov, Mr. Michael V. Hutchison



Watch Now

Fast-Track Pathway to College

High school students are getting a head start on their college degrees by enrolling in **McMurry Dual Credit Academy (DCA)** courses. “We recognize that students and families are concerned with the cost of obtaining a degree,” says Grant Greenwood, vice president of enrollment management. “The Dual Credit Academy provides students with an affordable means to obtain college credits at McMurry and provides a convenient pathway for students to get ahead.”

DCA provides high school students access to over 20 McMurry online courses at a reduced tuition rate. The University has agreements with several area independent school districts and private schools in Texas and is seeking to partner with additional schools.

“Students are comfortable with, and like, the flexibility of online courses. The Dual Credit Academy is an opportunity for us to serve



students and school districts,” says Greenwood. “Dual credit is very popular with high school students and families as it greatly reduces the cost of a college degree. At McMurry we champion value and the Dual Credit Academy is an extension of our commitment to provide an affordable education.”

Other benefits to students extend beyond affordability, including gaining firsthand experiences with college-level work that may help them transition from high school to college. Students can enroll in courses in a number of general education disciplines, including

English Composition and Rhetoric, College Algebra, History, Psychology, and Physics to name a few. The broad 20-course catalog introduces students to degrees, disciplines, and career pathways that they may not be exposed to in high school. Often dual-credit students enjoy a smoother transition between high school and college.

McMurry is also offering an additional scholarship benefit to students who enroll in McMurry Dual Credit Academy. “All students who complete a DCA course will receive a one-time \$1,000 scholarship to attend McMurry University as an incoming freshman,” says Greenwood. “This DCA scholarship stacks on any other sources of aid a student may receive from McMurry.”

If you have a student interested in enrolling in the Dual Credit Academy, email dualcredit@mcm.edu and the McMurry admissions team will help you get connected.



The McMurry Alumni Association Board of Directors (AABOD) met in Abilene for their annual spring meeting on April 23. Board actions included increasing the standing committees from three to five to refocus board efforts to better align with institutional priorities. They voted to increase membership from 18 to no more than 30 to adequately support the new committee structure. Ten new members were elected to serve for the upcoming term, with 16 existing members bringing AABOD membership to 25. AABOD's next meeting will be in July in DFW and will kick off the new board year.



L to R: Mike Hutchison '87, Sarah Bodner '96, Deena Duarte '99, Dorian Block '15, Dr. Sandra S. Harper, Katelyn Scott '97, Shawn Hailey '08, Natalie McDaniel '08, Kim Tate '07, Jeff Matsler '89

AABOD Committees

Development Committee*

- Advocate for alumni giving to McMurry and help create a culture of philanthropy in the McMurry community.
- Participate in programs and events that raise funds for various University endeavors, propose and employ ideas that increase fiscal assistance, and encourage local companies to invest in campus programs and activities.

Engagement Committee

- Advise on direction of programming for alumni and student engagement, and help identify ways to connect students with alumni, increasing awareness of the Alumni Association on campus.
- Promote and encourage the participation of alumni in support of the mission of McMurry and the purpose of the alumni board.

Membership Committee

- Cultivate new leadership for the alumni board by developing and executing a system of identifying and recruiting new alumni board members. The Membership Committee is responsible for developing a pipeline identifying potential members, assessing qualifications, and enhancing recruitment efforts.
- Plan and implement new member orientation for new Alumni Board members.

Recognition Committee

- Identify and recognize outstanding leadership and service by alumni.
- Promote and coordinate selection of the alumni association's annual awards: Distinguished Alumni and Young Alumni Achievement award.

Recruitment Committee*

- Extend the reach of the Office of Admissions and give alumni an opportunity to serve, by engaging in activities and programs to support student recruitment goals, including developing an outreach effort to promote the Alumni Recruiting Ambassadors program and identify alumni interested in recruitment.
- Identify prospective students and refer them to the Office of Admissions and encourage talented and qualified students to apply to McMurry.

* New committees



L to R: Hailee Reeder '17, Susan Tucker '94, Heather Hyde Wargo '09



L to R: Natalie McDaniel '08, Sarah Bodner '96

First Look. On the evening of April 23, Abilene-area alumni and friends gathered for an evening of food, fun, networking, and a sneak-peek into two exciting initiatives that are setting the stage for McMurry's future—the Garrison United Methodist Student Center modernization project and McMurry's Centennial. The event was hosted by the Alumni Association Board of Directors and the Black Alumni Network.

Class Notes

Kyle Peggram '19 & Meghan Inman Peggram '19 tied the knot June 12, 2021.



