

Futures STEM  
at McMurry

Women in  
Leadership

Faculty Helps Uncover  
Archaeological Desire

# THE MESSENGER

McMURRY UNIVERSITY SPRING/SUMMER 2019



IN RECOGNITION OF  
McMURRY UNIVERSITY STUDENTS  
FOR THEIR VISION TO MEMORIALIZE  
PROJECT

**McMURRY  
UNIVERSITY**

1923

2023

**CENTENNIAL ERA**

CHANDI CHANDLER  
AARON HERRING  
ALEXANDRIA MENDOZA  
DAVID WINSKI



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

The transition from the Centennial theme Discover to Create is timely for McMurry University as students continue to learn what is possible for tomorrow's leaders. Educational equity, a measure of achievement, fairness, and opportunity in higher education, is being achieved at McMurry as we prepare our students for the future, whether it means entering into the workforce or going on to pursue a graduate degree.

Faculty and staff now that adequacy is the enemy of excellence. Our Gateways to Completion and Mindset for Success programs are ensuring that our students know how focused the University is on helping them achieve their goals. Each day, the faculty and staff are asked to look at the University's mission to ensure that each of us is working to provide educational equity for our students.

This past year we have seen growth for McMurry with enrollment and the expansion of educational programs in STEM (Science Technology Engineering Mathematics) field. Arts programs have momentum as we showcase student abilities to spark dialogue about societal questions and cultural issues via their passion for creating.

Higher education continues to evolve with hybrid and online programs gaining popularity. These programs offer access to individuals who otherwise may not be able to achieve their dream of a bachelor's degree. This year, 15 online students graduated with business and criminal justice degrees.

Students achieved recognition this year including capturing NASA's attention with recognition of the Cassini Project, winning the 94-year-old Battle of the Flowers Oratorical Contest, and achieving 2nd place in a statewide mathematics competition. McMurry continues to provide an exceptional education enhancing the value of the McMurry degree.

With these cumulative successes, it is time to focus attention on enhancing the experience for current and future students and faculty. With University progress grounded in history, McMurry Momentum is well-positioned to soar into the future ensuring that the University's second century will be as vibrant as its first.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Sandra Harper'.

SANDRA S. HARPER, PH.D.  
PRESIDENT

# THE MESSENGER

SPRING/SUMMER 2019

A PUBLICATION OF McMURRY UNIVERSITY

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**20 2019 GIVING DAY**



SOCIAL.MCM.EDU

### 1. ART INSTALLATION

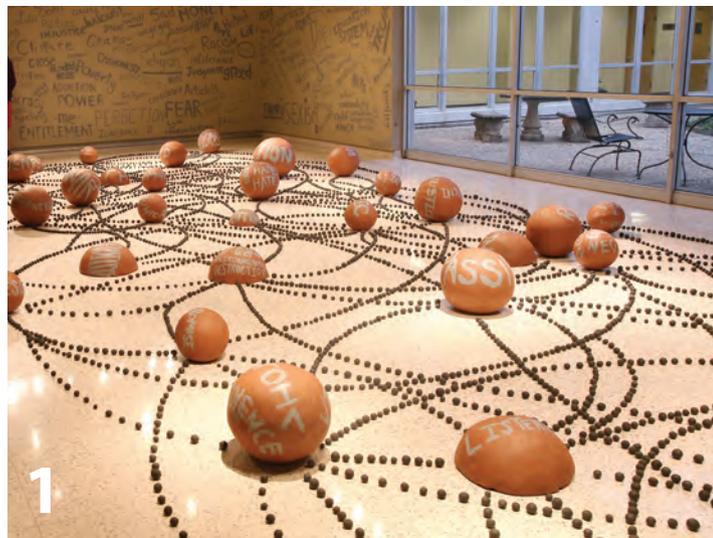
Over 300 McMurry students, faculty and staff had the opportunity to collaborate on a unique art installation. Graph III, an art piece facilitated by Steve Hilton from Midwestern State University, had individuals painting words and phrases on all walls of the gallery representing both problems of society and solutions to the problems. The McMurry community had the opportunity to listen to one another, make connections and become involved in the piece rather than simply marvel at it.

### 2. BATTLE OF THE FLOWERS

In February, two of McMurry's brightest freshmen, Hunter Reynolds and Reagan Sullivan, were among 12 college students in Texas chosen to compete in the Battle of the Flowers Oratorical Contest held at the Witte Museum in San Antonio. Participants were required to write and commit to memory a 12-minute speech on the theme of "an event that changed Texas forever", Reynolds presented on the Warren Wagon Train Massacre and Sullivan on the decision to locate the Johnson Space Center in Houston. Facing off against students from across the state, including other prestigious liberal arts schools and much larger state universities, Sullivan placed first in the competition, winning the top prize of \$3,000.

### 3. KOCH LECTURE

McMurry University and the Johnson School of Business welcomed Dr. Michael Cox to campus this spring. Founding Director of the O'Neill Center for Global Markets and Freedom in the Cox School of Business at SMU, Dr. Cox led our first Koch lecture of the year in February. Titled "Capitalism Doesn't Cause Poverty, the Lack of It Does," he spoke regarding free market capitalism and entrepreneurship. Dr. Cox is a former chief economist and senior vice president for the Dallas Federal Reserve Bank. The event, hosted primarily for business students, also included other faculty, staff, students, the Abilene community and students from other local universities. In addition, a special session with Dr. Cox was held for 75 local high school students who visited the McMurry campus specifically for the opportunity to interact with Dr. Cox.





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#### 4. MATH TEAM

In March, McMurry students participated in the 99th Annual Meeting of the MAA (Mathematical Association of America) Texas Section. Competing among 20 teams from universities and colleges in Texas, the McMurry Math Bowl Team brought home second-place honors. The Math Bowl competition consisted of two rounds of 20 questions each. Teams were allowed one minute maximum to respond to each question and points were awarded for correct answers based on speed of response. The questions came from several areas of the typical undergraduate mathematics curriculum, including pre-calculus, calculus I and II, probability and statistics, math history, and linear algebra. Yuwei Bao (junior Math major), Lydia Clarke (junior Math major), and Kolbi Culbert (sophomore Math Education major) made up McMurry's silver place team.



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#### 5. GARRISON ENTREPRENEUR LECTURESHIP

McMurry University's Johnson School of Business brought yet another world class entrepreneur to Abilene during the Garrison Entrepreneur Lectureship. Jeff Hoffman is a successful entrepreneur, CEO, worldwide motivational speaker, author, Hollywood film producer, a producer of a Grammy-winning jazz album, and executive producer of an Emmy Award-winning television show. In his career, he has been the founder of multiple startups, has been the CEO of both public and private companies, and served as a senior executive in many capacities. Hoffman has been part of a number of well-known companies, including Priceline.com, uBid.com, CTI, ColorJar, and more. Hoffman, best known as the developer of Priceline, joined us in April to share experiences from his time at numerous startups and discuss managing change in the fast-paced worlds of business and Hollywood.

