

MERIDIAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Connections

M A G A Z I N E

*'Lady Gaga' & 'Steven Tyler'
taking center stage for
Tuition Guarantee
fundraising*



Dr. Scott Elliott, *president*

Barbara Jones, *vice president, operations*

Cathy Parker, *director of institutional effectiveness and accountability*

Billy Beal, *dean, learning resources*

Amy Brand, *associate vice president, finance*

Janet Heggie, *dean, community and business development*

Dr. Richie McAlister, *associate vice president, workforce education*

Soraya Welden, *dean, student services*

Kathy Brookshire, *director, institutional advancement*

Michael Thompson, *dean, academic affairs*

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Kay Thomas, *college promotions director*

Amy Miller, *graphic designer*

Preston Cooper, *webmaster*

On the cover: MCC Foundation Board Members Hayley Shirley and Jonathan Bell serve as team captains for the annual President's Roundtable Fundraising campaign.

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Celebrating excellence - MCC saluted alumni Gary Wilkinson, above left, Donnie Massey, Dr. Ricardo Gillispie and Dr. Leigh White during the Hall of Fame ceremony held on campus. Also spotlighted were 30-year-employees Walter Loyd, left, building custodian, and Dr. Richie McAlister, associate vice president for workforce education. See additional story and photos on page 11.

*Adequate funding -
a journey, not a
destination*



FROM THE PRESIDENT

I've been hanging around the Capitol this time of year for the past 14 regular legislative sessions, and I can tell you that the fight for adequate funding is a journey, not a destination.

There are times, despite my zealousness for the community college mission, when I actually feel sorry for our leaders – folks like Speaker Pro Tem Greg Snowden, Sens. Videt Carmichael and Terry Burton, and Reps. Chuck Young, William Shirley and Steve Horne.

Incessant needlers like me try very hard to make the argument to such lawmakers that their agency should be THE highest priority. And it's a mathematical certainty that not every agency can be on the front burner. Worst of all in the legislative process, making one agency a priority often involves diminishing support for another.

My observation is that most of our leaders would like to fully fund every worthy cause. I'm sure they would rather say "yes" than "no" if at all possible. But the rub is they never have enough revenue at their disposal.

Rather than making an emotional plea on the issue of funding, I would rather stick to what I perceive to be the facts. I believe there's an economic continuum that ultimately results in better services for the citizenry, and it goes something like this:

Workforce development enables job creation; job creation creates wealth (or greater earnings power); greater wealth generates more tax revenue; and more tax revenue provides for better public schools, better health care, better roads, better public safety – and the list goes on.

With about 64 percent of the jobs in America today derived from the kinds of training offered by community colleges, I would argue that workforce development has a stronger nexus with our two-year colleges than any other agency. So, the continuum of which I've written, in no small part, begins with community colleges.

New companies won't move to Mississippi and existing industries won't expand their payrolls unless they are confident that a viable workforce is available to them. Just ask any economic developer – like Wade Jones with the EMBDC – about the validity of that statement.

So, when I'm in Jackson nipping at the heels of our legislators – people of good faith whom I genuinely like and respect – it's only because I believe wholeheartedly in the correlation between the mission of community colleges and the future prosperity of our state.

Currently, community colleges receive about 7 cents out of every general fund tax dollar that goes to support public education in Mississippi; whereas, the K-12 system receives about 72 cents and the university system about 21 cents. Moreover, community college enrollments have grown in recent years at a far higher rate than any other educational entity. On a per-student basis, last year community colleges received about \$3,277 in state support versus \$4,638 for every K-12 student and \$6,648 for every regional university student, the latter being those from institutions like Delta State. I'm not talking about the major research universities.

There has to be some kind of logic applied to the expectation of deliverables placed on community colleges as related to the aforementioned imbalance in state support. In the end, I see it as a matter of investment and return. If we make a stronger investment in our community colleges, I believe we're going to ignite the aforementioned economic continuum and move toward strengthening our tax base both vertically (higher wages) and horizontally (adding more gainfully employed people to the rolls).