Bonnie Bevers '04 joined the Intergenerational Ministries Team at the Rio Texas Conference Office in January 2022. She completed her Master of Divinity degree at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in May 2022 and has returned to the Rio Texas Conference to serve as the Youth Delegate Coordinator, leading the conference Youth Ministry Council. Bonnie is a Deacon candidate in the Rio Texas Conference and is happy to be home to continue doing the work she loves.



In April, after more than 20 years in the TV news business, **Daniel Brown '99** put away his producer headset and started a new job as Senior Marketing & Communication Specialist with Houston Methodist Baytown.



On June 1, **Adam Samuels '00** became the new executive director of the Abilene Education Foundation. For the last 15 years,

he has been a staff member at St. Paul United Methodist Church and conducted youth choirs for Chorus Abilene for the past nine seasons.

Congratulations to **Jess Barnes Bellemer '08** who was recently named Dean of the Library at Lees-McRae College.

Cindy Holden Davenport '80 has retired from Clyde ISD as a choir teacher after 18 years. She is now enjoying time at home with her husband, Steve Davenport '81, who retired last May after 37 years with Abilene ISD. Steve taught History and was a coach, all at the same school. Cindy is now pursuing a retirement career as a Tupperware consultant. She and Steve are loving being grandparents to two little ones and another on the way!

Kaitlyn Thompson '20 is in the process of completing her MSW degree from Angelo State. She is ready and excited for December to get here when she'll finally be finished with her degree. She is interning 18 hours a week at the Abilene State Supported Living Center and balancing a full-time job.

Tara Goodloe de Fuentes '14 and her husband, William, are fostering a 17-year-old in Guatemala and starting a bilingual pre-primary school there.



After 30+ years in public education, **Christine Bedding Purkiss '82**, will be retiring at the end of August from Angelo State University.

Since graduation, **Traya Joiner '20** has been busy. She landed a job as a Crisis Specialist with Betty Hardwick Center while working on a master's degree at Angelo State University. Plus, she and her fiancé, Leo, have become entrepreneurs, opening Leo's Warzone for mobile paintball as well as a charcuterie business for Abilene and surrounding areas.

Friends We'll Miss

- | | |
|---|---|
| Noah Abeita '05
Roscoe, TX
4/15/2022 | James Payne '66
The Colony, TX
3/4/2022 |
| Margaret Houston Bolding '87
Abilene, TX
11/7/2021 | Claudette Perry '51
Abilene, TX
12/10/2021 |
| Mary Sue Bynum Avary
Katy, TX
1/29/2022 | Dusty Rhodes
Houston, TX,
11/19/2021 |
| Kay Herron Cathey '74
Mansfield, TX
11/3/2021 | Ron Salmon
Ruston, LA
3/29/2022 |
| Richard Chaffin
Cleburne, TX
1/10/2022 | Dick Schofield
Abilene, TX
3/19/2022 |
| Bill Deffebach
Houston, TX
4/11/2022 | Ronald Sitton '69
Lubbock, TX
2/2/2022 |
| Sidney Ophelia Dietz Ernst
3/19/2022 | Billy Spencer '62
Abilene, TX
12/21/2021 |
| Mike Goode '70
North Richland Hills, TX,
1/5/2022 | Rita Hood Stephenson '47
Winters, TX
Feb. 2022 |
| Robin Green '67
Lubbock, TX
12/9/2021 | David Sullivan '56
Breckenridge, TX,
2/16/2022 |
| Gus Guthrie '66
Fort Worth, TX
1/12/2022 | Linda Cooper Taylor '63
Buffalo, WY
1/20/2022 |
| Dennis Laster '92
Abilene, TX
11/7/2021 | Thomas Trinkner '71
Abilene, TX
3/7/2022 |
| Carlos Mainord '68
Broken Arrow, OK,
11/8/2021 | Sarah Ragle Weddington '64
Austin, TX
12/26/2021 |
| Sandra Shields Martin
Merkel, TX
4/3/2022 | Lee Wescott '60
Lakeway, TX
1/25/2022 |
| Roxanne Medina '15
Dallas, TX
5/4/2022 | Orlier White '55
San Diego, CA
12/20/2020 |
| Denise Johnson Moore '99
San Antonio, TX
12/4/2021 | Mary Deffebach Williams
Early, TX
11/11/2021 |
| Wayne Mooring '70
Waco, TX
4/29/2022 | |

For the full list visit:
alumni.mcm.edu/in_memoriam

McMurry Fund Helps Enable the Best and Brightest to Achieve Their Dreams

Senior Jalen Meshurle Promesse '23 is no stranger to going after what he wants. A top-level graduate of Ysleta High School in El Paso, Texas, Jalen's achievements prior to attending McMurry are impressive.