### 6. KNOX-BENNETT

The Knox-Bennett Lectures featured Mark Bristol, a screenwriter, director, and storyboard artist. Bristol held two storyboarding events on campus this spring: a question and answer session about his career in film-making with a demonstration of storyboarding techniques, and a screening and analysis session of *Mission Impossible: Fallout*, for which Bristol was the principal storyboard artist. Students were treated to a very interactive experience as Bristol frequently paused during the film and offered insight into the art of writing, directing, and storyboarding a film.

### 7. FOOTBALL COACH

McMurry was excited to welcome head football coach Jordan Neal to campus in December. Neal is the 23rd head football coach in McMurry University history and comes to McMurry after six seasons at Hendrix College (2013-18) in Conway, Ark., where he was the assistant head coach/offensive coordinator. He was a part of the staff that restarted the school's program after a 53-year hiatus. The Warriors were, annually, one of the top offensive and passing teams in NCAA Division III, setting one NCAA III record and earning four statistical championships. Neal has an extensive extracurricular and community service background, including working as a college pastor at Southside Baptist in Brownwood, serving as a youth intern at First Baptist Church of Abilene and serving as an FCA huddle leader. McMurry also welcomed Neal's wife, Amanda, and their daughter, Adriana.



### 8. SIKES-MELUGIN

The Rev. Dr. Kenda Creasy Dean was the speaker for this year's Sikes-Melugin Lectureship held on March 28. Rev. Dean gave two riveting lectures: *Adulting 2.0: Coming of Age in the Immanent Frame*, and *Hacking the Giant Hairball: How Martin Luther, Kimmy Schmidt, and the Start-Up Generation are Re-Making Church*. Rev. Dean is an ordained United Methodist pastor and the Mary D. Synnott Professor of Youth, Church and Culture at Princeton Theological Seminary. Her publications include "Almost Christian" and "The Godbearing Life" (with Ron Foster). If you missed her lectures this spring, be on the lookout for two more of her books that will come out this year: "Under the Dragon Scales: Restoring Joy to Youth Ministry and Consensus" and "Conflict: Practical Theology for Congregations".



### 9. MACC APPROVED

On February 1, the McMurry University faculty voted unanimously to approve McMurry's first on-campus master's degree. In May, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools approved the Master of Accountancy degree, and the program will be available for enrollment in August. The program will be housed in the Johnson School of Business and will lead to a Master's Degree in Accountancy (MACC). The degree is designed for recent B.B.A. graduates with an undergraduate degree in accounting or related field, but also for professionals already in the workforce who want to sit for the CPA exams. The MACC is designed so that students may complete the program in one calendar year. The 10 courses to obtain the master's can be taken by completing four courses in the fall, four courses in the spring, and two in the summer. More information may be obtained by contacting Dr. Paul Mason at [mason.paul@mcm.edu](mailto:mason.paul@mcm.edu) or by phone at 325-793-3850.

### 10. DAVID BOJE AND GRACE ANN ROSILE VISIT CAMPUS

Closing out the Johnson School of Business speakers for the year were David Boje and Grace-Ann Rosile. Boje presented an interesting lecture regarding pollution in the oceans and the international water crisis's direct impact in Abilene. Rosile illustrated ethical dilemmas faced by contemporary organizations and their potential solutions. Recently retired from New Mexico State University and world renowned respectively in the fields of management storytelling and tribal culture, this husband and wife duo are close associates of Dr. Duncan Pelly, McMurry's new Associate Professor of Entrepreneurship.

### 11. SOCCER COACH

In February, McMurry named Mike Lambeck as the head men's soccer coach. Lambeck brings a wealth of NCAA Division III soccer knowledge with him, as he most recently spent three seasons as an assistant for the University of the Ozarks men's soccer program. During his time with the Eagles, Lambeck helped lead the team to three consecutive playoff appearances, including an 8-8-3, 6-4-1 ASC mark last season. Primarily working with goalkeepers, Lambeck has helped develop 20 All-Conference players in his three seasons at Ozarks. Goalkeepers earned those honors in 2016 and 2018. In addition to coaching at the collegiate level, Lambeck has coached numerous soccer camps in Ohio. He has also served as the head coach and director of goalkeeping for Club Ohio Football Club, as well as the director of goalkeeping and youth academy director for the Arkansas Valley Soccer Association. Lambeck graduated from Wittenberg University with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology in 2012, and is currently working on his Masters of Sports Administration from Southeastern Oklahoma State University.

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# HOMECOMING



McMurry University Theatre Presents  
The 2019 Homecoming Musical

**You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown**  
Music & Lyrics by Clark Gesner

Based on the comic strip by Charles M. Schulz  
10/24 - 10/27

Tickets: General Public \$12  
MCM Faculty, Staff, Students \$10  
Box Office: (325) 793-3889  
Website: [www.mcm.edu/theatre](http://www.mcm.edu/theatre)

Curtain at 7:30 PM  
Sunday Curtain 2:00 PM  
Venue: Ryan Little Theatre at McMurry University

McMurry University will be celebrating our second year of the Centennial Era at Homecoming

**October 24-26, 2019**



# COMING

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## We hope you'll join us on campus for a fantastic weekend including the **RETURN OF THE HOMECOMING MUSICAL!**

Other weekend highlights include:

- :: Class of 1969 50th Reunion Lunch
- :: Reading with the Author: Professor Cole Thompson discusses his new book
- :: Final Ala Cumba Remembrance Event
- :: KIVA 80th Reunion
- :: Delta Beta Epsilon 75th Anniversary
- :: Alpha Psi Alpha 65th Reunion
- :: Tipi Village
- :: Homecoming Musical "You're a Good Man Charlie Brown"