But if we keep on doing what we've always done – as the old saying goes – we're going to keep on getting what we've always got. At least, that's my story, and I'm sticking to it.

The Eagle takes to the air

Radio station tunes into Adult Standards style

Where can you hear Rod Stewart, Tony Bennett, the Bangles or Doris Day? On MCC's 106.9 FM The Eagle, a full-power commercial radio station.

The MCC Foundation was gifted the station from Laura and Clay Holladay last year, and the station is currently in its opening stages of operation on campus. The new radio station has ushered in a different format of music to the Meridian area.

"We are very excited about the direction that the radio station is taking us in the Meridian market," said Program Director Robby Atkinson. "We bring a much different format to the table for our listeners. We

have had such a positive response from the general public. The station is in its infant stages at this point, but we have many exciting things on the horizon for our listeners in the near future."

The radio station is currently playing an Adult Standards format of music which ranges from Rod Stewart, Elton John, Tony Bennett to Frank Sinatra and more. The music on the new 106.9 FM The Eagle spans many different generations and Atkinson said that is what sets the station apart from all others in Meridian.

"We have a very unique sound, and I believe that is a great draw for the audience in Meridian," added Atkinson. "We have something for every age and for everyone that enjoys different types of music from different decades."

The College is currently building a studio on the ground level of Todd Library to give the station a home on campus, and officials are anticipating completion later this spring. The station will also provide experience for students in the Broadcast Communication Technology Program. The station also has plans to provide sports programming for fans of the Eagles.

Atkinson noted, "The station will play a vital role in the development of students that come through the broadcast program. We are also excited about the opportunity to air MCC athletics on the station in the near future. We have one of the premier athletic programs in the country, and we are excited to air games on the station later this year."



MCC Foundation Board President Jeff McCoy, left, signs agreement with Clay Holladay.



McCoy with Laura and Clay Holladay.



Bryan Holladay, left, Eddie Holladay with Dr. Ray Denton, associate dean of learning resources.



McCoy and MCC President Dr. Scott Elliott review contract.

Anderson saluted for support to MCC

MCC instructor recognized



Though the weather was cool, warm wishes inside the Northwood Country Club ballroom melted away the chill as the Meridian Community College Foundation Membership Celebration got under way.

As the highlight of the evening, Anderson Regional Medical Center was honored for its support of the College during the program which featured speeches by MCC President Dr. Scott Elliott, MCC Foundation Board President Jeff McCoy and board member Tony McDaniel. Kathy Brookshire, director of institutional advancement, also announced the William B. Crooks Teaching Chair recipient, Al Mitchell.



Elliott presented representatives of Anderson Regional Medical Center a plaque during the program and told the group that the hospital had been an important partner with MCC since the mid-1960s in the delivery of allied health and nursing education programming.

“Anderson, and other partners in the medical community, provide clinical, hands-on training components that are absolutely vital in the education of health care professionals,” Elliott said.

He added, “ARMC has supported MCC through the years in so many ways, donating equipment and supplies that would otherwise prove very expensive for the college. In short, we couldn’t get it done without Anderson. We’re so lucky to have partners like ARMC who are dedicated to education and economic development.”

Shawn Anderson, Gay Anderson Whitworth, Joe Anderson, Jan Hollingsworth Farrington and Ray Humphreys.

At right; Al and Melissa Mitchell with Teresa Church.



Al Mitchell, study skills instructor, was recognized as recipient of the William B. Crooks Teaching Chair.

The Crooks Chair was created to provide a continuing celebration of the life of Crooks, his dedication to education and the building of community in East Mississippi.

Crooks was a long-time patron of MCC. He served on the MCC Foundation Board of Directors from 1988 until his death in January 1993. He was also the first chairman of the Board’s finance committee.

As chair holder, Mitchell will have the opportunity to initiate or refine course or program development, purchase books, materials and/or equipment to improve a course or program.