He played wide receiver for four seasons with the Ysleta football squad, and he managed to add track and field to his repertoire in the back half of his high school athletics career.

Off the field, Jalen's acceptance into National English Honor Society, Science National Honor Society, and the National Honor Society primed him for success in academics as he transitioned into college athletics.

You bring a clear direction and focus to your work, which is surprising given your involvement. What was it about McMurry that made you decide to commit?

As a senior in my high school's top 10 percent, I had several university paths to choose from. I thought about going to a large school – one where I could have great opportunities and special attention – but after receiving what I thought would be a career-ending injury during a football game, I started



focusing on what my future could really look like. After this fork in the road, I knew I needed to pursue a different path. That's when McMurry raced to the front of the pack.

That setback must have taken a toll on your drive and determination, but you never seem to slow down. What did McMurry do to make you feel welcome in spite of this challenge?

At McMurry, I was treated as more than an injured athlete. The faculty, staff, and coaches showed me I am valued as a person, my education is top priority, and I am truly wanted here. I was given an generous scholarship package because of the McMurry Fund. I was given a lot

of space to heal and work on my criminology degree. I cannot thank the university enough for making me feel welcome, and once that feeling set in, I knew my path was set.

Now that you're in the home stretch before graduating, how does it make you feel to have taken this journey as a McMurry War Hawk?

I'm proud of my decision to attend McMurry. This community takes care of each other, and my friends and I are constantly reminded that faculty and staff are dedicated to our education, and every opportunity is ours for the taking. The scholarships we receive change our paths, create awesome opportunities, and prepare us to launch into the world ready to build our careers. McMurry's role in our lives – in my life – is very important, and the gifts from donors are what makes it all possible in the first place.

To support Jalen and other students like him, consider giving a gift to the McMurry Fund. Donations can be made monthly or on a one-time basis.

Visit join.mcm.edu/mcmfund to learn more about how the McMurry Fund is changing lives for the better.



1 McMurry University #125
Abilene, Texas 79697

Non Profit Org
US Postage
PAID
Lubbock, TX
Permit No.49

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

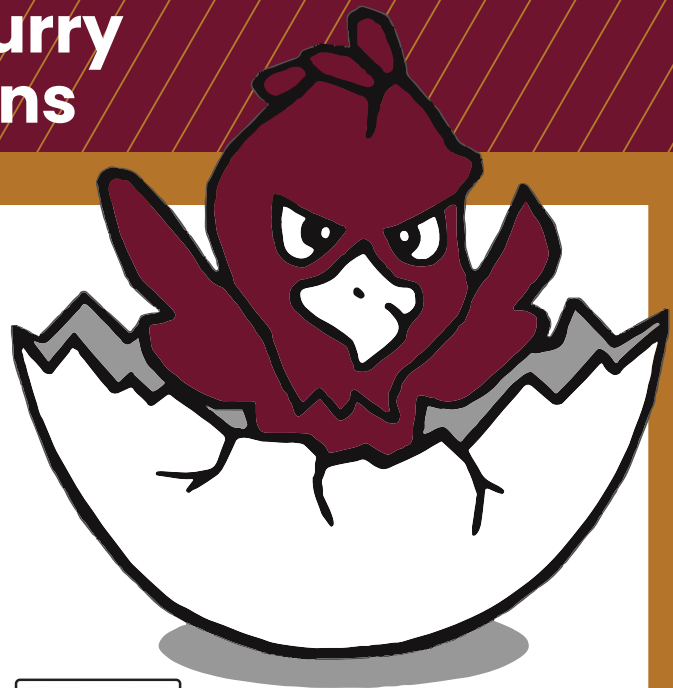
Share your love of McMurry and its unique traditions

THE KETTLE CLUB

Invite the kids in your life to “soar with the kettle”—a group of hawks in flight—and enroll them in The Kettle Club, a new program for legacy children and grandchildren of McMurry alumni.

Any Legacy under 17-years-old is eligible to join for a fee of \$19.23 (the year McMurry was founded) and will enjoy benefits including:

- Enrollment certificate
- Annual birthday cards
- Age-specific gifts on milestone years
- Opportunities to attend Legacy-specific events
- And more...



SCAN ME

**Learn More &
Enroll a Legacy, TODAY!**
Scan this QR code or visit:
JOIN.MCM.EDU/KETTLE-CLUB