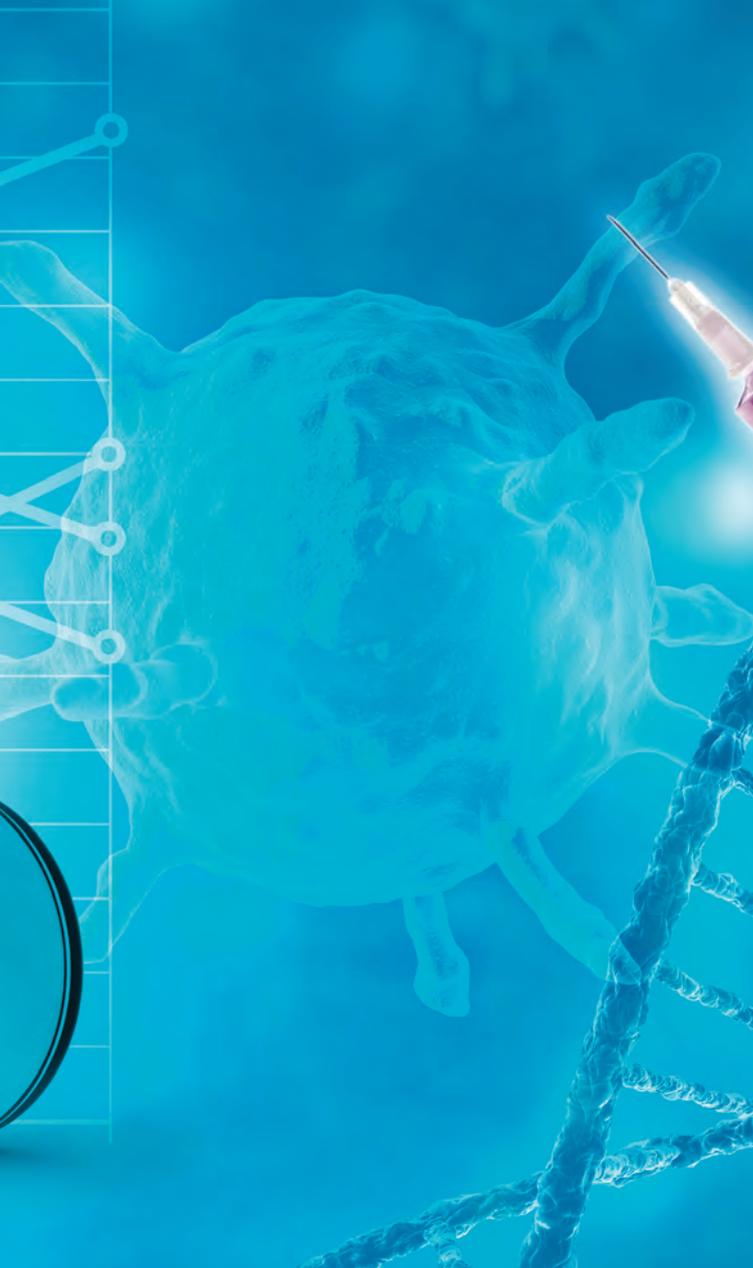
If you would like to help organize a reunion for your class, a class year group, or a club/organization, please contact Suzann Coutts in the Alumni Office at 325-793-4608 or email [alumni@mcm.edu](mailto:alumni@mcm.edu). More information online at [homecoming.mcm.edu](http://homecoming.mcm.edu).



# Futures STEM at McMurry



\$3.75 million grant awarded to McMurry University and Cisco College to strengthen efforts in science, technology, engineering and math.



Something transformational is happening on the campus at McMurry University and in the lives of students and faculty who have an enormous vision of what the future offers for themselves and for others.

Research is at the heart of the change, fueled by a \$3.75 million, five-year Title V Cooperative Grant the U.S. Department of Education awarded McMurry and Cisco College on September 30, 2018. Title V grants go to outstanding Hispanic-Serving Institutions to strengthen efforts in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) field.

McMurry is adding new degree programs in Sustainability and Renewable Resources and in Human Health Science, which will partner with Kinesiology and Biomedical Science. Facilities are

being improved. Resources are growing. McMurry and Cisco have articulation agreements that will make it easier for students to go from one institution to another and on to graduate school or straight into a waiting job market.

The choices for these new degree programs are “rooted in real needs for Texas and this region of the United States,” said Dr. Alicia Wyatt, Associate VP of Academic Affairs. Wyatt and Dr. Gary Wilson, who returned to the classroom as a Professor of Biology in 2010 after many years as a dean, studied numerous factors in deciding on the vision for this grant. After choosing a focus, they talked to alumni in these fields as they put the grant application together.

They saw that the health field offered job security. And work in sustainability and renewable resources can offer security for the environment.

Wilson notes that the grant coincides with the start of McMurry’s five-year celebration leading up to the university’s centennial in 2023. The first year’s theme is McMurry Discovers.

“Some people describe research as the ‘interrogation of nature’ whose sole mission is to discover how the world works,” Wilson said. “So our having research teams and engaging faculty and students in scientific discovery is a perfect expression of the process of discovery, the manifestation of the Year of Discovery on campus.”

Wilson said he is excited by the new life the grant is bringing to campus.

“This grant is providing incentives and accommodations to allow faculty to be involved in research,” he said. “I can’t overstate the value of research on improving faculty vitality and quality of courses and teaching.”

For students, the grant gives them a greater opportunity to be part of the research, to be a part of the story and to be better prepared for their STEM careers.

Wilson said science in the classroom gives students the “very best tourist’s view” of a field of science with a good general knowledge. “Research, on the other hand, is the application of that tourist’s knowledge in a very deep study of a very narrow aspect of a discipline,” Wilson explained.

Along with the research in this grant comes the

possibility of earning what Wyatt describes as skill badges, which will provide a fuller picture of what the students have experienced and what they have accomplished when they enter the job market or move to another university to work on a graduate degree. The badges will show future employers or educators the students are proficient in tasks they might be asked to do at the next level. Students can earn these skill badges, or microcredentials, through extracurricular work. Wilson said there are four categories of badges now: skills, experiences, accomplishments and achievements.

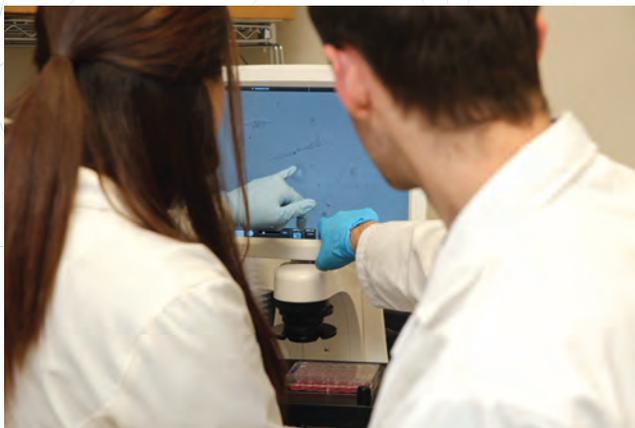
The first badge, for experiences, were awarded in April during McMurry's Research Festival.

In order to qualify as a Hispanic-serving institution, at least 25 percent of the student population must be Hispanic. McMurry has 26 percent. The entire school benefits from the grant. "Every student has the opportunity to join a research team," Wyatt said. One of the unique aspects of the program is that students can cross over to participate in research at Cisco.

The anticipated education path starts at the high school level and moves to college, community and/or four-year, on to graduate school or the job market.

"That's what we are trying to promote," Wyatt said.

The STEM program has three research teams on the McMurry campus and one on the Cisco campus.



The teams typically have four students. The search is on for students who want to be involved in research, and the number of teams may increase.

"Because of the grant, we have more faculty engaged in productive research than we have in recent memory, and by the end of the grant, there will be unprecedented numbers of active researchers (faculty and students) on campus," Wilson said. He said the impact on the Cisco campuses may be even greater because two-year colleges typically do very little research.

Signs of change are everywhere.

Renovation is underway on the second floor of the Finch-Gray Science Building at McMurry, where Wyatt said a new biochemistry and teaching research space should be ready for use in August. The university's greenhouse has future renovation plans, including enlarging the facility, and adding solar panels and water retention features as well as an outdoor classroom. A virtual cadaver lab where students can study humans, animals, insects and plants is also planned, and faculty are helping develop the content that will be needed for the digital cadaver tables.

Cisco is also renovating some of its labs.