The Crooks Teaching Chair was the first endowed chair in any community college in Mississippi and one of the few such endowed chairs at any community college in the country.

The Phil Hardin Foundation planted the seed for this chair honoring Crooks by issuing a challenge grant. The endowment has grown through the years through good investment management and additional donations.



Supporters near and far turned out to celebrate good at Northwood Country Club. Here are a few scenes from

- 1) Michele & Carey Smith
- 2) Helena & Neil Johnson
- 3) Ray Humphreys, Dr. Scott Elliott, Jan & Dr. Joe Anderson
- 4) Jimmy & Ann Alexander
- 5) C.D. Smith, Ann Weddington
- 6) Dr. Joe Anderson
- 7) Tile Howell, Wink Glover
- 8) Joy & Dr. Tommy Greer, Laura Holladay, Eddie Holladay
- 9) Anne Malone, Claudia Stokes
- 10) Tony McDaniel, Ethel Ann McCoy
- 11) Candy Ward, Richard Armstrong
- 12) Marilyn & Jerry Greene
- 13) Constance Bradley-Tubbs, Celeste Watson
- 14) Alan Lamar, Jonathan Bell
- 15) Melissa & Al Mitchell
- 16) Hank Florey, David Buckner, Bubba Hampton, Dr. George Thomas
- 17) Ray Humphreys, Dr. Scott Elliott





Good times at the MCC Foundation Membership Celebration held
from the evening:

- 18) Dottye & Hardy Graham
- 19) Jeff McCoy, Kathy Brookshire
- 20) Tommy Dulaney, Lee Foley
- 21) Lamar McDonald, Jeff McCoy, Ronny Hampton
- 22) Nadia & Tom Morris, Bennie Jean Fortenberry
- 23) Mary & Dietmar Goetz
- 24) Mark McPhail, Jonathan Bell
- 25) Dr. Bob Cater, Tim Hogan, Kathy Brookshire
- 26) Charlotte & Donnie Massey, Cathy & Wayne Raley
- 27) Mabel Merritt, The Rev. Dr. Tom Sikes
- 28) Ann Compton, Kathy Brookshire, John Compton
- 29) Cathy Webb, Barbara Jones
- 30) Dr. Woody Abraham, Karla Bailey, Leon Bailey
- 31) Dr. Marie Smith Davidson, Billy Beal
- 32) Jan & Lawrence Farrington
- 33) Deb & Bob Bresnahan



Auxiliary reaches out to help students attain their goals

Christy Lynn Kennedy, Deron Shamourn Madison, Laura Michelle Morris, and Cynthia E. Williams have been selected to receive the Anderson Regional Medical Center Auxiliary Volunteers Scholarships at Meridian Community College. These \$1,000 awards are funded through the MCC Foundation by the local hospital support group.



Christy Kennedy of Stonewall is a 1991 graduate of Quitman High School. She is in the final semester of the Associate Degree Nursing Program. Christy is a member of the Organization of Student Nurses. Her plans are to continue working while pursuing a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing.

Deron Madison of Meridian is a 1996 graduate of Meridian High School. She is in the Health Information Technology Program with plans to graduate in May of 2013. Deron is a member of the Health Occupation Students of America and the HIT student association. Her plans are to become a Registered Health Information Technologist.



Laura Morris of Meridian is a 1985 graduate of Crowley High School in Crowley, Texas. After serving twelve years in the United States Navy, she returned to school and is in the Practical Nursing Program at MCC. A President's List scholar, Laura is a member of the Health Occupation Students of America.

Her plans are to work one year and then take the accelerated program for the associate degree in nursing.

Cynthia Williams of Meridian is a 1983 graduate of Meridian High School. She is a sophomore in the Health Information Technology Program. A President's List scholar, Cynthia is a member of Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society for two-year college students. Her career goal is to achieve the bachelor's degree in HIT.



Visiting team takes look at MCC

Meridian Community College received an outstanding report from a visiting team of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

Meridian Community College is up for reaffirmation in 2012 and the on-site visit was a part of the accreditation reaffirmation process.