The Biomedical Science program also is involved. Wilson said a virtual department will be created as McMurry focuses on the needs of students who want to pursue a health career.

The degree in Sustainability and Renewable Resources is very important to both Wyatt and Wilson.

"We really need to get serious on the environment," Wyatt said.

"We have a strong desire to leave our world a better place than we found it," Wilson said.

Wilson said a conversation with McMurry alumnus Dr. Earl Beaver '66 shaped ideas for the program, which is designed to focus on preventing problems or solving existing problems. With it, students and faculty will apply science, policy and technology to prevent or eliminate practices



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endangering the planet, Wilson said.

“Our United Methodist Church heritage should compel us to see stewardship of our planet from a scientific perspective to be central to our DNA,” Wilson said.

Wyatt and Wilson, who have collaborated on other grants over their years at McMurry, were ready to put their plan in motion as soon as the grant was announced. Wyatt is the program’s administrator

and Wilson oversees the research side.

“I think this can be transformational for our institution,” Wyatt said.

“There is nothing quite like the feeling you have when you realize nobody else in the world knows something you just discovered,” Wilson said. McMurry is giving students and faculty that opportunity.

A career in public health is on Daniel Nunez’s horizon. Research assignments at McMurry University will help him get there.

Nunez transferred to McMurry from Cisco College last fall and is studying Biomedical Science. His goals include a fellowship at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a doctorate in epidemiology and the opportunity to help prevent diseases.

He is one of the many students McMurry expects to attract and help become STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) leaders for the future. McMurry and Cisco share in a \$3.75 million Title V Cooperative Grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The grants are awarded to outstanding Hispanic-serving institutions for programs to strengthen efforts to foster and expand opportunities for Hispanic success in STEM field .

His path is similar to what McMurry envisions for this program, where students move from high school to community college to college and on to graduate school or the job market. Nunez went to Cisco after high school and then transferred to the University of Texas at Arlington before deciding to return to Abilene to continue his education at Cisco before transferring to McMurry. He is a junior. Nunez is on a research team, led by Dr. Malaney O’Connell ‘10, that is focused on breast cancer research. The students on the team presented their work in December at the San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium and were the only undergraduate students in the nation to show their work.

“A lot of the procedures we do, they are doing at the graduate level,” Nunez says of some of the things he has been able to experience as part of Dr. O’Connell’s research team.

Dr. O’Connell is Nunez’s faculty adviser.

“Daniel is invested 100 percent,” she said. “Not only have his grades improved, he is also very driven.” He is focused on research and learning as much as he can.

His efforts encompass exactly what the faculty at McMurry hopes Title V will produce with the focus on STEM. Dr. O’Connell said that when Nunez goes to graduate school, he can be treated as proficient in some procedures and techniques because of the skill badges he will earn as part of his research work at McMurry.

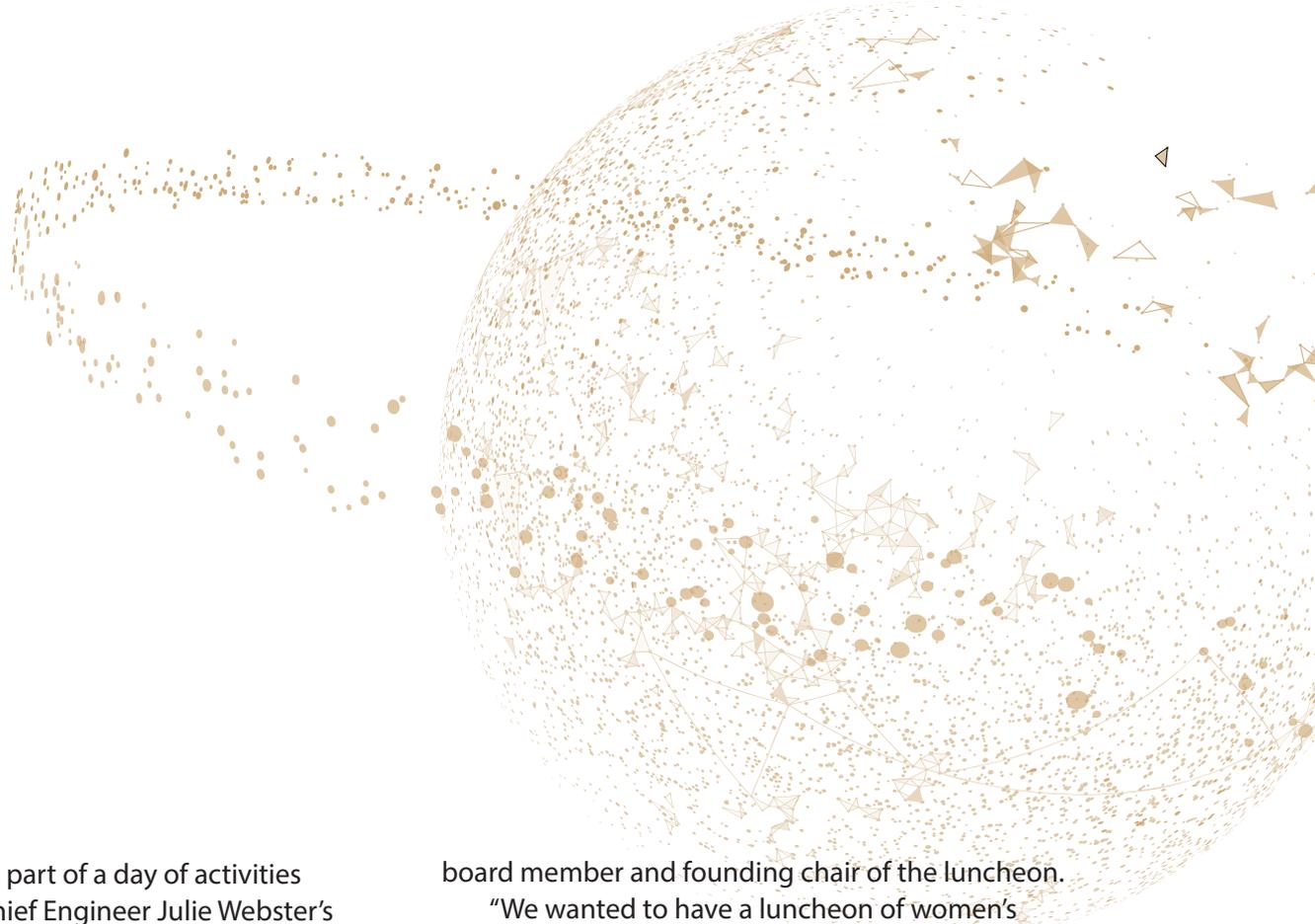
The skill badges and the research work are a way to help Nunez and other students succeed in their dreams.

“We are building the skills that are necessary at the next step,” Dr. O’Connell said.



WOMEN  
IN  
*Leadership*

Science is part of all of our lives. Physics and art students at McMurry University delivered a beautiful, lasting reminder of that in March as the university unveiled a memorial the students collaborated on to honor NASA's 20-year Cassini mission to Saturn.