"I have gone through four or five such SACS reviews at the five colleges with which I've been affiliated in my career, and, without question, this is the best report I've experienced. MCC has been deemed to be in compliance with all SACS core requirements, which is paramount in the reaffirmation process," said MCC President Dr. Scott Elliott.

According to SACSCOC, "The findings of this visiting committee represent a preliminary assessment of the institution at this time; final action on the report rests with the Commission on Colleges. A copy of the entire report can be obtained from the institution."

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges is the regional body for the accreditation of degree-

“I have gone through four or five such SACS reviews at the five colleges with which I've been affiliated in my career, and, without question, this is the best report I've experienced.**”**
*MCC President
Dr. Scott Elliott*

granting higher education institutions in the Southern states. According to the Commission's website, "the Commission's mission is the enhancement of educational quality throughout the region and it strives to improve the effectiveness of institutions by ensuring that institutions meet standards established by the higher education community that address the needs of society and students.

"It serves as the common denominator of shared values and practices among the diverse institutions in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and Latin America and other international sites approved by the Commission on Colleges that award associate, baccalaureate, master's, or doctoral degrees. The Commission also accepts applications from other international institutions of higher education."



MEETING & greeting



Legislative Lunch – The Mississippi Association of Community & Junior Colleges (MACJC) recently hosted its annual legislative luncheon in Jackson to update state senators and representatives on initiatives of the state’s 15 two-year colleges. Visiting from left are MACJC Chairman and Meridian Community College President Dr. Scott Elliott, Lt. Governor Tate Reeves, Mississippi Community College Board Executive Director Dr. Eric Clark, and Bob Smith, chairman of

the Mississippi Community College Faculty Association. The luncheon showcased several of the community colleges’ culinary arts programs, as students in those programs prepared various dishes for the luncheon. Meridian students, under the direction of Mark Chandler, prepared a bread pudding dessert. “It was a big hit,” Elliott said.

CEFCO donates \$25,000 to Foundation

CEFCO Convenience Stores announced at its 10th Annual Hackers-R-Us Charity Golf Tournament in Temple, Texas that it had donated a grand total of \$320,000 to Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals, Meridian Community College, Central Texas College, and McLennan Community College.

The \$25,000 donated to the Meridian Community College Foundation, designated for the C.E. Fikes Endowed Scholarship, commemorates CEFCO’s founder, Clarence Edison Fikes.

James and Kim Fikes and the entire leadership team were proud to be able to give back to the communities they service.

“It was wonderful getting to spend time with the CEFCO Family,” said MCC Foundation Executive Director Kathy Brookshire. “It was also a joy to meet Kim and James Fikes. They truly have a philanthropic heart, and they care about community colleges! We appreciate their support.”

The Temple, Texas based company is the 57th largest chain in the convenience retailing industry, operating 122 stores in Alabama, Mississippi, and Texas. They employ more than 1,350 team members nationwide. Since 1979, CEFCO has been committed to providing the best customer experience, every customer, everyday, in every store.



Pictured from left are: Raymond Smith, President CEFCO; Kathy Brookshire, Executive Director MCC Foundation, Barbara Jones, Vice President MCC Operations; Kim and James Fikes, Owners of CEFCO; Brett Giesick, Chief Retail Officer; and Steve Keane, Senior VP-Marketing.

President's Roundtable: *Impacting lives and community*

Making a significant impact. That's what many agree MCC is doing for our community.

Thanks to the individuals and businesses that join the MCC Foundation President's Roundtable, their talents and treasures are directly making a difference in the lives of Meridian Community College students.

"Businesses who donate are saying, 'I want to support MCC,'" said Kathy Brookshire, director of institutional advancement and executive director of the MCC Foundation.

Because of their efforts, members of the President's Roundtable are helping to support the Tuition Guarantee Program – the first of its kind ever in Mississippi. The Foundation's committed Board of Directors work diligently each year to raise monies required for this program.