**T**he unveiling was part of a day of activities that featured Cassini Chief Engineer Julie Webster's visit to campus as the guest speaker for the 6th Annual Women's Leadership Luncheon, which this year celebrated women in space exploration.

Dr. Sandra S. Harper, McMurry's president, told a crowd gathered for the dedication before the luncheon that the "concept taken from the sciences and then designed by our art students perfectly blends the wide array of study that we have here at McMurry of the arts and the sciences."

She noted: "There's an art to the science and a science to the art."

The Women's Luncheon began in 2014 when Dr. Harper was inaugurated as the 12th president of McMurry. She is the first female president of the university and the first female president among the three universities in Abilene. March is also Women's History Month.

"It came about as part of the inaugural ceremony," said Melody Hunt '79, a former McMurry

board member and founding chair of the luncheon.

"We wanted to have a luncheon of women's achievements," said Nancy L. Smith '79, executive director of donor relations and stewardship in the Office of Institutional Advancement.

As part of that celebration, the committee wanted to award a scholarship in Dr. Harper's honor. They gave a \$5,000 scholarship the first year from money raised at the luncheon.

"Based on the success of that, we knew we had a good thing," said Hunt, who owns Hunt Direct Marketing. "From there, it's just grown."

Single scholarships were awarded each of the next two years. An endowment was created in 2016 and the community-based committee also decided to begin awarding two scholarships a year. Sponsorships of the luncheon

from throughout the Abilene community cover the scholarships, and additional funds raised at the perennially sold-out event goes into the endowment. Smith said the endowment will have

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Julie Webster, Cassini Chief Engineer

more than \$105,000 after this year. The goal is to eventually have \$200,000.

Smith praised the efforts of the women who have worked on the luncheon, many every year. "We feel quite blessed that they are part of this effort," she said. She asks them every year if they want to keep doing it and the answer is always yes. But if the committee ever decided to stop doing luncheons, Smith said, a \$200,000 endowment would allow the awarding of scholarships from "now to perpetuity."

The scholarships are reserved for women "because we want to encourage those young women who will become leaders in the future," Smith said.

When the committee doubled the number of scholarships, the members decided to award one to a traditional student and the other to a non-traditional student, referring to individuals who either began their college career over the age of 22 or completed their degree in more than the traditional four to six years.

"Myra Dean hit upon the idea of a non-traditional student scholarship," Hunt said. Dean, a non-traditional student herself earning her master's degree later in life, realized there wasn't a lot of financial aid for non-traditional students. Her idea

was a "lightbulb event" for the committee, Hunt said. "We have a pretty large group of non-traditional students." Over the years, the number of applicants has grown. The merit-based scholarships awarded for 2019-2020 went to Neah Garza and Laura Culp, who were chosen from a field of 28 applicants. The scholarship recipients are chosen both for their excellence in the classroom and for distinguishing themselves through service on campus and in the Abilene community.

"We have some amazing students," Hunt said. Garza, a senior from Abilene, is pursuing a triple major in business management, computer science, and computer information systems as well as a double minor in English and math. She is a member of the University Honors Program, the Alpha Chi National Honor Society, the Kappa Mu Epsilon Math Honor Society, and a Business Advocate, and is also on the tennis team.

"I firmly believe that leaders should set an example for others and should always do the right thing, even if no one is watching," she wrote in her application.

Culp, who earned the non-traditional scholarship, is a junior majoring in business management. She is a junior class senator and views her most important role as that of a mother to her four children. In addition to raising a family and going to school, she has a job and an internship.

"If I can impact my children's lives and teach them to never give up, pursue their dreams in the face of adversity, and to be contributing members of society, then I have done my due diligence for the future of the country," she wrote.

Hunt said all the scholarship recipients have been very impressive and poised, knowing what they wanted to do. She said it has been exciting to watch the video messages they've sent along over the years.

Three of the past recipients attended the event this year, two sent video messages and one wrote a note. Smith said one of the women is now a band director, who shared that her students won a competition and credited the scholarship with

providing the training she needed for her role.

The importance STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) has in higher education for women was a consideration in the speaker.

It is "touching everything about our lives every day," Hunt said. "It drives our economy."

Past speakers at the luncheon had predominantly been from the business world. Hunt had thought it would be cool to have an astronaut as a speaker.

The Society of Physics Students helped deliver someone just as exciting with the group's efforts to get Webster, who is now working on NASA's Juno mission to Jupiter, to campus.

"They really hit a home run," Hunt said. Their delivery "captured the essence of STEM and why it's important and how it affects everyone."

The students acted on the plea of Chandi Chandler '18, a past Harper scholarship recipient, to do something to remember Cassini. They drew up a concept for the memorial, sought approval from the school, and tapped the arts students to help create their vision.

And then

some of the students, including senior physics majors David Winski and Alexandria Mendoza, attended an American Association of Physics Teachers conference at Tarleton State University last year, where they heard Webster speak and talked to her about the memorial in the works for McMurry. Webster was a perfect choice for the Women's Luncheon. She is a fifth-generation Texan and had roots in West Texas.

She told the crowd at the dedication that there was enough data collected by Cassini that their children will be doing research in years to come. With a hand on the memorial, she said, "A reminder that we have to go back. A reminder that we have to go back. There's a lot left to do. Science advances one theory at a time, one funeral at a time, one spacecraft at a time, one mission at a time. You're the ones to go back."

What they learn at McMurry will help them. And McMurry can count Webster among the many supporters of the scholarships going forward, Smith said. She joined others at the luncheon in making a pledge for the future.

**"If I can impact my children's lives and teach them to never give up, pursue their dreams in the face of adversity, and to be contributing members of society, then I have done my due diligence for the future of the country."**

— Melody Hunt



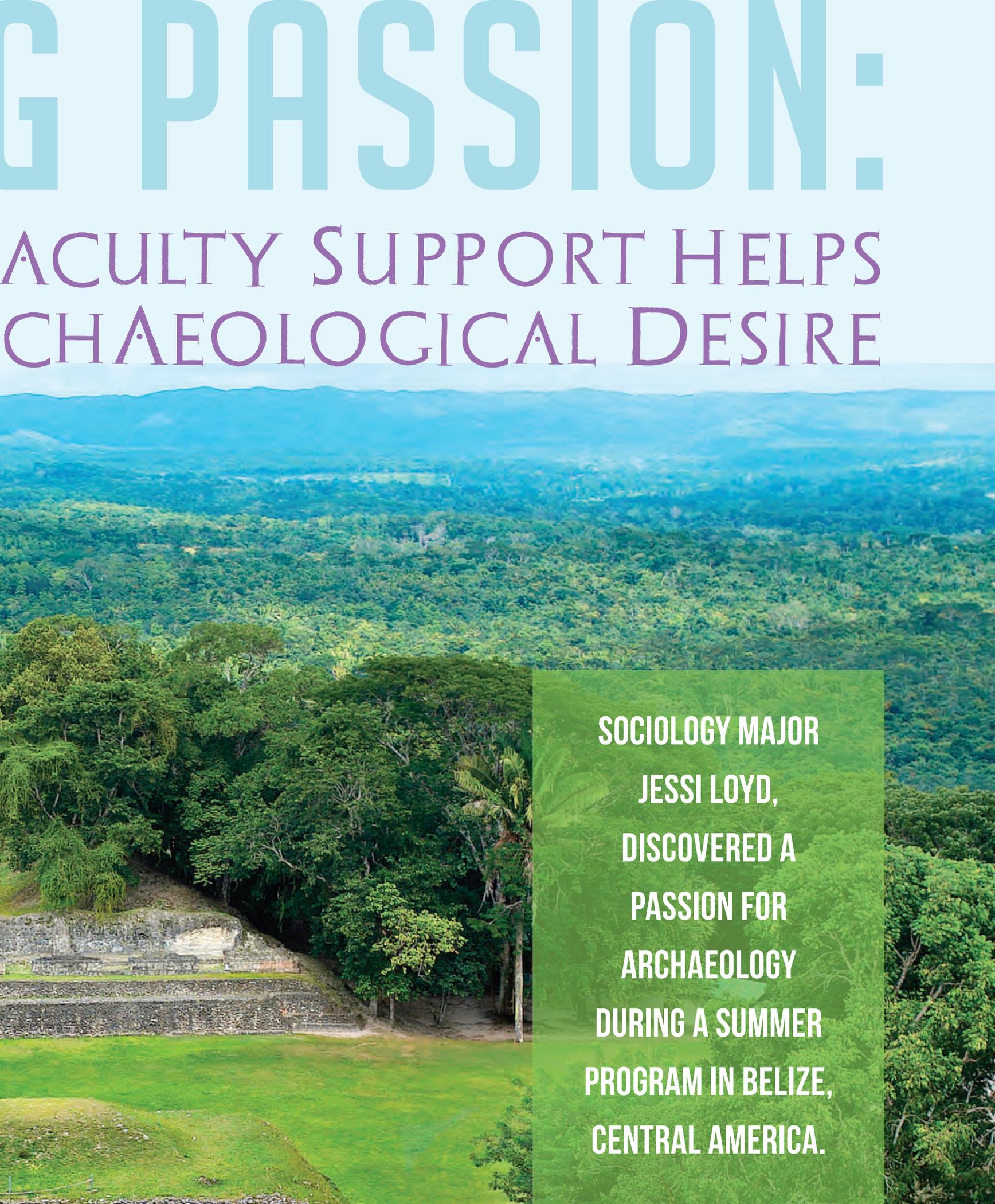
# DISCOVERING

FOR  
UNCOVER AR



# GG PASSION:

## ACULTY SUPPORT HELPS CHAEOLOGICAL DESIRE

An aerial photograph of a dense, vibrant green forest. In the lower-left foreground, there are several ancient stone ruins, including a prominent wall and a smaller structure, partially obscured by trees. The background shows rolling hills and more forest under a clear sky.

**SOCIOLOGY MAJOR  
JESSI LOYD,  
DISCOVERED A  
PASSION FOR  
ARCHAEOLOGY  
DURING A SUMMER  
PROGRAM IN BELIZE,  
CENTRAL AMERICA.**

**“FROM THE BREATHTAKING VIEWS OF THE UNCOVERED RUINS TO THE DAYS SPENT DIGGING IN THE FIELD, THE TRIP FURTHERED MY PASSION FOR ARCHAEOLOGY,” SAYS LOYD.**

The McMurry University experience puts students directly in touch with their academic passions. There’s a close bond between students and faculty, fostered by small class sizes, that allows students to explore new fields of study with the guidance of scholars at their side.

This was the case with Sociology major Jessi Loyd '19, who discovered a passion for archaeology during a summer program in Belize, Central America, that was recommended and arranged by Professor of Sociology and Criminology Dr. Jerry Hollingsworth '94.

Loyd attended an archaeological field school that explored the Maya civilization in the rainforests of northern Belize.

“I was familiar with their work, and was able to direct Jessi there for her field experience,” says Dr. Hollingsworth. “The students learn aspects of recovering artifacts through participation in digs, as well as lab work and classes.”

Although she had a latent interest in archaeology, it wasn’t until Loyd went to Belize that she became certain of her desire to become an archaeologist.

“From the breathtaking views of the uncovered ruins to the days spent digging in the field, the trip furthered my passion for archaeology,” says Loyd.

“I remember the moment I found something big. The biggest artifacts I found myself were pieces of a pot close





together, sitting on the plaster floor . It really made me see why I'm so passionate about digging in the dirt. But I also remember the moments I spent in the evenings with the friends I made. Some of them were from other states and from other countries. Our different backgrounds always made for interesting conversations and Saturday nights," she says.

There was another less desired discovery that didn't diminish Loyd's newfound love of archaeology.

"One day in the field, I was digging into a hole in the floor with just my hands. I put my hand in to pull out dirt, and a black, 3-inch-long scorpion came out after it. I shrieked like a little girl!"

After these life-and career-changing practical experiences, Loyd returned to the McMurry campus in the fall ready to pursue archaeology. She found support and received advice and direction from several McMurry faculty members.

"The support from the McMurry faculty is what really made this trip possible," says Loyd. "I would not have been able to attend without both the guidance and monetary help from Dr. LeMasters, the Honors Program, and Kellie

Merritt ('04). Dr. Hollingsworth continues to help me with my honors thesis and with the graduate school application process. I have enormous gratitude for the help I received from McMurry faculty."

Dr. Hollingsworth, himself a McMurry alumnus, sums up the essence of the McMurry University experience: a close relationship between instructors and students that's difficult to develop at a larger university.

"I believe that McMurry offers the ability to get to know our students better, and to personalize their education experience," he says.

The McMurry experience can lead to new academic discoveries, altered career paths or to reawakened passions, as it did for Jessi Loyd.

**“THE SUPPORT FROM THE MCMURRY  
FACULTY IS WHAT REALLY MADE THIS TRIP  
POSSIBLE,” SAYS LOYD. ”**



# 2019 Giving Day

Each year, the McMurry community joins together to help support our students in pursuing their dreams. Giving Day 2019 was massively successful as we surpassed not only one, but three Giving Day goals and totaled out at \$51,425.

Gifts given during McMurry Giving Day, and even year round, contribute to the overall success of McMurry students as they prepare for lives of leadership, service, and professional success. Funds raised on Giving Day go toward the McMurry Fund, which touches all aspects of the university, including student scholarships, faculty and library support, and overall greatest area of need.

The McMurry Fund scholarships are often the financial support that covers the remaining gap preventing students from being able to attend McMurry. Gifts to faculty support provides opportunities for professors to conduct research and other special projects that McMurry students are able to work on right beside their mentors. New equipment and resources are provided to the library every year through the McMurry Fund to help better our students' educational experience.

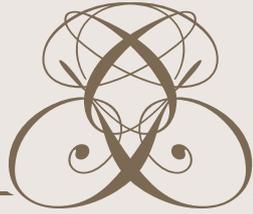
# THE MCMURRY FUND



“When looking at colleges, we knew we wanted to go somewhere together and that’s why McMurry was the perfect fit for us. We both received scholarships from The McMurry Fund, which has allowed us to focus on continuing our journey toward our degrees in Exercise Science and Human Performance. Now graduation is right around the corner in December! Thank you so much for believing in us and fellow McMurry students. Ala Cumba!”