The Tuition Guarantee, in its 16 years of existence, has helped more than 4,000 students in providing a solution to the biggest hurdle of attending college – paying for college.

The MCC Foundation also awards 200 merit scholarships yearly.

Other officers of the MCC Foundation Board are Jeff McCoy, president; Tony McDaniel, vice president; Alan Lamar, treasurer; Tony Pompelia, past president; and Pam Harrison, advisor. Board members include Jimmy Alexander, BB Archer, Richard Armstrong, Jonathan Bell, Jamie Cater, Doug Deweese, Tommy Dulaney, Hardy Graham Sr., Jerry Greene, Tim Hogan, Neil Johnson, Dr. Tommy McDonald, Mark McPhail, Bob Malone, Tom Maynor, Joel Payne, Gerry Purvis, Joe Charles Sanders, Hayley Shirley, The Rev. Dr. Tom Sikes, C.D. Smith, Donnie Smith, Robert Smith, Russell Thompson, Judy Warden, M.L. Waters and Alex Weddington.

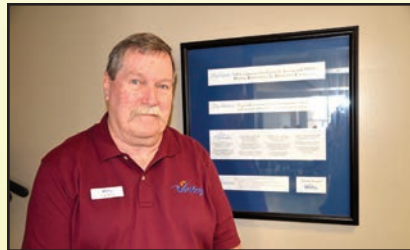
New businesses supporting the President's Roundtable in 2011:



One Life America – Wade Parker, chief sales officer and executive vice president and One Life partner; and Scotty Elliott, chief executive officer and president



Circle S Ranch
Becky Swearingen



Valley Services
Clark Mishoe



A+ Storage
Wayne Wuestefeld



Liberty Shop-Uniform Shop
Clinton Hales



Best Bodies
Becky Sims



Attorney
Leonard Cobb



Harris Grocery
Richard Harris

Alumni take spotlight at reception

Gillispie, Massey, Wilkinson and White tapped for MCC Hall of Fame



RICARDO GILLISPIE

A 1969-70 alumnus of T.J. Harris Junior College, which merged with Meridian Junior College, Dr. Gillispie has amassed an impressive record as a social worker and community servant. Following T.J. Harris, he went on to earn a baccalaureate degree from Mississippi Valley State University, a masters degree from the University of Southern

Mississippi, and a doctorate from Jackson State University. Dr. Gillispie is a part-owner and clinical practitioner with Family Counseling Services in Meridian. In 2006, Dr. Gillispie became Program Warden with the East Mississippi Correctional Facility, for which he designed the behavioral/mental health program in 1999. He has also served as a federal surveyor of psychiatric hospitals for the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services. Dr. Gillispie is a published author in his field and a member of the National Association of Social Workers, among several other professional organizations. He served for 15 years on the Meridian Public School Board and has also served on the Mississippi Social Workers Licensure Board, among other state and national boards in field. In 1992, Dr. Gillispie was named "Social Worker of the Year" for the State of Mississippi.



DONALD R. "DONNIE" MASSEY

A 1977 graduate of Meridian Junior College, Massey went on to earn a bachelor's degree in industrial technology from Mississippi State University. He began working professional as an engineering manager for Meridian Machine Works in 1979, and ultimately

became the owner of D&H Construction and Cabinetry, LLC, of Meridian. His company engages in general construction and remodeling in both the commercial and residential markets. He is also the owner of CP Warehouses, LLC, a commercial warehouse business featuring 450,000 square feet of storage space in addition to a 22-unit, 40,000-square foot climate controlled self-storage facility. Massey is a longtime community servant through his work on the Jimmie Rogers Board, the First Tee Board and coordinator of the annual Soule' Festival, among other organizations. He was elected president of the HomeBuilders Association of Mississippi in 2001 and named to that organization's Hall of Fame in 2010. He is member of the MCC Foundation and a big supporter of Eagle baseball. Massey was a standout in the infield for MJC under Coach Billy Harold Smith.



GARY WILKINSON

A 1971-73 alumnus of Meridian Junior College, Wilkinson went on to study business administration at Mississippi State University. He began his professional career as a division manager for Sears in 1972 and has held

positions of increasing management responsibility since that time with such agencies as the United States Jaycees, United Blood Services and Merrill Lynch, which he has served as a financial advisor since 2001. Wilkinson has amassed a stellar record of community service, holding such offices as president of the Meridian Jaycees, chairman of the Lauderdale County Tourism Board, secretary of the Lauderdale County Republican Party, United Way company chairman, member of the Mississippi Junior Miss Board, and chairman of the U.S. Junior Chamber of Commerce Foundation. He has also volunteered with such organizations as Boy Scouts of America, the Meridian Symphony, American Heart Association, Meridian Little Theater and as a deacon for Meridian First Baptist Church. He and his wife of 39 years, Sally, have two sons and one grandchild.



LEIGH ADAMS WHITE

Dr. White is a 1984 graduate of Meridian Community College. From MCC, she went on to earn a BSN degree from the University of Mississippi Medical Center and doctorate in podiatric medicine (DPM) from the School College of Podiatric Medicine in Chicago, Ill. She began her professional career in health

care at Riley Memorial Hospital in Meridian in 1986, and has served as a podiatric physician and surgeon since 1993 at the Foot Clinic of Meridian. She is a longtime supporter of MCC, having co-founded the Adam Jared White Scholarship, which is awarded annually to a sophomore member of the Baptist Student Union to honor the memory of Dr. White's late son. Dr. White is a multi-talented individual, having been in the cast of three Meridian Little Theater productions and singing in the Highland Baptist Church choir. She has also served as a MIDD-Meridian Board member. She is an avid runner and voracious reader. She and her husband, Allen White, also have a daughter, Alexandra Karen.

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Cosmetology students tapped as Young scholars

Joyclyn Franchessca Cole and Lauri Lea Smith have been selected to receive the Charles L. Young, Sr. Scholarships at MCC. These \$1,100 awards are funded through the MCC Foundation from the Charles L. Young, Sr. Foundation directed by Mr. Charles L. Young, Jr. Mr. Young senior was a member of the Mississippi House of Representatives and served District 82 for 29 years. He was a strong advocate for education and a loyal friend to the College.



Joyclyn F. Cole

Joyclyn is a 2007 honors graduate of Meridian High School. She is in the Cosmetology Program at MCC. A Dean's List scholar, Joyclyn is a member of Health Occupation Students of America. She is an AmeriCorps volunteer, a Youth Team Leader and Sunday school teacher at her church. Joyclyn aspires to touch the lives of others while owning her own salon.

Lauri is a 1987 graduate of West Lauderdale High School. A Dean's List scholar, she is a sophomore in the Cosmetology Program. Before returning to school, Lauri worked as a courier for FedEx for ten years. In pursuing her dream to become a cosmetologist, she is looking forward to working with a long time friend and being close to her child's school.



Lauri L. Smith

William G. Riley Scholar plans for career in nursing



Chelsea Ann Aycock has been selected to receive the first William Gail Riley, M.D. Memorial Scholarship at MCC. This \$2,000 award is funded by the MCC Foundation. Dr. Riley served this community as a pediatrician for 34 years. He and his brother founded The Riley Foundation with proceeds from the sale of the local hospital that bore his family's name for seven decades. Dr. Riley's impact on the medical community and his generous contributions to education and the arts will be forever felt in this community. His legacy is one of service and philanthropy. The MCC Foundation is proud to honor his memory through this scholarship. The family of Dr. Riley has made the commitment to continue the scholarship by establishing an endowment in his name.

Chelsea is a 2010 graduate of West Lauderdale High School. She is entering the first semester of the Associate Degree Nursing Program at MCC. A Dean's List scholar, Chelsea is a member of Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society for two-year college students. In addition to her college studies, she works full time and is a volunteer for Love's Kitchen. Her educational goal is to achieve the master's degree in nursing.