*Britney Beaver '19 & Whitney Beaver '19*

[mcm.edu/give](https://mcm.edu/give)



# Distinguished ALUMNI

McMurry University's Night of Distinction: Celebrating Alumni Achievement, is our newly created signature awards event. First held in 2018, it expanded on a previously held dinner in order to bring more awareness to a larger number of our outstanding alumni making significant impacts in their professional fields and their communities, along with a commitment to McMurry University.

We had a great group join us this year as we honored seven alumni and hosted a crowd of 150 in April. We'll be back on campus in 2020 for the next Night of Distinction on Friday, April 17, in the Mabee Room. We hope to see you here as we Celebrate Alumni Achievement!

Alumni are nominated through the alumni relations office. Nominate outstanding alumni at [alumni.mcm.edu/awards/nominate.html](http://alumni.mcm.edu/awards/nominate.html).



Dr. Ralph McCleskey '65 with his wife Pat, daughter Alison and granddaughter Lola



Jason Rodriguez '00 with Dr. Sandra Harper after receiving the Outstanding Alumni Award in Business



GaBrielle Mallett '05, Young Alumni Achievement Award recipient, with her parents Freddie and Tanjena Famble '02



Dr. Ralph McCleskey '65 poses with family and friends in attendance to celebrate his receiving the Distinguished Alumni Award



Vernon Asbill '69 with his wife, Dr. Kate Null Asbill '69, after receiving the Outstanding Alumni Award in Education



A. Ray Hamilton '66 with Dr. Sandra Harper after receiving the Outstanding Alumni Award in Math & the Sciences



Cheyenne Cruz '09 with Dr. Sandra Harper after receiving the Outstanding Alumni Award in Fine Arts

## Alumni Events

### McMurry Alumni Awards

Do you know alumni who should be honored for their dedication to McMurry, their professional accomplishments, and/or their selfless service? Nominate them for one of our awards at: [alumni.mcm.edu/awards](http://alumni.mcm.edu/awards)

### Did You Know?

The McMurry Alumni Association offers an online Book Club. It is a community where alumni and friends enjoy books related to business, social issues, psychology and more. The only cost to participate for McMurry Alumni is the purchase of the books. Learn more and sign up at [pbc.guru/mcm](http://pbc.guru/mcm).

### Save-the-Dates

**Homecoming 2019 – Oct. 24-26**

**Final Ala Cumba – Friday, Nov. 1**

**McMurry Serves – Saturday, Feb. 22, 2020**

**Night of Distinction – Friday, April 17, 2020**

**Spring Alumni Weekend – April 17-18, 2020**

For an up-to-date calendar of all alumni events and activities, please visit [join.mcm.edu/events](http://join.mcm.edu/events). We hope you'll join us for an alumni event soon!

### Alumni Weekend

McMurry's third annual Spring Alumni Weekend was a hit in April, despite the rain! Join us next year April 17-18, 2020, in Abilene as we enjoy a weekend of celebrating alumni, renewing old friendships and creating new memories. For more information, visit our webpage at [mcm.edu/spring-alumni-weekend](http://mcm.edu/spring-alumni-weekend).

### McMurry Serves

McMurry alumni, students, faculty, staff, family and friends participated in the fifth annual McMurry Serves event on Saturday, February 16. More than 320 McMurry University volunteers put in over 800 hours in their communities. Next year's event will be held on Saturday, Feb. 22. We invite alumni from all over the U.S., and the world, to join us in service! For more info or to help host a project in your community next year, please visit [mcm.edu/mcmurry-serves](http://mcm.edu/mcmurry-serves).





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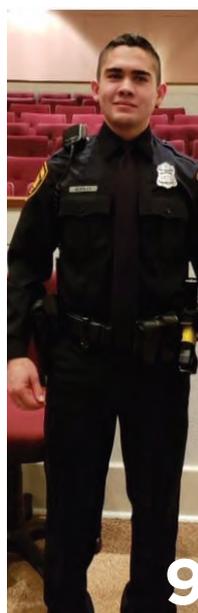
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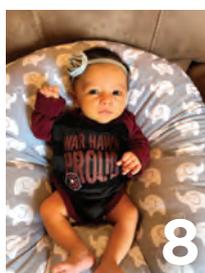
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## 1980s

**1. Rick Waldraff '83** was named President and CEO of Goodwill-West Texas in January. Congratulations Rick!

**2. Danny Mosley '84** was named by Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis to the 5th Judicial Circuit bench for Citrus, Hernando, Lake, Marion, and Sumter counties. Congratulations Judge Mosley!

## 1990s

**3. Justin Hooper '97** was promoted to Chairman, President and CEO of the Weatherford Region of First Financial Bank effective Jan. 1, 2019. Congratulations Justin!

**4. Jenny Terrell Feenstra '99** was honored in February with the prestigious award of Optometrist of the Year, by the Texas Optometric Association. Jenny credits Dr. Gary Wilson with giving her guidance and support on the path toward a health care profession. Jenny is pictured with

her husband Nathan Feenstra, daughter Katelyn (4 yrs) and son Lucas (2 yrs). Congratulations Jenny!

## 2000s

**5. Brady Nichols Sloane '04** was featured in several national media broadcasts for her project at Madison Middle School in Abilene, a Flash Bob... Ross flash mob painting event for more than 45 of her students. Brady teaches pre-AP art and wanted a way to celebrate and reward her students' hard work. Check out the story and a video interview with Brady by Humankind at [bit.ly/30ciSjN](http://bit.ly/30ciSjN).

**6. Jenny Garcia Brockway '07** was recognized in April as Georgetown ISD's Forbes Middle School Staff Member of the Year. Jenny is the counselor at Forbes, along with owning her own company, JGB Counseling & Wellness. Congratulations Jenny!

**7. Heather Hyde Wargo '09** and Ryan Hyde Wargo welcomed Rowan Donal Hyde Wargo into the world, on Aug. 16, 2018. Rowan is pictured in the McMurry Alumni Association bib. Congratulations Hyde Wargo Family!

## 2010s

**8. Alaisa Guerra Montanez '11** and her husband Michael welcomed baby Aria in February 2019. Congratulations Montanez Family!

**9. Stephan Murillo '17** graduated in December 2018 from the San Antonio Police Academy. Congratulations Stephan!



# A PLACE TO

In the fall of 2020, big things are coming to the McMurry University softball program.

In 2018, McMurry launched the women's softball program and Dr. Sam Ferguson, Vice President for Student Affairs and Intercollegiate Athletics, outlined the timeline and vision for the next three years. Kathi and Murray Edwards knew they wanted to be involved with the program, but were unsure how. That was until Kathi recalled a promise made to an outstanding group of young women to bring the softball team to campus by year 3.

On April 12, Ferguson announced the construction of a new softball stadium at McMurry University due to the kindness and generosity of Kathi and Murray Edwards. Having both grown up in the area, but not attending McMurry themselves, Kathi and Murray felt a fondness for the university because of family ties on both sides. Kathi currently sits on the Board of Trustees. After frequenting numerous games and witnessing the character, passion and camaraderie of the players, Kathi and Murray knew how they wanted to help.

"These kids deserve a home, and we were able to help with that," said Murray. "We need to keep the student in the center of what we do," Kathi stated. "That's why we are here."

The new home for McMurry softball will be named Edwards Field in honor of the Edwards family.



# CALL HOME



### In Memoriam

**Miles Adams '90** of Abilene, TX died November, 26, 2018.

**Richard Aguirre '85** of El Paso, TX died November 9, 2018.

**Maxie Barrera '91** of Arlington, TX died March 15, 2019.

**Guy Beckham** of Abilene, TX died March 23, 2019.

**John Bryant '70** of Abilene, TX died December 11, 2018.

**Raymond Bynum, Jr. '60** of Houston, TX died October 18, 2018.

**Jeff ey Caseltine '12** of Canadian, TX died January 21, 2019.

**Helen Johnson Collins '32** of Sarasota, FL died October 3, 2018.

**Virginia Connally** of Abilene, TX died March 31, 2019.

**Nolan Cox, Sr. '61** of Merkel, TX died October 2, 2018.

**Will Dix** of Abilene, TX died October 3, 2018.

**Elizabeth Oxley Culwell '63** of Abilene, TX died February 21, 2019.

**Alissa D'Amore '97** of Dallas, TX died January 1, 2019.

**Florine Houy Erwin '53** of Alamogordo, NM died January 25, 2019.

**James Glasscock '57** of Fallsington, PA died February 17, 2019.

**Irvin Hamilton '71** of Austin, TX died January 3, 2019.

**Thomas Hart '96** of Clyde, TX died January 26, 2019.

**Nancy Harris Harwell '47** of Carthage, MO died September 25, 2018.

**Jane Ammons Harvey '61** of Abilene, TX died December 12, 2018.

**Billie Hargus Hoefler '49** of Abilene, TX died March 20, 2019.

**Jacque Hunter Holland** of Houston, TX died October 17, 2018.

**Anna McBride Johnson** of Abilene, TX died October 5, 2018.

**Ronnie Johnson '86** of Abilene, TX died December 21, 2018.

**Martin Kemper '72** of Woodway, TX died March 28, 2019.

**Oleta Kesler** of Horseshoe Bay, TX died December 27, 2018.

**Billie King '76** of Fort Worth, TX died March 30, 2019.

**Michael Lehr '52** of San Angelo, TX died January 17, 2019.

**Frances Scrimshire Lindquist '41** of El Paso, TX died February 9, 2019.

**Opal Ramsey Little '47** of Eastland, TX died October 20, 2018.

**Maurice McLeod** of Abilene, TX died October 6, 2018.

**Leonita Englert Miller '86** of Abilene, TX died October 22, 2018.

**James Parker** of Abilene, TX died February 19, 2019.

**Jackie Patterson '84** of Fort Worth, TX died February 7, 2019.

**Shelly Glenn Richards '81** of Ardmore, OK died April 26, 2019.

**Robbie Russell '70** of Abilene, TX died November 14, 2018.

**Catherine Bynum Schneider '59** of Houston, TX died January 30, 2019.

**Jimmy Seay** died October 21, 2018.

**Emily Ledbetter Shoemaker '51** of Clyde, TX died December 31, 2018.

**Charlyne Williams Tucker '57** of Denver, CO died December 3, 2018.

**Connie Walker** died January 29, 2019.

**Anne Woodman '64** of Abilene, TX died January 1, 2019.

**Peggy Ray Woods '62** of Abilene, TX died December 31, 2018.

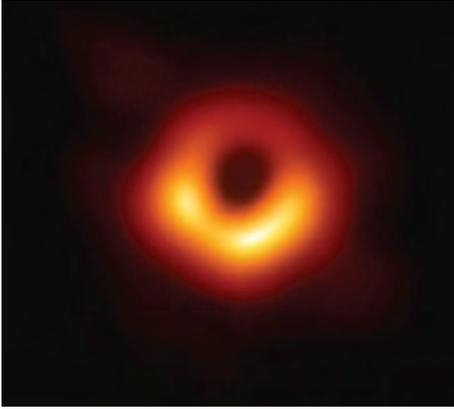
**Ruth DeYoung Young '81** of El Campo, TX died January 8, 2019.



**Jane Ammons Harvey '61** passed away on December 12, 2018. Jane was loved and will be missed by all those who were blessed to know her. Jane and husband James Wiley Harvey '62 were blessed with two children, Wiley Case Harvey '89 and Cameo Suzanne Harvey '89. Jane graduated from McMurry with a bachelor's degree in Business with a minor in English. McMurry was always close to her heart. She served as Assistant Registrar at McMurry from 1972-1974 before her health forced her to leave the position. Jane and James helped put both of their children through McMurry and faithfully attended Homecoming each year. Jane received the Cross and Flame Award in 2005 for Outstanding Service to McMurry University and Leadership in the United Methodist Church. Jane was a member of the sorority T.I.P. while at McMurry and had been the T.I.P. Alumni Association president for many, many years. During her tenure as Alumni president she helped create the T.I.P. Scholarship in 2012 which helps young women fund their education at McMurry. She also was the editor of the T.I.P. yearly newsletter for the last 16 years. Jane was a longtime member of First United Methodist Church in Abilene. She attended FUMC in her college years and joined the church with her family in 1972. Jane Harvey had a beautiful soul, a giving heart, and a passion for philanthropy and helping others. McMurry was truly blessed to have Jane as one of its champions, as were the many alumni and friends of McMurry who had the honor to know her. She was full of care and joy, and was a wonderful blessing to all she served.



*McMurry* Black hole discussion



*McMurry* Dr. Michael Cox Lecture



*McMurry* Edwards Field



*McMurry* Serves



*McMurry* Battle of the Flowers



*McMurry* I Heart McMurry Week



# what's

## TRENDING ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Stay connected by visiting our YouTube channel! Featuring student and faculty achievements and events, you can learn more about what's happening on campus and be in the know.



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HELPING  
STUDENTS  
DISCOVER  
THEIR  
FUTURES.

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## Consider Rolling Over **Your IRA** Today!

By taking a distribution from your IRA this year, you will likely pay more in taxes and may even be in a higher tax bracket. **Rolling over** part of you IRA's "required minimum distribution" or RMD to McMurry University can help to reduce your tax bill while supporting the University.

An **IRA Charitable rollover** gift can benefit both you and McMurry's mission! Contact your IRA Administrator to get started with you gift. While you will not receive an income tax deduction, you will not pay taxes on any distributions made to McMurry. Please inform us of your plans so we use your gift in a way that means the most to you.

Debra Hulse | 325-793-4761 | [hulse.debra@mcm.edu](mailto:hulse.debra@mcm.edu)

**70 1/2 or  
Older You  
Can Direct  
Up to  
\$100,000**